

ABERFORD & DISTRICT PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES of a meeting of the Parish Council held on Tuesday 19th May 2009 in Aberford Church of England School.

PRESENT: Councillors D. Howson (Chairman), R. Alderson, Mrs G. Broadley, I. Forster, P. Hancock, D. Stainton
Apologies were received from Cllr. D. Gluck

Also Present: Nine members of the public, two Police Officers and the Clerk.

09/40 MINUTES

The Minutes of the last meeting held on 21st April 2009 had been circulated prior to the meeting. It was proposed by Cllr. Hancock and seconded by Cllr. Stainton that the same were a true record. This was agreed.

09/41 POLICE MATTERS

The two Police Officers present gave their report. There had been several burglaries recently but culprits had been apprehended for most of them. Attention was drawn to locks which were available for uPVC doors and there was some discussion about them. Information would be made available to residents. It was recommended that the map of the village be updated as an old one was being used. A request was made to monitor speeding through the village at around 8.00a.m. and the Officers noted this.

09/42 MATTERS ARISING

(a) Referring to Minute 09/33(a) Aberford in Bloom – the group had leafleted the village recently which had produced some response from people willing to sponsor or volunteer their services.

(b) Referring to Minute 09/33(b) Litter Bins – Clerk was to arrange a site meeting.

(c) Referring to Minute 09/33(c) War Memorial – awaiting contact from LCC

(d) Referring to Minute 09/33(d) Streetlights – a plan had just been received via email but it was too small – Clerk asked to request a paper copy. It was noted that markings had appeared but the work was not scheduled to begin until early/mid June according to Mr Brummitt of SEC. When Cllrs. had been able to study the paper copy a meeting would be held.

(e) Referring to Minute 09/33(e) Footpath Lotherton Lane – following a site meeting the collapsed footpath would be made good shortly, the path would be extended over the 'layby' area as it approached Lotherton Hall but could take months rather than weeks to do. Work to enhance the footpath for mobility scooters would be prohibitively expensive due to the need to construct a retaining wall on the inner side and some form of guard fencing in addition for users. However, the cutting of hedges and widening of the existing footway was being pursued by LCC Highways.

(f) Referring to Minute 09/33(f) School Field/Tennis Court – efforts were continuing to move LCC forward. Ownership appeared to be vested in Parks & Recreation Dept. Cllr Stainton had been in touch with Cllr Proctor who was trying to help. Cllr Alderson was in contact with several LCC Officers to press forward on behalf also of the school and in particular to try again to resolve the question of access. Cllr Howson would be meeting with 'the estate' upon his return from holiday in two weeks time and he hoped matters might be clarified sufficiently as access work could not start until they were.

(g) Referring to Minute 09/33(i) Litter/School involvement – Cllr Alderson reported that he had agreed through Mrs Heggie that the children would be given a project to design a poster over the half term break. The designs would be judged when school reconvened. A local resident who was a printer had offered to help in the production of a poster and Councillors agreed that the sum of £60 be given to the school by the Parish Council. This sum could be split into 3 prizes for the children.

(h) Referring to Minute 09/33(j) CCTV – the Chairman reported only two villages in the Wetherby area did not have CCTV. Bramham were intending to have it in their central area. The majority of those present at the meeting appeared to be in favour but it was hoped that residents would make their views known to Councillors. The ongoing cost could be in the region of £4,000/£4,500 per year which would be a problem. Further information awaited.

(i) Referring to Minute 09/33(k) Cattle Lane speed sign – Cllr Stainton was trying to arrange an early meeting.

(j) Referring to Minute 09/33(n) Outer NE Area Committee Meeting – there had been an exchange of emails about short notification of agenda papers and reports which were often very large. Five clear working days was the laid down period – an internet link would allow access on the first day of publication – this link to be pursued as it did not connect when tried. The points the PC made about practicalities of the room layout/sound etc were to be put before the Area Committee Manager.

(k) Referring to Minute 09/35 Waiting for Replies (a) and (b) Providence House doorway and Humphreydale – the Compliance Officer had not yet replied.

(l) Referring to Minute 09/36(f) Grants Policy – the draft Policy was adopted by Councillors but the figures would need further consideration.

