

Skelton Parish Council

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Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Skelton Parish Council held on Thursday 30th July 2020 at 19.30 held by Zoom

Present:

Councillors: Cllrs Watt (Chairman), Gossow, Lawn, C Linfoot, Mansell, Stead and Watson.

Ward Councillor: Cllr Hook

Public: 5

Press: 1

Clerk: Karin de Vries

- 20-21/28 Chairman's welcome
The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting. He explained that the meeting would be recorded and that a journalist from The Press was in attendance.
- 20-21/29 To receive apologies for absence
Cllr John Linfoot's apologies were accepted.
- 20-21/30 To receive declarations of interest and dispensation requests
None.
- 20-21/31 To approve minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Skelton Parish Council held on 25th June 2020
It was RESOLVED to approve the minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 25th June 2020 as a true record. The Chairman to sign the minutes after the meeting.
- 20-21/32 Open Forum
It was RESOLVED to adjourn the meeting to hold the Open Forum
- 1 Police Report
No monthly police report had been received. Nevertheless, a brief report had been received in July to say that a suspicious vehicle had been spotted in a car park on 14 June and another vehicle had been damaged on the 19th of July.
 - 2 Report from ward councillor
Cllr Hook is involved in a group to improve safety for cyclists and pedestrians with the help of Government funding. The group is going to suggest a cycle lane along the A19 from the ring road into town and to make the crossing of the ring road over the railway line and the river safer for the school route to Manor school. The chairman reminded Cllr Hook about the footbridge on route 65 and the edging to the village green. Cllr Hook said that the ward councillors had approved the edging. She had received no news regarding the bridge.
 - 3 To receive the litter picker's report
The litter picker's report had been circulated to councillors prior to the meeting. He'd reported a significant increase of rubbish in the playground.
 - 4 Village Matters and parishioners' questions.
A resident said they aimed to start a Community Speed Watch initiative. They noted that good training was now available and that the speed gun could be kept at their house. They invited councillors to volunteer.

Another resident asked whether a York hotel is used for asylum seekers. They had concerns for residents and raised a number of questions. The Chairman responded and said the matter will be discussed later on the agenda.

Cllr Mansell also spoke within the Open Forum to raise the matter of debris within the Fairfield layby. He asked Cllr Hook to raise the issue of sexual activity within the layby at high level. The Chairman responded that this had been an issue for many years and that fencing had been installed to keep the activities away from Rawcliffe Landing. Another councillor asked whether CCTV could be useful.

The Open Forum was closed and the meeting resumed.

- 20-21/33 To notify the resignation of Councillor Kitson
The clerk had contacted the City of York and had displayed the statutory notices for the vacancy. Cllr Kitson was thanked for his service to the council.
- 20-21/34 It was RESOLVED to ratify the following delegated decisions made between meetings:-
- 1 To confirm the adoption of the risk assessment and the re-opening of the playground on Saturday 11 July 2020 subject to the signage having been installed and a pre-opening Covid19-secure inspection by the clerk and/or the Chairman.
 - 2 To note that the Brecksfield playground had re-opened on 11 July and to confirm the adoption of the risk assessment reviewed on 11 July 2020.
 - 3 To confirm attendance by Cllr Watson on the YLCA Spreading your Wings webinar
- 20-21/35 To receive and decide necessary action on the following village and playground matters:-
- 1 To receive an update with regard to the repair works to the playground
The mound had been removed and grass was sown. Most of the repairs had now been carried out including the zipwire.
 - 2 To note the Covid19 safe reopening of the playground on 11 July 2020.
Noted.
 - 3 To receive an update on the provision of new play equipment.
Quotations had been received for a viper swing, a net climber and a roundabout. After some discussion, it was decided that councillors give some thought whether to proceed before additional consultation can be carried out.
 - 4 To receive an update on the tree survey
The clerk made a note to include the three trees along Radcliffe Court in the survey.
 - 5 To receive a request to support safety inspections of trees along the road to the cemetery.
A local resident has reported that the trees along Moor Lane are in a dangerous condition. Cllr Hook promised to request that the City of York Highways assess the hazard caused by the trees.
 - 6 To receive correspondence with respect to a memorial bench near the pond.
After some discussion, it was RESOLVED not to agree to a memorial bench.
 - 7 To receive an update with regard to concerns about a bright LED street light.
Cllr Hook had raised this issue and a response had been received from the Environmental Protection Unit of the City of York. They have it on their list of outstanding investigations.
 - 8 To consider quotations for the purchase of a projector
Four quotations had been received for the supply and installation of a projector. The quotation for the preferred Panasonic was £95 over the sum agreed at the April 2020 meeting (minute 20031.4). It was RESOLVED to accept the quotation for a Panasonic VZ580 5000 Lumens WUXGA projector for £1795.68 including VAT.
 - 9 To note progress on the installation of the flagpole and the purchase of flags and a halyard.
The Chairman had received the flags as well and halyard and would raise the Yorkshire flag for Yorkshire day on 1 August 2020.

