

WYCK RISSINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting on Monday 16th March 2020 at the Village Hall.

Present: Tim Simon (Chairman), Andrew Fifield, Brian Finnimore, Louise Fifield (Clerk), Hilary Ponti and 7 residents

There were apologies from Robert Montague and Councillor Dr Nigel Moor.

- **There were no Declarations of interest**
- **Welcome to Hilary Ponti** – Hilary was welcomed. She has been co-opted as our 5th Councillor following the retirement of James Ross.
- **Minutes of the Parish Council meeting on 2nd December 2019** were approved and signed.
- **Maintenance of the Green and Pond**

Green: (TS) Unfortunately it turned out that there had been some damage to the Thames Water access point near Hope Cottage as a result of the second grass cut last year which have needs repair at an estimated cost of £135 + VAT.

It was decided to have a process for obtaining competitive quotes – the PC agreed that anything below £500 only needed 1 quote, between £500 and £2,000 should have 2 quotes and anything above £2000 should have 3. BF pointed out that, having set its own rules, the Council could always step outside these rules if it deemed appropriate. The Pyments quote for the Thames Water access point repairs was thus agreed.

Pond: In RM's absence TS reminded us that Jack Smith was now on a monthly rate for 7 months between April and October.

- **Roads and Drainage**

The kerbstones on the private road leading to the Village Hall have suffered in the very wet weather and many have sunk below the ground, some as a result of parked cars. Pyments have quoted £1795 to take up 10 metres of kerbstones and re-set in concrete. Oaktree (suggested by BF) quoted £2350 and it was agreed to go with Pyments. TS has approached the Village Hall committee suggesting they might share this cost given that some of the damage has been caused by cars using the village hall - we await their decision prior to commissioning the work. A resident suggested we wait until the weather is dry before beginning this work and this was agreed.

The flooding at the Fosse Way end of the village was a serious issue at the end of 2019. Despite Highways being very busy they responded quickly but discovered that there was a damaged culvert under the road caused by Thames Water installation of the new water main which had penetrated the stone lining of the old culvert. The work was finished in early January and was successful. There is one small item outstanding - a grid must be replaced onto a pipe to prevent debris blocking the pipe crossing the Ransom's field. Thanks to Dr Nigel Moor for his help in achieving this. At the church end of the village the flooding is caused by a blocked drain which following a CCTV survey is deemed very fragile and needs replacement. This is scheduled for the 20/21 financial year.

A resident asked about the lateness of notice for the road closure during the January work on the culvert. TS explained that this was because of the Christmas holiday shut down so the road closure notice was not issued until after the work had started. It was noted that we were lucky that there was no ice on the road at that time as the drainpipe (the alternative way into the village) would have been lethal. Since the meeting it has been established that there was a notice sent out about the road closure by WRPC email albeit that it coincided with the beginning of the work as the contractors had arrived to start work with no prior notice.

Sand and gravel have been deposited on the surface of the drainpipe – mostly due to runoff from the fields. There is some confusion over whose responsibility this is, and it transpires that Glos. Highways say that road sweeping is the responsibility of CDC. TS will raise this with Dr Nigel Moor, and Andrew Maclean also said he would try and chase it. (AM has since managed to arrange for the sweeping to be carried out by CDC on Saturday 28th March, and it was actually done on Saturday 21st March!). A resident also commented on the deep ditches that the runoff has caused.

Another resident had emailed the clerk to ask if anything could be done about the large amount of water ponding outside their house. BF noted that there were many places where this has been happening but felt a simple channel would help this particular situation.

- **County Council News: report by Councillor Dr Nigel Moor:** (sent in advance of the meeting).