(m) Referring to Minute 09/37(b) Play Area – the inspection was carried out by an Engineer from LCC and his report was on file. Everything was in good order apart from metal bushes needing replacing/2 missing bolts on the roundabout/5 cover caps – all being at small cost. The items were not covered under the Guarantee but LCC had the parts and were able to do the work. It was agreed that this should be ordered to be done. Cllr Stainton said he was disappointed that the Parkdale employees who replaced the plastic bushes did not pick up on the metal bushes being in need of replacement.

(n) Referring to Minute 09/37(d) Complaints Procedure – This was adopted by Councillors.

(o) Referring to Minute 09/37(e) Lengthsman – a meeting had been offered by Ms Anderson the LCC Area Manager NE of Streetscene Services and this was to be arranged by the Clerk.

(p) Referring to Minute 09/38(b) Noticeboards – request passed to the LCC officer responsible for our area – to chase for a meeting

09/43 REPORTS FROM SUB-COMMITTEES

In the absence of Cllr Gluck there was nothing further on the Parish Plan.

09/43 CORRESPONDENCE

(a) Some details of forthcoming courses to be run by YLCA were given out by the Clerk. One in particular might be of interest as it was for 'more experienced Councillors' The date most convenient for Aberford area would be Monday 27th July at Scarcroft Village Hall from 7.15 – 9.45. There was also to be one at a venue to be advised near York in September. The cost per place was £35.

Additionally a course for Councillors 'in the Chair' or who might do that job in the future was available. This would be a one day event and one was to be at Wakefield on Friday 29th May (Cllr Howson on holiday then) and one at Poppleton Community Centre near York on 23rd November. The cost would be £105 with coffee/tea and lunch provided. Clerk asked to remind Councillors at the next meeting.

(b) A Health and Safety Policy document had been circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting. This was adopted and would be placed on file with the Clerk for reference.

(c) An exchange of emails had taken place between local Clerks about the lack of notification of roadworks which several communities had experienced recently. Cllr Hancock said residents of his street had been given two days notice. Mrs Ann Castle had become involved and was trying to see if advanced notification could be set up. This might be pursued through the Town and PC Forum or through the Area Forum. Councillors would be kept informed.

(d) The Minutes of the last Parish/Town Working Group Planning were with the Clerk.

(e) The annual meeting of the Leeds Branch of YLCA was to take place on Tuesday 2nd June at 7.30pm in Leeds Civic Centre. The papers were with the Clerk.

(f) A consultation paper had been received concerning LCC leadership arrangements and feedback was asked for. Councillors to circulate to see if they wishes to express a view either collectively or individually.

(g) A long email had been received from the Leeds Festival organisers concerning traffic arrangements affecting local residents and making the offer of tickets – Councillor Broadley undertook to liaise on this matter. It could result in some money being raised for a cause of the PC's choice.

09/44 PLANNING MATTERS

Applications

There was only one application : P/09/01977/FU/HE – Single storey front extension to Ash Tree House, Cattle Lane, Aberford. Councillors had no objections.

Waiting for Replies

The Compliance Officer had yet to reply concerning the stopping up of a doorway at Providence House, Main Street and as to building work going on at the fire damaged property Humphreydale.

09/45 ACCOUNTS

Matters Arising from the Annual Audit

(a) The Clerk reported that the accounts had been successfully audited by Mrs Spence of the Yorkshire Local Councils Association and the end of year statement was as that presented as a draft at the April meeting. Councillors approved this. The Account Book was duly signed by the Chairman and Clerk. The Annual Return from the Audit Commission was approved.

Some procedures concerning financial good governance needed to be put in place and these required to be formally adopted by the Parish Council.

(b) Firstly Councillors recorded that they were satisfied with the performance of the Internal Auditor.

(c) Councillors needed to be satisfied that the Clerk was making a return to the Inland Revenue regarding her remuneration. A letter to this effect from the Clerk was noted and would be kept on file.

(d) The Standing Orders needed to be re-adopted. Councillors confirmed their re-adoption.

(e) A model Financial Regulations document had been obtained from YLCA – it was agreed to adopt this and the Chairman and Financial Officer duly signed this.

(f) A model Financial Risk Assessment document had been obtained from YLCA – it was agreed to adopt this and the Chairman and Financial Officer duly signed this.

(g) A more formal Budget should be set each year when reviewing the level of Precept. This could be reviewed as necessary, at mid year for instance. The Clerk had drawn up a document and Councillors formally adopted this, noting that the figures might have to be amended from time to time through the year.

(h) A model Standing Orders on Procurement of Work, Goods and Services had been obtained. Councillors formally adopted this, noting that the figures inserted could be amended by a formal resolution at a future meeting if so desired.

