

Minutes of General Meeting, Wyck Rissington Parish Council

Held in the Village Hall on Monday 26th June 2023, 18:00

Councillors Present: Cllrs Finnimore, Maclean, and Gorton
In attendance: 9 members of the public

- 230626/1 Andrew Maclean was appointed temporary Chairperson
230626/2 Andrew Maclean was elected council's Chairperson for the year 2023/4
230626/3 Chairperson's Declaration of Acceptance of Office was received
230626/4 The minutes of the previous PC meetings of 24 March 2023 and 23 May 2023 were approved.
- 230626/5 All members have signed their acceptance of office form
230626/6 Brian Finnimore and Simon Gorton confirmed they had completed and submitted their Register of Interests to the monitoring officer.
- 230626/7 It was agreed the position of Clerck/Proper Officer will be unremunerated
230626/8 Brian Finnimore was appointed the RFO
230626/9 It was agreed the position of Responsible Financial Officer will be unremunerated
- 230626/10 Simon Gorton was appointed temporary Clerk/Proper Officer
230626/11 Declarations of Interest: To receive disclosures of personal, pecuniary, and prejudicial interests from councillors on matters to be considered at this meeting.
NONE
- 230626/12 Public Session (maximum of 15 minutes) :
11.1 A resident was concerned that the green would not be cut and baled this year. Simon Gorton confirmed the contractor had been contacted and had confirmed he would be doing the work but had requested any lower branches of trees on the green be removed up to 3m. Two residents volunteered to do this work but declined to do a risk assessment. It was agreed that Simon Gorton would meet with the residents to assist in trying to establish a risk assessment in order for this work to be completed.
11.2 The Chair of the Village Hall committee said she may resign if risk assessments were required for events. In a discussion on risk assessments, Brian Finnimore stated they should be prepared by those undertaking the work and are requirement of the PC's insurance policy as would also be the case for the Village Hall Committee.
11.3 A resident asked if she could add points later re risk assessment.
11.4 The previous Honorary Clerk explained why he felt why he had to withdraw from the council. His desire was for a community focused, low bureaucracy organisation. He did not see the need for a professional Clerk and felt we should ideally be a parish meeting but accepted the assets meant this could not occur. He also felt that Brian Finnimore's rigid approach to rules was unnecessary. Andrew Maclean responded. He agreed that there is now too much bureaucracy but it was unfortunately something we had to accept. He agreed that the assets meant Wyck Rissington can only be a Parish Council and the village has only two options: to either recruit more Councillors or to merge with another Parish. He also felt that a Professional Clerk was essential to navigate through the issues currently facing the Council.
11.5 Discussion with members of the public over the register of assets including the need to put a register of assets in place, that the business register used to be in assets and that perhaps a separate trust for village land.
- 230626/13 The Code of Conduct, Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and Risk Plan were adopted.
13.1 Elizabeth Ransom proposed that Peter Watson revises the Risk Plan as this is an area he has expertise in.
- 230626/14 It was noted that an asset register needed to be put in place.

- 230626/15 Brian Finnimore confirmed that while the PC had been unable to pay its premium due to the resignation of the other councillor with access to the account, the PC's insurers had agreed to extend cover.
- 230626/16 It was agreed to continue the Council's membership of GAPTC and the ICO.
- 230626/17 It was noted that Complaints, Freedom of Information and Press and Media policies as required by the PC's Standing Orders, need to be put in place.
- 230626/18
- 18.1 The internal audit report was received and Brian Finnimore thanked Simon Lanyon for his work on this. The requirement for an asset register was the only issue.
- 18.2 The analysis of significant year on year variances was approved, it being noted that significant savings had been made under the headlines of staff costs and trees.
- 18.3 The Annual Governance Statement was approved.
- 18.4 The Annual Accounting Statement was approved.
- 18.5 It was agreed to delay the Exercise of Public Rights to inspect the accounts by one week from the usual start date of July 1st due to the likely unavailability of Simon Gorton to facilitate the transfer of access to the website.
- 230626/19 Matters arising from previous meetings. The robin bus was raised and details are on the website. The availability of Community Connections was raised by Hillary Ponti .
- The flooding issues facing certain households in the village was discussed. Andrew Maclean suggested that following their offer, GCC need to be engaged and that the issue needs to be resolved with all affected parties involved in resolutions. He also suggested that non-interested councillors need to be involved in decisions on flooding re the Parish Council. A member of the public suggested it was perhaps unfair for GCC to focus on two households in the village when other areas in the village flood too. Brian Finnimore said there was a distinction between residences flooding and roads.
- Brian Finnimore was asked if he was confident a Council could be formed and he responded that he did not know. Andrew Maclean said any future council needs to be broad minded and involve members of the community that represents the diversity of the residents.
- A member of the public stated that she thought the village was no longer in safe hands.
- Given the current state of discord within the village, and the issues facing it, it was suggested by a member of the public that three months until the next meeting may be too long. It was confirmed that should the position change, an extraordinary meeting can be called.
- The parking issues by the start of the footpath to Bourton was raised. An unfortunate side issue to the increased popularity of the footpath is that the cars parking on the green are damaging it. However, it was pointed out that as the green is a registered common, any works will require permission from the secretary of state, a process of widespread consultation and six months for a planning inspector to make a decision. It was agreed that Elizabeth Ransom, Andrew Ransom and Simon Lanyon would form a working committee with support from Veronica Woodford.
- 230626/20 James Little will continue to work on the ponds. Robert Montague has the files, ready to be passed on to the appropriate Councillor.
- 230626/21 A report from Cllr Mark Mackenzie-Charrington had been received and will be published on the Parish website.
- 230626/22 Andrew Maclean confirmed that there were no particular District Council matters to report

- 230626/23 Wyck Cottage has finally received approval for some of the works.
Grafters budget hotel is going to appeal.
Wyck Hill House hotel may become a wedding venue.
- 230626/24 The payments were approved. It was agreed that Simon Gorton would be added to as a signatory to the Lloyds bank account in due course and that the Cllrs that have stepped down would be removed. In the meantime it was agreed that Simon Gorton would talk to Brian Brazington re a possible delay to payment of the invoice for cutting the green pending a second signatory to the account.
- 230626/25 It was agreed that a Clerk would try to be recruited and the contract and job specification was agreed to be the same as previous.
- 230626/26 Simon Gorton raised correspondence received. He attempted to summarise an email received but was informed by the previous Clerk that this was currently sub judice and therefore no further disclosure took place. He said that there had been another email written by Brian Finnimore, as a private resident to the Chairman of the Parish Council. Its contents were not disclosed. A member of the public asked why there had been a delay in bringing these items of correspondence to a meeting. It was explained that the GCC email had not been mentioned in the March meeting due to it not having been received in good time. This email, and the one sent by Brian Finnimore, had not been included on the single item agenda at the last meeting.
- A letter from from a resident was read out. He asked for a tree on the green to be observed as it may have bleeding canker. It was agreed that the best course of action is to wait and see how the tree responds.
- 230626/27 It was agreed that the dates of the next meetings would be 4th September 2023, 4th December 2023 and 4th March 2024.

Meeting ended 7.28pm