A budget of £468 million was approved for 2020/21, a net increase of £31 million from the previous year, enabling the council to continue with climate change, delivering new and improved facilities for children & family, and boost funds to help protect the vulnerable. Key elements are:

- An initial £1million to climate change Action Fund
- £1.32m for roads and footpaths
- £12.9m towards vulnerable children
- £73.6m - schools, children & family services incl £3m expansion at the Cotswold school
- A further £49.8m for third year of council's £150m Your Highways programme
- Around £14.5m for Gloucester S W bypass, Arle Court, M5 junction 11, and cycle routes at Honeybourne, Gloucester – Quedgeley & Cheltenham – Bishops Cleeve.
- £1.5m for GFRS' firefighters
- £700k to flood alleviation work – part of a £5.3 investment to reduce risk of flooding
- £3.1m to deliver Broadband across the county
- Ongoing investment of almost £5m to upgrade streetlights and traffic signals.

Additional budgets introduced and agreed were:

- £15,000 ongoing revenue budget for a Think Travel Co-ordinator
- £50,000 for suicide prevention work
- Continuation of one-off £1,000 per member for youth work, totalling £53,000
- £10,000 for a one-off scheme for period poverty
- £30,000 for the extended scheme for holiday hunger
- £20,000 to be spent on digital connectivity for care leavers
- £20,000 to be spent on driving lessons for care leavers
- A 25% increase to the grant for each of 8 community libraries, to £12,500.

- **District Council News: Councillor Andrew Maclean**

There are to be changes in the refuse collection arrangements. We can now put out clothing, small electrical appliances and tetra packs. TS told the meeting he had asked for a new green garden waste bin, but this cannot happen until the end of June as the licences have been extended until then.

Coronavirus: AM wants us all to be prepared. The recommendation is that the over 70s should be self-isolating, and many pubs, clubs and restaurants are closing. This is likely to remain for some time. It was agreed that LF would send out a note immediately to a) ask if anyone needed help, and b) to ask if anyone would volunteer to help. One resident had previously asked if she could be a volunteer, as did another at the meeting, along with LF. It was important we think of the outlying people such as at Wyck Beacon, or those not on the distribution email list.

- **Planning:**

- 5 Wyck Hill houses: Certificate of Lawful Existing Use or Development. These properties were housing staff from the hotel.
- Heath Lawn: planning permission has been granted for the kitchen and the office guest annexe.
- Pear Tree House: Still under consideration.
- Laurence House: the revised plan to include a minor revision discussed at the last meeting.
- Proposed alterations to The Old Dairy: consisting of the addition of a garage/car port, a study at the end of the property, some internal alterations, and a flat roofed kitchen extension to the rear. BF felt that the first 3 elements were all acceptable, but he was concerned about the large flat roof kitchen extension with rendered rather than stone walls, which was not architecturally correct. It will be visible from the lane, particularly from the entrance to the neighbour's yard at Porters Farm. AM is not a fan of flat roofs but that at Little Rissington the Heritage Officer forced a change from a pitched to a flat roof so that it would be subsidiary to the main building. In response to this, the applicant said that the back of the wall into the courtyard is already rendered so they were not attempting to change what was already there, and that there are several other flat roofed extensions in the village so the precedent is there. BF felt that a carefully designed flat roof – a more modern, high quality design would be a better alternative or a pitched roof. Another neighbour from The Granary explained that he didn't like the design and that every window from his house looks at it. From the garden there is a party wall and then a rendered block above it. He felt his privacy would be affected and that design doesn't complement the setting. The neighbour at Porters Farm commented that while it wasn't pretty, they didn't want to fall out over it. TS asked if something can be done to reach a compromise? It was agreed that increasing the height of the garden party wall would not be permitted without rebuilding it. The Ransom's suggested a glass roof, thus more like a conservatory could be considered? TS asked if some alternative could be found to try and address the concerns. If not, the PC would only be able to give qualified support.

- **Finance Report:**

BF distributed the finance report for the March 2020. Paid since the last meeting was the token for Annette and awaiting payment is the Clerk's honorarium (£60) and the GAPTC annual subscription (£35). We are currently on course to be £349 in the black at the end of the financial year as compared with the budget of a loss of £620. Current bank balance is £7561.

