

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

Present: Cllrs Fane de Salis (Chairman, presiding), Harriman, Johnson, Robinson, Smith and Wakefield, the Clerk (Mr D Stowell) and 6 members of the public

1. **An apology for absence** was received from Cllr Jackson-Rimmer.
2. **Declarations of Interest** as to personal and prejudicial interest in any agenda item - none
3. **Minutes of Meeting held 19 November 2015** were approved and signed.
4. **Matters arising from minutes (not on the agenda)** – none.

5. Public Open Forum

Mr Kevin Traynor said that he had been informed that planning application 15/01928/FUL for the proposed 2 bedroom house in the curtilage of their current home at 2-6 Thrapston Road has been referred to HDC's Development Management Panel on 18 January. He asked the Parish Council to support the case for approval bearing in mind that it is for a smaller house which is currently in short supply in the village.

Mr Richard Holman raised questions regarding the way the proposed development of Spaldwick Service Station had been presented to villagers, and expressed the view that the meetings held on November 14 & 30 should have been arranged and chaired by the Parish Council; and that despite these meetings and the consultation conducted on the village website many residents had not had an opportunity to give their views.

6. Finance.

The following payments were approved

- 100641 Spaldwick School, hire of room for 4 meetings Sept to Dec 2015, £43.00
- 100642 Greg Rice, Hosting and maintenance of website and email, Jan to Dec 2016, £50.00
- 100643 Playtimes, grant agreed at last meeting, £500.00
- 100644 SLCC, half Clerk's membership, £44.00
- 100645 Cash for Town & Poor's Charity, Christmas gifts £180.00 (6 x £30)
- 100646 Spaldwick PCC, Maintenance of churchyard, £780
- 100647 F D Stowell, Salary & Excs. Sep-Dec, £402.65 (inc. £3.96 VAT)
- 100648 HMRC, PAYE, £94.80

2016/17 Budget and Precept – Following consideration of the estimated outturn for 2015/16 and a draft budget prepared by the Clerk, it was resolved to adopt a revenue budget of £12,050. It was further resolved to set a precept of £10,000 (unchanged from last year).

7. Planning

The following new Planning Application was considered

15/02039/FUL, Amended scheme for detached dwelling on land adjacent to 19 Littlecotes Close. It was decided to submit the following observations: 1. The previous scheme 1201357FUL is believed to have been 'withdrawn', not 'approved' as stated in the application 2. Although the floor area has been reduced in size, the front elevation is more massive due to the change from a hipped roof. Refusal was recommended on the grounds that the proposed dwelling will appear too bulky on this small site.

The following developments regarding previous applications were noted:

15/01217/TREE, 5 Pound Close – there has been nothing recorded on the HDC website since validation and its status remains 'in progress' and no reply has been received in response to the Clerk's request for clarification of the current position.

1301639FUL, Land east of 5-17 Stow Road – the case officer has asked the agent to reply to the questions raised in the Clerk's email of 30 August, but to date no reply has been received. However the CCC Historic Environment Team issued an email on 9 September stating that they had received an archaeological report which indicated that no archaeological remains are likely to be present within the development area and recommended that the archaeological condition is discharged. The Clerk will not be pursuing this matter further.

No response having been received regarding the dead tree which has not yet been felled, and as this would not be in breach of the planning permission unless it remained in place on completion of the development, the Clerk will not be pursuing this matter further.

15/01928/FUL, Proposed dwelling house in the curtilage of 2-6 Thrapston Road, Spaldwick
It was noted that the Environment Agency has recommended refusal on the grounds that the Flood Risk Assessment does not comply with the requirements set out in the National Planning Policy Framework, but states that this could probably be overcome by raising the floor levels 600 mm above the 1 in 100 year flood level to allow for climate change.

Local Planning Authority decisions / reports – none since last meeting.

Spaldwick Service Station - The Chairman reported that he had taken notes at the meeting on November 30 and would publish them if none were received from Applegreen. He reported that 36 responses had been made online to servicestationcomments@spaldwick.com; 13 were in favour, 19 against and 4 undecided. The majority of objections were on the grounds that the proposals would result in extra traffic through the village unless the slip road onto the westbound A14 is improved. Cllr Smith is to coordinate preparation of a survey to obtain the views of a larger proportion of the villagers.

The Clerk is to investigate the possibility of a traffic survey being carried out by County Highways or using the Speedwatch facility to obtain current statistics so that the effects of Speedwatch and/or of any changes to the Service Station can be assessed when similar surveys are carried out in the future.

