

**Minutes of Spaldwick Parish Council Meeting held at 8 pm
Thursday 17 September 2015 in the Community Room at Spaldwick Primary School**

Present: Cllrs Fane de Salis (Chairman, presiding), Johnson, Robinson and Wakefield and the Clerk (Mr D Stowell), District Cllr White and 1 member of the public

1. **Apologies for absence** were received from Cllrs Jackson-Rimmer and Smith, and from County Cllr Bywater
2. **Casual vacancy** – The Chairman reported that on 7 September he had received the resignation due to upcoming work commitments of Cllr Greg Rice. It was noted that the Clerk has commenced the procedure to advertise the vacancy. If no request for an election is received by the Returning Officer by 30 September the vacancy will be filled by co-option. Interested persons have been asked to contact the Clerk.
It was resolved to thank Greg for all his time and efforts in supporting our community and to wish him well in his endeavours.
3. **Declarations of Interest** as to personal and prejudicial interest in any agenda item - none
4. **Public Open Forum** – Richard Johnson of Richard Johnson Restorations, the owner of the Manor Farmhouse, explained his plans to restore the house and its outbuildings to enable him and his family to live in this historic building,

5. Planning

The following new Planning Applications were considered, and responses to the LPA were agreed as shown below.

15/01506/LBC, Restoration of the structure of the dilapidated farmhouse using the original material as far as possible, Manor Farmhouse, High Street.

The applicant has clearly identified those parts of the structure at risk of further deterioration and appropriate work necessary to restore it without affecting any historically significant elements, whilst making improvements to the house to make it easier to use and more economical in terms of energy required for heating. This will ensure that it can be lived in again and consequently remain in good order for many years to come. The Parish Council therefore recommends approval.

15/01428/LBC, Reconstruct two outbuildings using existing salvaged material and supplementary material to match (retrospective), Manor Farmhouse, 15 High Street

The applicant clearly recorded the dilapidated condition of the two outbuildings when he took ownership. The reconstructions have restored these two outbuildings to their original state. They significantly enhance the setting and character of the listed building and do not in any way harm the integrity or historic significance of it. The Parish Council therefore recommends approval.

15/01217/TREE, Felling and removal of four ash trees, 5 Pound Close (circulated July 31)

The Parish Council has no objection to this proposal as the trees are showing signs of die back and the applicant is prepared to replace them with a suitable species on the field side of the pond.

The following Local Planning Authority decisions / reports were noted

15/00956/HHFUL, Alterations to existing frontage with single storey front and side extensions, internal alterations, 4 Mount Pleasant – permission granted

1301639FUL, 4 dwellings etc. east of 5 to 17 Stow Road - The developer's responses to commencement conditions imposed when permission was granted have now been completed.

Delegation of planning responses to the Clerk in certain circumstances.

It was resolved to delegate the Clerk to respond to planning applications on behalf of the Parish Council following consultation with members regarding minor planning applications when there was clearly a unanimous opinion and it would otherwise be necessary to convene a special meeting to consider them within the 3 weeks deadline.