- 10 To receive a request to support a village speed watch initiative.
Cllr Mansell asked the Council to support the initiative. It would not require any operational involvement by the Council. It was RESOLVED to support the speed watch initiative.

20-21/36

To receive the Chairman's report relating to a York hotel being used as a place for asylum seekers and to decide on any necessary action.

An article in The Press had mentioned that refugees would be welcome in York but the Chairman and another councillor had queried why it had not been told where the asylum seekers would be placed. After corresponding with the City of York, the Chairman had been invited to a virtual meeting. He had emailed a report of this meeting to councillors and gave a brief verbal overview of this meeting with York and Mears. He explained that because of Covid19, Mears had not been able to place its residents in small groups across the country and that therefore groups were block booked into hotels for a period of three months. Two incidents had been reported and those involved had been moved to different locations. Cllr Mansell then spoke for some time about asylum seekers and the two incidents and requested several motions to be discussed by the Council. The Chairman asked whether these were the same as those submitted to the clerk prior to the meeting. Cllr Mansell said that they were slightly amended.

The motions proposed:

1. To submit a request in accordance with the Parish Charter paragraph 13 for CYC to explain why it did not consult Skelton Parish Council as stated in paragraph 12 of the Parish Charter.
2. That the letter formally asks for a copy of the Risk Assessment for the undertakings to be made available to the Parish Council to view.
3. That the Parish Council goes on record as formally objecting to the use of the hotel as a holding centre as this is contrary to their planning permission.

After a brief discussion, motion 1 was proposed and seconded. It was RESOLVED to write to CYC to explain why it did not consult Skelton Parish Council as per motion 1.

There was some discussion whether motion 2 should be debated. The Chairman stated that he considered that the motion was inappropriate as risk assessments are a responsibility for the Health and Safety Executive and the City of York and that the Parish Council had asked no other businesses for a Risk Assessment. He stated that he did not wish for the Parish Council to be associated with such actions. The Chairman asked the clerk, in her role of Proper Officer, for advice whether the motion should be allowed. The Proper Officer said she had some sympathy for the argument that it was inappropriate to request a Risk Assessment. Nevertheless, on the basis of advice from YLCA she would allow the motion to be debated.

Motion 2 was proposed and seconded. Cllr Mansell argued that if any commercial enterprise had the potential to seriously impact on the residents of a community, a local council should be involved in assessing the risk. The Chairman stated that he would be ashamed if the Parish Council would vote for this motion. A vote was taken and the motion was defeated.

With regard to the motion 3, some discussion took place regarding a possible change of use. Cllr Mansell stated that he had submitted a request to the City of York to investigate whether the change of use was a planning infringement and that he had received a response that York were currently investigating it. The Proper Officer advised that motion 3 was broadly the same as the motion submitted prior to the meeting and that on the basis of advice, she had prior to the meeting rejected that motion as improper. Therefore, the motion was not debated.

20-21/37

To receive and consider a report from the Cemetery Advisory Panel and decide on any necessary action

- 1 To receive an update regarding the repairs of the cemetery path edging in the old cemetery. The works would commence in the week commencing 24 August.

20-21/38

Financial Matters and Governance

- 1 To consider quotations for insurance from Came & Co.
It was RESOLVED to accept a quotation for PEN insurance for 1 year for £900.55.
- 2 To approve the bank reconciliation and budget monitoring report to 29 June 2020.
The Council held £41,137.40, mainly in a savings account, due to the deferral of committed expenditure because of Covid19. It was RESOLVED to approve the bank reconciliation and the budget monitoring report to 29 June 2020.
- 3 Receipts
Council noted the following receipts:

a. Headstone		£ 155
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- 4 To confirm the following payments:-

a. Park Lane playgrounds	[BACS]	£ 744
Including VAT £124		
a. Park Lane playgrounds	[BACS]	£1980
Including VAT £330		