The RFO role has now transferred from JR to BF. The Lloyds Business On-Line is now in operation, and despite a complicated start, it is set to be a much better system. It has been agreed that we don't need 2 approvers in future as a result of the Legislative Reform Order 2014 which removed the requirement for all cheques and other payments by parish councils to have two signatories as this facilitated the use of electronic payments. It was agreed that BF should be the sole originator of all on-line payments. The Chairman will be the default approver and AF/RM/HP the back up. BF suggested that when a councillor commissions a piece of work, he or she should approve any payments. This was agreed.

4 Items of expenditure were approved:

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| • Pyments for repairs to the TW access points | £ 135.00 +VAT |
| • Pyments for Kerbstone repairs (awaiting WRVH decision) | £1795.00 +VAT |
| • Town and PC Council Websites for website accessibility | £ 330.00 +VAT |
| • Clerks Honorarium (including tax of £12.00) | £ 60.00 |

Accounting: BF recommended that we move from a hand-written ledger to an electronic system, using Excel spreadsheets. All receipts will be scanned and entered, and the data will need to be secured. This was agreed and BF will prepare the new system. TS commented that the regular income (precept + wayleaves) just about covers the regular expenses but not contingencies. Next December we should be considering increasing the precept for 21/22. This has been held at the level of £3200 for the last seven years but we need to start building our reserves again to cover contingencies. When considering the Budget for 20/21, BF has

built in two potential risks – a sum of £500 for non-specific items, and the balance for kerbstones. AF also agreed that the precept should be raised in 21/22.

Risk Management: Following discussion of the bridge over the wall and onto the green for the College Farm wedding scheduled in June it had been agreed that the PC need the constructor's risk assessment and this principle would apply to other instances where 3rd parties erect any structure, there must be a risk assessment covering the building, removal and safety in operation. A further instance of risk is when the Green is cut each summer, involving large plant moving around the green. BF has spoken to GAPTC and was left with the impression that we need to manage our risks formally and visibly. Most public sector bodies ask for risk and method statements (RAMS) and evidence of public liability insurance where 3rd parties are undertaking operations on its land with inherent risks. HP raised the issue of using her field for parking during village events and it was noted that her insurers need to be informed. HP will also check with her insurers with reference to the temporary bridge. AF and BF will review RAMS for this. Generally, it should be the person who commissions the work should ask for a RAMS and evidence of insurance. BF suggested that we ask our auditor to give consideration to our approach to risk management as it stands and make recommendations. Other areas of risk are the pond and trees and it is important that we understand these risks and have a plan, which may also involve our accepting certain risks where appropriate. BF agreed to discuss this with the Ransoms who perform our Audit and Risk Management.

- **The Old Dairy:** The Deed of Access has been completed and the small corner of land that was incorrectly enclosed in the 1990's will be returned to the village green, the section of wall will be demolished and a stock proof fence erected by the owners along the correct boundary line. As there are rights to graze animals on the registered Common there needs to be free access and this can only be achieved by removal of the wall. All were in agreement.
- **Letters and Emails received by the Clerk**
 - It had been noted that the height of the hedge (on the left before the double bends when approaching the village from the Fosse Way) had increased a lot. This has been raised with the landowner who responded that he had been advised to let it grow as this was good for owls – being less likely to be hit by vehicles. The side fronting the lane has been cut.
 - Email from CDC to inform us that the railway line between Kemble and Cirencester is to be restored.
 - Email a resident expressing disappointment that the 'road closed' signs during the work to the culvert in January resulted in serious confusion about which way people would be able to access the village. Agreed that this should not have happened but all signage in these cases is the responsibility of the Glos CC contractors.
 - A letter of thanks for the Garden Voucher from Belinda and Annette Aked was read out.
 - The GAPTC North Cotswolds Cluster meeting is to be held on Thursday 26 March. It was agreed to send our apologies.
- **A. O. B.**
 - Warning the village when there is to be shooting/fireworks nearby. This was following a misunderstanding over a recent local shoot – and the landowner will inform the village when appropriate. HP asked if anyone planning to use fireworks for any reason would do the same, particularly important to anyone with horses or dogs.
 - The annual village litter collecting will take place on Saturday 4th April at 11.00 am. All volunteers welcome as always.

Date for the Next Parish Council Meeting in June will be available soon.