

**Minutes of Spaldwick Parish Council Meeting held at 8 pm
Thursday 18 December 2014 in the Community Room at Spaldwick Primary School**

Present: Cllrs Plummer (Vice - Chairman, presiding), Jackson-Rimmer, Leach, Johnson, Smith and Wakefield, the Clerk (Mr D Stowell), and 7 members of the public.

1. **An apology for absence** was received from Cllr Rice,
2. **Declarations of Interest**
There were no personal and/or prejudicial interests declared in any agenda item.
3. **Public Open Forum** - Several members of the public expressed their anger at the continued absence of a General Meeting (Annual or Extraordinary) at which membership of the Village Hall Management Committee could be regularised by election. More than one member of the public said that if such a meeting is not called by the end of January it is likely that they will take this matter further with the Charity Commission and/or the police. They asked that the Parish Council pursue this matter further to ensure that a General Meeting is called within that time scale to avoid the need for escalation outside the village. It was pointed out that villagers should be informed of the current financial position and of future plans.
The Chairman of the meeting stated that the points raised would be considered by the council at item 10.
4. **The Minutes of Meeting held 13 November 2014** were approved subject to the report on the Public Open Forum being amended to include more detail. The amended draft is to be brought to the next meeting for approval.
5. **Matters arising from minutes (not on the agenda)** - none
6. **Finance**
The following changes to the Clerk's pay to comply with the recent NALC/SLCC agreement were noted: £9.36 payable December 2014, followed by an increase in quarterly gross pay from 1 January 2015 by 2.2% to £473.70.
Churchyard maintenance – In response to a letter from John Blatch asking for help with the churchyard maintenance, which this year cost £845 for grass cutting, with the income (interest from the Garden Fund legacy) being £56.53, it was resolved to contribute £800
The following payments were approved:
100605 F D Stowell, Salary & Excs. Sep-Dec, £440.82 (Inc £8.03 VAT)
100606 HMRC, PAYE, £94.60
100607 Fergusons, Grass cutting as previous year, 13 cuts + 10 cuts additional areas from May 2014 + pruning shrubs around play area, £4159.32 (inc £693.22 VAT)
100608 Spaldwick Primary School, Room rental Sep-Dec, £18.00
100609 CCC, Street lighting energy, Church Lane, £40.12
100610 Manor Farm Tree services, reducing height of trees behind 32-42 Ferriman Road, £370.00
106611 Greg Rice, annual hosting and maintenance of website and email, £50.00
100612 Cash for Town & Poor's Charity, Christmas gifts £120.00
100613 Spaldwick PCC, Maintenance of churchyard, £800.00
100614 SLCC, half Clerk's membership, shared with Stow Longa PC, £44.00
2015/16 Budget and Precept – Following consideration of the estimated outturn for 2014/15 and a draft budget prepared by the Clerk, it was resolved to add £5000 for a bus shelter funded from reserves, and to adopt a budget of £18300 with a total of £6100 funded from reserves. It was further resolved to set a precept of £10,000 (unchanged from last year).

7. Planning

New planning applications – none received since the last meeting

Local Planning Authority decisions – none determined since the last meeting

8. Assets – Provision / Maintenance

War Memorial – The Clerk reported that he had made no recent progress on the scheme to refurbish or duplicate the inscriptions.

Footpath notice board – Cllr Johnson said that, after Christmas, he will look at the practicality of locating it at the back of the Parish Council notice board on the Village Green.

Trees on Village Green – it was noted that two quotations to reduce the canopies by 30% and to obtain HDC permission prior to commencing work have been received to date and a third is expected shortly. These are to be considered at the next meeting.

Children's Play Area, Ferriman Road – it was noted that the hedges around the fenced area have now been cut; and that the Clerk's action re the poor finish of the safety surface repairs is outstanding.

Bus Shelter in Royston Avenue – The Clerk reported that he had received three quotations which he briefly described to the meeting. It was agreed to provide all members with details of the shelters offered, to facilitate an informed discussion on the matter at a future meeting.

Other Assets – to receive reports of any new problems and note progress on others.

Parish Council Notice Boards – It was noted that Cllr Johnson has rectified problems with the doors of both boards to enable them to open sticking door problem and is looking at fitting backing boards to assist in use of drawing pins.

Bollard at Public Open Space, Ferriman Road – when the trees along the boundary were lopped the existing bollard was disabled. Following discussion which included replacing the bollard with a more robust type, the Clerk was asked to obtain costs for replacing the old bollard with one of similar size.

9. Highways, footpaths, byways etc. – to note the following updates

Street Lighting PFI – High Street design details awaited.

Local Highway Improvement Initiative 2014/15 – to note that CCC has instructed the contractor to carry out the kerb improvement near the High Street post box; and that the project engineer will shortly recommence design work on the Thrapston Road footway improvement scheme. Richard Johnson of Manor Farm House, who recently placed three boulders near the post box to stop vehicles overrunning the kerb, will remove them when CCC start work.

Local Highway Improvement Initiative 2015/16 – The bid for 2 flashing 30 mph signs was submitted to the review panel on 7 November – a response is awaited.