6. **Minutes of Meeting held 16 July 2015** were approved and signed.
7. **Matters arising from minutes (not on the agenda)**
CAPALC have advised that the cost of the Clerk's attendance at the catch up day on 2 October will be £25.00
8. **Appointments, responsibilities**
In view of the resignation of Cllr Rice and the wish of Cllr Wakefield to be removed from the War Memorial Working Group due to lack of time, it was resolved to make the following new appointments:
Playground Inspection – Cllr Steve Fane de Salis
Conveners of the War Memorial Working Group – Cllrs Johnson & Smith
9. **Register of Interests** – to note the following report; In response to a request from HDC on 28 August the Clerk confirmed that the Code of Conduct adopted by Spaldwick PC is based on the HDC model but pointed out that the Spaldwick page on the HDC website showed the Register of Interests as unavailable despite the councillors' forms having been sent to them over 3 months ago. The Spaldwick Register has subsequently been updated, and has also been published on the parish council website as required by the Transparency Code.
10. **Finance**
Employee Pensions – The Clerk reported that he has received confirmation that, having advised the Pensions Regulator that the Parish Council has no workers aged between 16 and 74, it has no duty towards automatic enrolment.
Maintenance of Street Light in Church Lane – It was resolved to approve the Clerk's action in renewing the maintenance contract which ended on 30 June and had to be renewed by 14 September to enable continuance, at a cost of £22.39 per annum.
Insurance renewal – Following consideration of 4 quotations with annual premiums of £939.10, £439.77, £381.15 and £314.39 respectively which had similar benefits to each other it was resolved to accept the lowest (from Hiscox) as recommended by brokers Came & Co. It was further resolved to enter into a 3 year binding agreement which would reduce the annual premium by 5% to £298.67.
In answer to a question raised prior to the meeting the Clerk confirmed that the policy includes public liability cover for land belonging to the council or charity and to the base of the mediaeval cross. He will obtain advice from conservation experts as to insuring the latter against damage.
The following payments were approved:
100631 F D Stowell, Salary £378.90 & expenses £49.02, July – Sept, Total £427.92
100632 HMRC, PAYE, £94.80
100633 F D Stowell, payment made to B S Pope, hoop barrier, £345.60 (inc £57.60 VAT)
100634 Parish Online, Getmapping PLC, Annual fee, £33.80 (inc. £5.60 VAT)
100635 CCC, Contribution to Local Highway Improvement Scheme 2014/15, £610.00
100636 PKF Littlejohn, External Audit fee, £120.00 (inc. £20.00 VAT)
100637 Came & Company, Annual insurance renewal, £298.67
Donations to local groups – it was agreed to await applications from eligible groups before making any grants from the £1000 budget.
External Audit 2014/15 – It was noted that the report from the auditors, Littlejohn LLP, concluded that “on the basis of our review of the annual return, in our opinion the information in the annual return is in accordance with proper practices and no matters have come to our attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met”.
Publication of Accounts – it was noted that Greg Rice has updated the PC website to include the Annual Returns for 2014 and 2015 and the Accounts Summary for 2015. The Clerk will also publish the Notice of Completion of Audit.
11. **Assets – Provision / Maintenance**

Proposed re-location of the bier and documents recording its history and refurbishment – up-date deferred to the next meeting due to the absence of Cllr Smith.

War Memorial Refurbishment – it was noted that Helen Bowman from the War Memorials Trust will be meeting with members of the working group on 13 October at 12 noon. Other members of the PC are invited to join them.

Children’s Play Area updates

Work suggested by Wicksteed – due to the resignation of Greg Rice, Cllr Robinson agreed to take responsibility for preparing a proposal and obtaining quotations.

The overhanging branches which were restricting access have been cut back and removed. Other urgent work on surrounding hedges – the Clerk to ask Fergusons to carry this out ASAP Annual Maintenance of the grass and surrounding hedges – the Clerk will obtain quotes.

The Chairman reported that he had recently carried out an inspection of the equipment and would give a copy to the Clerk for retention.

Public Open Space, Ferriman Road update – It was noted that the supplier has advised that the lockable hoop barrier will be delivered on Thursday Sept 24. The Chairman will take delivery and arrange installation.

Painting of Assets updates – the seats at the Village Green and Royston Avenue have been completed and work on the Royston Avenue Notice Board has been started. It was agreed that the Chairman should photograph the seats and include them in a short article on the Spaldwick website.

Trees planted by Parish Council – It was decided to consider replacing two dead trees at Belton’s Hill next time trees are offered by HDC. The verge on the North side of Cockway Lane has been cut back around the young trees to promote their growth.

Other Assets – no problems were reported.

12. Highways, footpaths, byways etc.

CCC Local Highway Improvement initiative 2016-17 - To determine what scheme, if any, to submit to the CCC review panel. The following proposals were considered:

1. Mobile interactive battery-powered speed indicating device (SID) and mounting posts to be located at three locations in the village, between which the device could be moved periodically.
 2. Extended footway along Thrapston Road beyond Pound Close to the bridge over the brook.
 3. Footway on the grass verge in Stow Road between Mount Pleasant and House-on-the-Hill
- Following discussion it was resolved by 3 votes to 1 to put forward proposal 2.

Winter Gritting - a request has been received for a grit bin to be provided at Belton’s Hill so that the local residents can apply grit when they consider it necessary. As it would be much less risky for the gritting to be carried out from a vehicle rather than by hand, the Clerk has asked the CCC Highways Network Manager to advise the outcome of the gritting route review carried out this summer and our request for Belton’s Hill to be included in the precautionary route. If the reply is negative the Clerk will investigate the possibility of a local farmer being provided with a spreading trailer for use on otherwise ungritted roads. If this fails a grit bin provided by the PC will be considered.