It was RESOLVED to confirm the above invoices for payment.
- 5 To approve the following invoices:-

a. Salaries, office costs and expenses July	[BACS]	£ 836.36
b. HMRC Income tax July	[DD]	£ 58.40
c. Amazon hazard tapes	[BACS]	£ 19.65
Incl VAT £3.28		
d. City of York NDR	[DD]	£ 57
e. Came and Co Insurance Premium	[BACS]	£ 900.55
f. Sleightholm landscaping	[BACS]	£ 1290
Including VAT £215		
g. PKF Littlejohn Limited assurance review	[BACS]	£ 240
Incl VAT £40		
h. City of York. Commercial Waste Charge	[BACS]	£ 33.54
i. YLCA webinar. Introduction to the planning system	[BACS]	£ 22.50
j. YLCA webinar. Spreading your wings	[BACS]	£ 48

It was RESOLVED to approve the above invoices for payment.
- 6 To receive notification that PKF Littlejohn have completed their review of the Annual Governance & Accountability Return (AGAR) for Skelton Parish Council for the year ended 31 March 2020. The clerk was thanked for completing the AGAR successfully.
- 7 To consider a report and quotations with regard to a new website and to consider any necessary action. This item was deferred as the clerk had not had time to compile all necessary information. The chairman reminded councillors that the clerk is employed for only 12 hours per week and that she had excessive work pressure in the run up to the meeting.
- 8 To adopt a Business Continuity Plan. Cllr Gossow had requested the model from YLCA. The clerk explained that the Business Continuity Plan is to be kept by the clerk and the Chairman. A final version will be complete for the next meeting and councillors will be told where the plan is kept.
- 9 To receive clarification from the clerk as to the meaning of wording in adopted standing order 6 and to agree any proposed addition.
A request had been received to amend the standing orders to clarify the wording 'in writing' in standing order 6. The clerk had written to councillors to explain that any wording in the Standing Orders in bold is stated in law and that this wording cannot be amended. Moreover, an extra-ordinary meeting is called by the Chairman. The clerk had sought advice from YLCA who clarified that the term 'in writing ... by two councillors', could mean emails from two councillors. The Chairman apologised at this point for refusing to call a meeting after a

councillor had requested it, as it lacked a written and signed request from two councillors and stated that he did not think an extra-ordinary meeting was warranted for a matter that is not the responsibility of a local council. He explained that he just meant to do what is best. It was RESOLVED that the Standing Orders should be clarified in the fainter print section.

- 20-21/39 Planning
- 1 To consider a response to the following planning applications:-
 - a. 20/01109/TPO Blue Bell Wood 15 The Vale. T1 Ash reduce crown and overhanging branches and T2 Sycamore crown lift and reduce canopy. No objections
 - b. 20/01213/TCA Skelton Hall. Remove one stem from Sweet Chestnut tree in a Conservation Area. No objections.
 - 2 Planning applications decided by City of York Council
 - a. 20/00751/FUL. 22 The Vale. Installation of glass and steel balustrade above the existing garage to provide balcony to front (amended scheme). Approved.
 - 3 To consider other matters related to planning and decide upon any necessary action to include:-
 - a. City of York Local Plan. Nothing to report.
 - b. Proposals to dual the outer ring road. A consultation is anticipated for the phase 1 dualling between the A19 and Little Hopgrove roundabouts.
- 20-21/40 To consider correspondence received and decide action where necessary to include:-
- 1 All following emails from YLCA were noted:-
 - a. White Rose Updates from 3 July and 17 July 2020.
 - b. YLCA email regarding NALC Guidance -Compliance with the Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications)(no 2) Accessibility Regulations, 2018.
 - c. YLCA email with regard to a consultation for the New Model of Conduct for Local Councils. A report by Cllr Watson and the clerk had been circulated with a recommended response to the consultation. It was RESOLVED to approve the response.
 - d. YLCA email with a Joint Statement from NALC and SLCC on face-to-face council meetings. YLCA recommended that meetings should remain virtual for the time being.
 - 2 All following correspondence from NALC was noted:-
 - a. Coronavirus-Information for Parish and Town Councils, dated 30 June, 1 July, 16 July and 21 July 2020.
 - b. NALC email Supporting Local Councils to reopen playgrounds safely dated 3 July 2020. Dave Meigh of the City of York had been very helpful and would be sent a thank you note.
 - 3 A series of emails from CYC with Covid-19 updates from 29 June to 22 July 2020 was noted.
- 20-21/41 To notify the clerk of matters for inclusion on the agenda of the next meeting.
The Chairman reminded councillors to notify the clerk of matters for inclusion on the agenda at least 10 working days prior to a meeting. Cllr Gossow thanked the clerk for her work in writing the Business Continuity Plan. At this point the Chairman reminded Councillors how fortunate the Council is to have a good clerk.
- 20-21/42 It was confirmed that the next meeting will be held on 24 September 2020 at 19:30.
The meeting closed at 21:22.

Chairman's signature:

Date of approval: