

# DRAFT MINUTES OF RAVENSWORTH PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON MONDAY, 11<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2024

**Present:** Councillors A Ayres (Chair), J Cooke, B Hird, A Pledge and C Robinson

**Apologies:** None.

## 1. Declaration of Interest

Councillor Hird reported that she worked at Mainsgill Farm Shop and felt it appropriate to declare an interest,

**Agreed:** that as Councillor Hird's only interest was as an employee at the Farm Shop, she was free to participate in any discussion about the project.

## 2. Minutes of Previous Meeting

Whilst the Minutes of the meeting held on 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2024 had been circulated to councillors for comment prior to the meeting, the Chair had since noticed that the sum of £36.33 for plants had mistakenly been entered as £33.63.

**AGREED:** that subject to the above amendment, the Minutes be approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

## 3. Matters Arising

**3.1 Mill Close Lighting** – a reply had been received about the overnight turning-off of streetlights in Mill Close. North Yorkshire Council follows prescribed criteria, none of which supported the Parish Council's claim that the lighting should remain on overnight in this area.

Although disappointing, it was felt that RPC had taken this matter as far as it could at this point.

**3.2. Gayles Quarry** – it was noted that any decision regarding the reopening of the Quarry had now been deferred until 26<sup>th</sup> March 2025 at the request of National Highways.

**3.3. Open Reach Update** – following communications with various stakeholders, including Open Reach, North Yorkshire Highways and Chris Bryant (Minister for Data Protection and Telecoms) the Chair has now received a letter from Chris Bryant's office confirming that all network operators have been contacted urging them to share

existing infrastructure as the default approach, and where new infrastructure is needed, to install underground wherever possible before deploying new telegraph poles.

The Chair said that he had subsequently received a message on 4<sup>th</sup> November 2024 from Openreach, following numerous attempts to discuss the Parish Council's concerns, and had also been contacted by subcontractors for Open Reach, Comcare, Next Generation Delivery and Compliance Telecommunications. The Chair had now been able to explain the Parish Council's view and would be meeting with a project manager for Com Core within the next few days.

The Chair also referred to a conversation he had recently had with a representative from Northern Power Grid who had informed him that all the electricity poles in the village were due for replacement.

## **4. Open Discussion**

**4.1. Cars Parking on the Village Green** – several residents expressed concern about cars being parked on the Village Green in front of other peoples' houses. It was noted that this was becoming a bigger problem now that some households had several vehicles, including some commercial ones.

An attendee suggested that more bollards might be installed on areas of the Village Green where parking congestion was an issue.

As previously minuted, it was considered that the draft Village Green Policy displayed on the Village Website was no longer fit for purpose.

### **AGREED:**

- (a) That the draft Village Green Policy be removed from the Village Website;**
- (b) That the recently published Information Document, which includes a statement about the Village Green, including parking, be circulated by e-mail to as many residents as possible, together with a covering note asking villagers to park considerately.**

**4.2 Leak on Village Green** – it was reported that a water leak outside No. 22 The Green should be repaired within the next few days.

**4.3 Dogs Fouling** – concern was again voiced about this problem and in particular on the track down to the bridge at Tofta

## 5. Finance and Payments

The Chair reported that:

- The second half of this year's Precept had now been received - £2,700
- Bank interest had reduced this month - £1.67
- Defibrillator expenditure (annual charge for VETS) - £120
- Spring bulbs for Village Green expenditure - £90
- Current balance in the account of £12,495.78.

It was anticipated that, subject to any unforeseen costs, the account would be in credit by approximately £10,000 at the start of next financial year.

### **AGREED:**

- (a) That the Parish Council should not request an increase in next year's Precept;**
- (b) That having regard to the healthy budget, consideration be given, in due course, to any projects which the Parish Council may wish to undertake next year.**

## 6. Planning Applications

**6.1 New Lane** – ZD24/00537/FULL/Full planning permission for demolition of greenhouses, erection of dwellings including access, rerouting of watercourse, landscaping, and change of use of land from agriculture to create area for biodiversity enhancements.

