

DRAUGHTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a Meeting of the Council held on Monday 12 December 2022 in the Village Hall at 7.00pm

Present: Ms R Binks - Chairman
Cllr T Coupe – Vice Chairman
Cllr J Garnett
Cllr B Davies
Cllr R Neale
Cllr S Petty (from Minute 7)
Mrs J Markham – Clerk
Absent: Cllr Turner

In attendance: District Cllr D Pighills
North Yorkshire Cty Cllr R Foster

Public: 2

1. Apologies for Absence

Received from Cllr Turner; reasons for absence approved.

2. Disclosure of Interests

Members were invited to disclose any interests (including any not already to be registered for filing in the Register of Interests) relevant to the business of the meeting, and, in respect of a disclosable pecuniary interest (to be registered or not), to request dispensation pursuant to the Council's Code of Conduct to participate in the business under discussion and vote on the matter.

Relevant Interests disclosed: None

Additional Interests disclosed: None.

3. Casual Vacancy

It was RESOLVED (Proposed: the Chairman; seconded: Cllr Garnett):

“THAT Mr S Petty be and he is hereby co-opted to the casual vacancy on the Council with immediate effect.”

4. Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 3 October 2022

The Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 3 October were taken as read, and the Minutes were approved and signed by the Chairman as a true and correct record.

5. Matters Arising

The Clerk's report, for information, was received. It was noted that the District Council's environmental control officer had provided dog waste signs for use by the owner of land off the Roman road; any formal action as regards control of dogs would also need to be taken by the landowner. This was relayed to the local businessman present at the meeting.

As regards traffic safety and the possible introduction of parking restrictions from the junction at the top of Low Lane towards the Old Post Office, the County Council Ward Representative reported that the proposal would be considered by the new unitary authority when the transition had been completed. He also suggested that devolution arrangements to be introduced by North Yorkshire Council could be a means of responding to local concerns in the longer term.

6. Scheme of Delegation

It was RESOLVED:

- (1) "THAT decisions taken by the Clerk since the date of the last meeting under the Scheme of Delegation dated 7 June 2021, as reported to Council and published on the Council's website, be ratified."
- (2) "THAT the Scheme of Delegation dated 7 June 2021 remain in force until such time as the Council should determine otherwise."

Mr Petty, joining the meeting at this point, was welcomed to the Council and invited to take his seat as a Member.

Cllr Petty signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office Form, in the presence of the Clerk, and was provided with a form for the notification of interests for completion and return to the District Council.

7. Clerk's Report

The Clerk's Report on ongoing items of business was discussed.

The following matters were discussed, noted and agreed as follows:

- (i) Draughton Vergers – the mower had been checked and it had been confirmed that further expenditure on repairs and parts would not be necessary this year. Cllr Neale therefore noted, as resolved at the last meeting, that remaining grant funds of c£300 could now be used to procure a new grass collector attachment. This was confirmed, and the Clerk was authorised to procure and pay for a

suitable piece of equipment, once a specific model had been chosen by the Vergers.

- (ii) History Project - Cllr Neale reported on the ongoing development of the History booklet.
- (iii) Milestones – Cllrs Neale reported that the historic milestones around the parish had been thoroughly inspected, with the help of a representative of the Milestone Society, and a condition report, with recommendations for possible action, had been produced. The report had been circulated, and it was noted that action to restore a number of the stones by volunteers could proceed in the Spring. Cllr Neale also noted that expenditure on this work would be minimal, amounting to possible payments to volunteers to reimburse the costs of reasonable expenses for materials, but that further proposals could be made in due course to the Council as regards renovation of the 2 stones with more specialist requirements for repair.
- (iv) Village Green Wood - the Clerk noted that, with a quote from the arborist now in hand, work could proceed as required to remove the remaining dead and dying ash trees on the village green, subject to confirmation of the availability of grant funding. The County Council Ward Representative offered to complete the grant application with the Clerk, and a phone call for this purpose would be arranged shortly.

8. Climate Change - Church and Community Initiatives

The notes of the meeting of the DAZ Working Group held on 5 December, together with supplementary notes produced by Cllr Neale, were received and noted. The final draft of the Feasibility Report, prepared by consultants, had also been circulated to Members.