Street Lighting PFI – Town Councils and the Parish Councils of larger villages have been notified that their new street lights will be dimmed; and a proportion switched off between midnight and 6 am unless these councils agree to pay £12 per street light involved per full year starting in 2016/17, increasing by inflation in future years, plus a small contribution of £65 per year covering administration of this proposal. This does not affect Spaldwick at present.

Bus Service changes – the Clerk reported that Parish Councils will be given information as soon as possible, but currently no changes are expected before January 2016.

Speedwatch – it was reported that one session has recently been carried out. More will follow.

Highway and street light problems – The following updates were received

Kerb outside 3 Stow Road to be replaced – work ordered by CCC 22 July

Barrier at entrance to Uphorpe Farm – The Clerk has asked County Highways to remove the broken barrier parts which could cause serious injury in the event of further accidents occurring; and to consider installing a new barrier more suitable to the site.

Contact details of owners of animals kept in local fields – The Clerk reported that he is trying to get animal owners to publish contact details but is having difficulty in identifying them. He would appreciate help from members of the public in this respect.

Installation of Chandlers street sign – the new sign was installed 14 Sept.

Church Lane – If the hedges remain overgrown this may be dealt with on a clear up day.

Broken barrier over brook on concrete road – Clerk to discuss repairs with Martin Eays.

Damaged Kissing Gate, Bury Close – The Clerk's action to investigate responsibility and request it be repaired will be carried out shortly.

Cockway Lane – The Chairman reported that he and Cllr Smith had investigated the complaint that the first section from Mount Pleasant is heavily overgrown overhead and on both verges but, in view of objections from a neighbour that clearing it would encourage unwanted visitors, decided to take no action.

Dog Fouling – arising from a complaint re dog fouling on the High Street footway, the Clerk reported that 6 new penalty warning signs have been obtained to replace faded ones.

Kirby / Claas Depot, Thrapston Road – 2 residents of Littlecotes Close have complained about the storage area at the rear of these premises which is visible from their homes and has remained in an unsightly and possibly hazardous state for a considerable time. It was noted that the Clerk has spoken to the manager who has already started clearing the scrap metal and other rubbish from the site. He gave an assurance that the area will be cleared shortly.

Footpaths, byways – The Clerk reported the following new information

Footpath 12 to Easton, Growth (brambles etc) encroaching on and around the bridge.

In answer to a report sent to CCC by Mick Ager 28/09/15, Simeon Carroll replied:

I have cleared this bridge myself in the past but have less opportunity to do this these days. I have therefore emailed the landowner asking him to carry out the work at his earliest convenience. I have no doubt that this will be done but if nothing happens in the next couple of weeks then please let me know and I will follow it up and possibly carry out the work myself. If I don't hear from you again I will assume that the matter is resolved.

Footpath 16 around Coton Barn Farm – Simeon Carroll has reported that he has recently improved the way marking and repaired and widened the footbridge to the north of this on the border between Spaldwick and Barham and Woolley.

Sign at foot of Stow Road - In response to a complaint by the Clerk that the end of weight restriction sign has faded so that it no longer refers to weight and might be interpreted as the end of the 30 mph zone, the CCC District Highway Manager replied:” When our new Local Highway Officer is in post I will ask him to inspect it and replace it”.

13. **Parish Plan** – it was resolved to defer to the next meeting consideration of updating the plan.

14. **Village clear up day** – The Clerk is to publish a proposal and invite public participation.

15. **Correspondence**

CCC Parish e-bulletin: Issue 1 & Key Issues July 2015 – circulated by email Sept 1

CCC Financial Challenge and Response – briefing circulated September 3

A14 Cambridge to Huntingdon Improvement Scheme October Parish Update Meeting

Marriott Hotel, Wednesday 14 October, 6:30 to 8.30 pm. Cllrs Johnson & Smith will attend.

Letter from HDC Executive Member for Operations and Environment ‘Improving Services to our Customers – Environmental Maintenance Requests’ – the Clerk reported that paper maps had been supplied on which it was requested that details of land maintained by the parish council and the planned frequency be entered. He had responded by supplying digital maps of Spaldwick giving this information.

16. **Any other business** – A request to use the bier at funeral in church on 21 Sept was agreed.

17. **Next Meeting** – Thursday 15 October 2015

The meeting closed at 10.05 pm