To meet the deadline for responses (4.11.24) councillors had met to discuss this application. Whilst it had been agreed that we would welcome the replacement of a disused nursery greenhouse on New Lane with a well-built development in keeping with the locality, there were several concerns that RPC felt needed addressing.

- The poor drainage of the site and risk of flooding were acknowledged but were not sufficiently dealt with in the application.
- It is proposed that this development would be connected to the main sewer. The PC has expressed concern about the ability of the Ravensworth Pumping Station to manage the demands of the village for a long time. Late night call-outs to the Station and spillages on to the land were noted. In 2023, the sewer storm overflowed at Ravensworth Pumping Station and spilled **68** times for a total of **363.00** hours, discharging into Holme Beck.

- The project takes insufficient account of the issues associated with additional traffic, not only the vehicles accessing and leaving this new development, but also those associated with the 40 lodges already approved at the adjacent location, and Wetherriggs, the nearby Animal Rescue Centre. There is also a threat that, should the Quarry at Gayles be allowed to re-open, the lorries associated with the enterprise would use New Lane.

**6.2 Proposed Chapel Conversion – ZD24/00551/FULL/Full** planning permission for change of use from a Methodist Chapel into a retreat and prayer centre run by the Ravensworth Chapel Trust. Those present recognised the chapel's position on the Village Green and its history as part of the community.

RPC has however identified the following issues:

- The proposed work on the building would inevitably affect the use of the Green and traffic on the track.
- Access would be required via the hard surface adjacent to the Village Hall. Since this land is owned and maintained by RPC, any work would require effective communication with RPC and this should be a prerequisite of any approval.
- There is no current water supply or sewage connection to the property, so care would need to be taken to ensure no damage and/or obstruction occurred to the village green, track or other land during the development.
- The grassed area behind the Chapel is a rectangle and the boundary follows the line of the building. It is not angled as shown in a number of documents supplied, including the location plan.
- Other concerns were made regarding the provision for the storage and collection of waste, the proposed extension at the rear of the building and assumptions about public rights of way.
- RPC does not agree with the claims made in the Supporting Planning Statement submitted by the applicant which we consider betray a lack of knowledge about the village and its needs.

## 7 Highways

**7.1 School Signs** - It was noted that warning signs had now been installed on the main road at the entries to the Village Green. While a 20mph would be RPC's ideal addition, it was hoped that the signage would encourage drivers to take more care.

**7.2 White Lining** – Whilst the road painting had finally been undertaken in late Septembers, many of the lines had already faded or disappeared. The Chair had reported this to North Yorkshire Highways and had been assured that the work would be redone.

**7.3 A66** – a decision by the Government as to whether the dualling of this road would take place was still awaited.

## **8. Village Hall**

Councillor Robinson reported that the following events were scheduled:

- Soups and desserts – third Thursday each month
- Village Hall AGM – 28<sup>th</sup> November at 2.00 pm
- Carol Concert – 20<sup>th</sup> December at 7.00 pm
- Christmas Wreath Making – 14<sup>th</sup> Decemberer

Carol also reported that the prints bequeathed by the estate of the late Pat Baker had now been framed and put up onto the walls of the Village Hall. Everybody agreed that these were a welcome addition.

## **9. Defibrillator**

Councillor Pledge reported that:

- as agreed at the last Parish Council meeting, all residents had been contacted and 11 had volunteered to be VETS, 5 of whom had medical training.
- Shaun Brinicombe is a trained first responder;
- Thanks to Debbie Mayne who has arranged to do some defibrillator training for residents on 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> November;
- a 'What to do in an emergency' sheet has been sent out to all residents as a paper copy so that it can be placed on their noticeboards. This has also been added to the Village Website;
- the Community Heartbeat Foundation has been informed of the new VETS' telephone numbers and these are now operational.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.00 pm