Litter Bin at High Street / Long Lane - The Clerk has suggested to HDC that this bin which is in danger of falling over should be relocated on the High Street side of the Beech House garden wall buttress. An inspector will assess this new position and, if acceptable, the contractor will reinstall it. The proposed new site

Litter Bin in Ferriman Road – It was noted that an HDC inspector was planning to look again for a suitable site in Ferriman Road including outside the school; and that the chance of getting a bin would be improved if the PC fund the supply and installation at a cost of £473.33. The meeting decided to drop this proposal which would have been convenient for dog walkers to dispose of dog waste bags, but as there is no litter problem in the area was considered to be an unnecessary expense

Potholes outside Spaldwick Service Station – It was noted that, following a complaint from the manager passed on by Mick Ager regarding a large pothole in the entrance to the Petrol station, the Clerk examined the site plans and formed the opinion that the pothole in question is part of the highway and subsequently asked County Highways to repair 3 potholes in that area. CCC have subsequently confirmed that they recognise that the fault needs addressing, and the work has been **scheduled** to be undertaken at the earliest opportunity.

Cockway Lane – following a complaint received from a member of the public Mick Ager reported to CCC a very muddy flooded section adjacent to the stream which goes under the

lane about 165 metres from the end of Mount Pleasant, and has suggested plantings should be spread as was done in Long Lane.

Simeon Carroll, the CCC Rights Of Way Officer, has responded that he will ask the contractor who is due to carry out work on a muddy section of the ROW further west to look at this when he is there but as the first section of Cockway Lane is technically highway and not part of the ROW network he cannot promise

- 10. Village Hall** - In the absence of any update from the Management Committee, there was a discussion during which members echoed the concerns raised in the Public Open Forum. At its conclusion it was **resolved** to write to the Chairman of the Village Hall Management Committee, asking for a meeting of his Committee to be held in early January to make arrangements for an Extraordinary General Meeting to be held not later than 30th January 2015, for the primary purpose of electing a Management Committee which accords with its constitution. The arrangements need to include the distribution of leaflets with due notice to all households in the Village and booking a suitable meeting room.

Voting on the resolution, which more than one member asked to be recorded, was

FOR: Councillors Leach, Jackson-Rimmer, Johnson, Plummer, Smith and Wakefield.

AGAINST: none

- 11. Bus Service changes** – a decision on the future of scheduled services is awaited.
- 12. Water courses, drainage and flood risk measures** – the Clerk gave progress reports:
- A) Ditch adjacent to Willow House** connecting sheep field to the Brook – Cllr Mike Baker has arranged a site meeting at 10 am on Saturday with John Oldfield (Internal Drainage Board Engineer), Mr & Mrs Wheeler and the Clerk to determine the problem and what action to take.
- B) Tree in Brook north of A14 crossing** – this tree and other obstructions upstream to the Thrapston Road Bridge were cleared by the Environment Agency 11 December.
- C) Pond at 54 Stow Road** - At the October meeting, which noted that this pond had recently been filled in, the question arose as to what happened to the results of the pond survey carried out a few years ago and whether as a result certain ponds, and in particular this one, had been given some form of protection. The Clerk has since spoken to the Manager of the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Environmental Records Centre who said he has no record of the survey. He stated that the pond itself would not be protected, but if Great Crested Newts had been observed there then they would be protected, however CPERC has no record of any at that location. Cllr Wakefield said she was concerned that removal of this large pond might cause flooding nearby. The Clerk will discuss the question with the appropriate authority.
- 13. Correspondence**
- Woolley Hill Local Energy Discount Scheme** - Prior to Christmas, RES will be contacting the properties eligible for LEDS (those sited within 2km of the turbines) to ask them to sign up to the scheme by submitting details of their electricity supplier. They will receive £100 per year discount from the point that Woolley Hill Wind Farm becomes fully operational – which is predicted to be in early spring 2015.
- Transparency Code for Councils with turnover under £25,000 (handed to members)** - The Government has published the final version of this Code which replaces the need for external audit for parish councils with turnover less than £25,000. The code will require the on-line publication of information which the Government says will provide taxpayers with a clear picture of the council's' activities, spending and governance and will improve the ability of communities to hold local public bodies to account. The Code is published initially as recommended practice but the Secretary of State intends to make the code mandatory by April 1st.

Parish Polls, Consultation on the Government's intentions to modernise parish poll regulations – the Clerk is to summarise the proposals and produce comments to be circulated in time to be considered at the next meeting.

14. Any other business

Woolley Hill Community Fund - Cllr Plummer reported that he had attended the first meeting of the Woolley Hill Wind Farm Community Fund Panel on 24th November, which was convened by Cambridgeshire Community Foundation (CCF) who will administer the fund, into which RES will put £20,000 each year for 25 years. Applications will be invited from not for profit groups of three or more unrelated people for grants of between £250 and £5000 for projects which must be of benefit to the community in one or more of the neighbouring seven parishes. A panel of seven representatives from these parishes will meet once or twice a year annually to consider applications for funding recommended by CCF and determine which are to be funded. There will be a website with full details of how to apply for a grant. The Clerk will ensure that a link is put on the Parish Council website in due course.

- 15. 2015 Meeting schedule** – To consider adopting the following programme subject to confirmation of availability of the Community Room at Spaldwick School
Parish Council commencing 8 pm – Thursdays, January 15, February 19, March 19, April 16, May 21 (Annual Meeting), June 18, July 16, September 17, October 15, November 19, December 17.
Annual Parish Meeting commencing 8 pm – Thursday April 23.