LPA decision to stop issuing paper documents for consultations

The Clerk reported that in common with many other authorities HDC would discontinue issuing paper documents from 1 April 2016. He intends to inform Councillors with internet access of new applications which they could view on the HDC website or receive as email attachments; and to allow any councillor without their own access to view them on his computer. To facilitate discussion at meetings he is of the opinion that the ability to project plans onto a screen or wall will be required. Initially this will involve the purchase of a projector for which he will obtain quotes; and the use of his personal laptop. The possibility of obtaining funding for a dedicated parish council laptop from government sources related to transparency is being investigated.

8. Assets – Provision / Maintenance

Proposed re-location of the bier and documents recording its history and refurbishment – Upon receiving assurance from the Clerk that the bier would remain insured under the current policy, Cllr Smith will proceed to negotiate with the Vicar regarding its proposed location in the Church.

War Memorial Refurbishment – The working group is preparing an application for a grant from the War Memorials Trust towards the cost of the proposed plaques which will clarify the inscriptions on the memorial.

Children's Play Area – The Clerk is to consult the owner of the property adjoining the high hedge to confirm whether or not they wish it to be reduced in height before obtaining quotes for the outstanding work on the shrubbery within the parish owned area. The Clerk reported that the swing seat has been ordered.

Painting of Assets – The notice board on the Village Green is the final item on the current list and will be refurbished shortly.

Planting box around jubilee plaques – awaiting details of tree work proposed by Mr Leach.

Village Cross base – The Clerk is awaiting advice from the HDC Conservation Officer regarding the Parish Council's responsibilities in safeguarding / insuring this stone.

Other Assets – no new problems were reported.

9. Highways, footpaths, byways etc.

Winter Gritting – nothing new to report. Proposals agreed at last meeting are proceeding.

Bus Service changes – nothing new to report. Changes are not expected before January.

Speedwatch – more volunteers are required to enable an adequate programme.

Barrier at entrance to Upthorpe Farm – new bollards installed; no further action proposed.

End of weight restriction sign, Stow Road – awaiting action by Local Highway Officer.

Pothole in entrance to Spaldwick Service station – this is continually redeveloping after having been filled in. CCC Highways are aware of the problem and intend to make the repair more permanent.

Contact details of owners of animals kept in local fields – to note no progress has been made in displaying information – Remains in abeyance due to lack of response from animal owners.

Damaged Kissing Gate, Bury Close – awaiting Clerk's investigation into responsibility for repair.

Verge in Stow Road – response to request for help in cutting back the hedge etc is awaited from Martin Eayrs.

Footpaths, byways access - M Ager has reported to CCC that the path in the cultivated field from High Street to the bridge (heading SSE) is unmarked.

Footpath signage at Bury Close – The Clerk will obtain new signs to replace any that are missing.

10. Village Hall – Concerns have been raised that the survey recently instigated by the Village Hall Committee is for the purpose of establishing whether or not the inhabitants of the village still want a Village Hall, and that if the majority say 'NO' this will be taken as authority for the committee to proceed to use the Village Hall funds for some other charitable purposes. The Charity Commission and ACRE have confirmed that the survey was not suitable for this purpose and that there are proper procedures, including obtaining the approval of the Charity Commission, which must be followed. Cllr Robinson, the council representative on the committee, said the purpose of the survey was to inform the committee, when considering the way forward, of the type of facilities the community wished for and whether they could be adequately supported.

However, it was resolved that as Custodian Trustee the Parish Council should pass these concerns on to the Village Hall Committee together with the comments made by the Charity Commission and ACRE on the current survey, the purpose of which may not have been fully explained to them; and to remind the Committee of the legal obligations contained in the Trust Deed. Cllr Smith is to liaise with the Clerk in drafting a letter.

11. Parish Plan – Cllr Robinson confirmed that he would undertake the review of the existing documents and progress towards finding the best way to produce a new Plan in early 2016.

12. Village clear up – It was agreed that the tidy up of the Children's play area had been generally successful. In view of the current condition of some of the road signs it was proposed that cleaning the signs and the white railings adjacent to the bridge on Thrapston Road could be undertaken by the working party. The Clerk will seek the comments/approval of County Highways before proceeding further.

13. Correspondence – none requiring notification / response.

14. Any other business

Parking on grass verge in Stow Road opposite Royston Avenue– it was reported that damage is being caused by a vehicle parked whilst the owner walks in Bury Close

Obstruction to traffic in Royston Avenue – a query was raised as to what could be done to overcome the problem caused daily by goods being dropped off daily at 2 Royston Avenue from a large vehicle.

The Clerk will seek advice from the relevant authorities regarding both problems

Street light fault – it was reported that a light in Stow Road is remaining on throughout the daylight hours. The Clerk will report this to CCC.

15. Meetings programme 2016 – it was resolved to adopt adopting the following programme

Parish Council: January 21, February 25, March 17, April 14, May19, June 16, July 14, September 15, October 20, November 17, December 15

Annual Parish Meeting: April 21

In the absence of any further business the meeting closed at 9.55 pm