(i) An insurance quotation had been obtained via a Broker from the Norwich Union. Increased levels of cover in some cases was offered at a somewhat lower premium.

Councillors decided to take up cover with the Norwich Union and Clerk asked to proceed with that.

(j) The auditor advised that internal financial controls needed to be tightened in that Councillors who were not empowered to sign cheques should look at all the financial records on a regular basis. It was agreed that the Financial Officer, Councillor I Forster (not an account signatory) would carry out this exercise every three months and this would be formally recorded within the Minutes.

(k) It was agreed that the Clerk would keep an Asset Register to record the small pieces of land which the Parish Council held in trust for the village although these were not of value as such. If the Parish Council subsequently acquired any assets then they would be so recorded.

Other Financial Matters

(a) The account balances were:

In HSBC current account	£ 3293.29
In HSBC No 1 high int a/c	£33,648.27
In HSBC No 2 high int a/c	£38,809.73
In Barclays Bond	£40,000.00

(b) Cheque number 100225 in the sum of £55.00 for inspection/report on the Play Area by LCC was agreed and issued.

(c) Cheque number 100226 in the sum of £84.00 for annual audit expenses by the Yorkshire Local Councils Association was agreed and issued.

(d) Cheque number 100227 in the sum of £208.31 for Clerk's remuneration, telephone expenses and stationery was agreed and issued.

(e) Cheque number 100228 in the sum of £1,000.00 for help towards the refurbishing of the Village Hall toilets was agreed and issued to the Village Hall Committee.

(f) Cheque number 100229 in the sum of £35.00 for annual membership of the Yorkshire Rural Community Council was agreed and issued.

(g) Cheque number 100230 in the sum of £40.00 for course fees for the Clerk to attend a Training Course run by the Yorkshire Local Councils Association was agreed and issued.

(h) Cheque number 100231 in the sum of £6.00 for car parking when attending a meeting on behalf of the Parish Council was agreed and issued to Cllr Hancock.

(i) Cheque number 100232 in the sum of £1,080.32 for annual insurance premium was agreed and issued to Norwich Union plc.

09/46 MATTERS FOR INFORMATION

(a) Some information about funding for Village Halls which might be available from the National Lottery, had been found by Cllr Stainton and passed to a member of the Hall committee.

(b) Cllr Forster reported that the road scheme for the North Newhold development seemed to him to be acceptable. There was to be a bus stop within the site. It would continue to be monitored.

09/47 OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

(a) It was reported that the making good after a trench had been dug on Pump Hill was not satisfactory. Some grassing had been carried out but over the top of a poor foundation. The Chairman undertook to speak to the property owner. The wooden railings required attention but, after some discussion, it was decided to investigate alternative materials for these – particularly as the Aberford In Bloom group were going to concentrate on that area to begin with.

(b) A lady from the In Bloom group expressed a hope that they would be considered for a share of any money generated by sale of the Festival tickets.

(c) The Field Lane sign was in need of attention again and there were two manhole covers which were broken and open.

(d) There was a complaint about the surfacing work which had been done in Raper View. Clerk instructed to formally complain.

(e) Parking near the Arabian Horse was a constant difficulty – especially the parking of a large horse box which was often facing the wrong way at night. Clerk to investigate the legal position.

(f) A burglar alarm had been noticed as flashing regularly and needed to be investigated. Chairman to pass this to the local police officers.

(g) A complaint was made that, during the student festival at Lotherton Hall last year, people were not allowed to walk around the perimeter paths although they were well away from the field being used. It was agreed to pursue this matter with LCC for the current year.

(h) A problem with surface water draining was occurring at the north end of the village. There was no gully between Greystone Park and the top of Pinfold Rise on one side and the force of water reaching the Pinfold Rise gully caused it to overflow down a driveway and onwards into Rein Court. In addition water always ponded opposite Pinfold Rise after heavy rain. It was agreed to ask for a site meeting with someone from LCC Drainage Dept to discuss this.

(i) A resident said he felt the PC were reluctant to spend money. Cllr Stainton outlined some of the expected expenses such as money from the capital fund being kept in reserve for the tennis court/school field area. The level of precept had been maintained this year as the bank balances were felt to be sufficient.

09/48 CLOSE OF MEETING

There being no further business the Chairman thanked everyone present before closing the meeting at 9.45p.m.