After discussion, Cllr Neale's recommendations to proceed with the project, by continuing lines of enquiry as now identified, were approved; in particular Cllr Neale's explanation of the overall rationale for the village's climate change initiatives was supported. This highlighted the potential capacity for local green energy generation, if projects were to be developed more widely throughout the country, to contribute significantly to national aims for the achievement of net zero targets. In this regard, Cllr Neale noted that further action could be taken, through the YLCA and JEB networks, to promote climate initiatives by local

councils as part of NALC's climate change policy in lobbying the Government.

It was RESOLVED:

“THAT a proposal be made to YLCA Craven Branch to propose a motion to the Joint Executive Board for the amendment of NALC's Net Zero Policy by the inclusion of reference to the important role potentially to be played by local councils in pursuing small-scale climate change initiatives which make use of existing spare local capacity in the national grid, and that the Clerk be authorised to propose and promote this resolution on behalf of the Council as appropriate at future YLCA and JEB meetings.”

Cllr Davies noted that individual householders' efforts to retrofit homes would be a crucial part of the overall achievement of the Government's policies, and this was accepted. As a next step in furthering the DAZ project, however, the Clerk was authorised to approach the local DNO to ascertain grid capacity.

The Clerk also reported on progress being made with the church's zero carbon project, a first stage of which involved insulating the roof of the church. Fund-raising for this was currently in progress, with a successful event held on 11 December and a further concert planned to take place on 28 January 2023. This would be publicised around the village.

9. Planning

The Clerk's report on ongoing planning business was presented and recent decisions made by the planning authority were noted. It was noted that the appeal against the refusal of planning consent for a housing development at Field House Farm had now been dismissed.

The following matters were agreed as follows:

- Leardene – Tree Works ((Ref. 2022/24540/TCA) – no comments to be made
- West Berwick – pre-planning consultation for mobile mast – no comments to be made

10. Business Continuity Planning

The Clerk introduced a draft Business Continuity Plan designed to ensure the continuation of Council business in the event of unforeseen disruptions and emergencies. After discussion, the policy was approved and adopted with immediate effect.

11. Salary Award for Clerks

The 2022/23 Salary Award for Local Council Clerks, as recommended by sector body NALC, had been circulated and was noted. The recommendations as regards the hourly rate due to the Clerk were accepted, and implementation of the award, with effect from 1 April 2022, was agreed.

It was RESOLVED:

“THAT the recommended NALC Salary Award for Local Council Clerks 2023/24 be adopted, that additional salary costs 2023/24 be included within the draft Budget 2023/24, and that any additional salary costs arising in respect of the current financial year be absorbed within existing budgetary provision.”

12. Budget and Precept 2023/24

The draft Budget 2023/24 was received and discussed.

The Clerk explained the increase in proposed budgetary allowance for energy costs in 2023/24 for powering the 4 footway lights and reported on advice received from Highways officers as regards possible measures for mitigating the rise in costs. These ranged from restricting the hours of operation, replacing the lights with energy efficient LED fittings and upgrading them on a gradual basis over a number of financial years, or removing them altogether. Council considered the costs of each of these options, and noted that grant funding could be available in 2023 to fund the upgrade of the lights to LED fittings.

It was RESOLVED:

(1) “THAT the provision for energy costs, as set out in the draft Budget 2023/24, be approved, and that the Clerk be authorised to instruct Highways engineers to reset the footway lights to part-time operation as an interim measure to contain increases in costs, with a view to upgrading the light fittings in the longer term, subject to availability of grant funds from the principal authority for this purpose.”

It was then RESOLVED:

(2) “THAT the draft Budget 2023/24, a copy of which is attached to these Minutes as an Appendix, be approved, and that it be used as the basis for setting the Parish Precept 2023/24 in order that sufficient funds be made available for budgeted expenditure, taking account of increased

energy and salary costs, and also of the level of funds available as carried forward from previous financial years and with a view to managing any potential increase in local taxation, and that the Clerk be authorised to complete and sign the precept form accordingly.”

13.Consultations, Correspondence and Members’ Discussion Forum

Newsletters and emails circulated for information were noted, including updates on progress being made in setting up the new unitary authority. Cllr Foster reported briefly on the new North Yorkshire Devolution deal and it was agreed, after discussion, to express an interest in participating in a pilot to assess potential double devolution arrangements for Draughton as regards minor highways improvements. The Clerk was authorised to respond to the invitation from North Yorkshire Council accordingly.

14.Next Meeting

It was agreed that the next meeting would be held in the Village Hall on 6 February 2023.

The meeting closed at 8pm.

Chairman