

Kirkby Fleetham with Fencotes Parish Council

Minutes of meeting – 20 April 2023 at 7.30 pm.

Present: Parish Councillors: Mr Jones, Mr Walker, Mrs Herbert, Mrs Edwards-Heathcote, Mr Lamperd, County Councillor Wilkinson and 2 Residents.

A resident raised the issue of Council Tax harmonisation with County Councillor Wilkinson. The creation of the North Yorkshire Council means that the unitary authority has a legal requirement to make sure all council taxpayers in the county are charged the same amount based on the council tax band of their home.

Hambleton has traditionally paid lower charges than other districts. This means that over the next two financial years, Hambleton will pay an increased unifying charge. This is in addition to the council tax increase of 4.99% for 2023/24.

The question was, what are these charges, and what additional benefits do the council taxpayers of Hambleton receive, if any, for these increased payments.

Councillor Wilkinson is to provide the Parish Council with detailed answers to these questions. Which can then be publicised more widely.

1. Apologies

PCSO Lees, Bedale Neighbourhood Policing Team.

- 2. Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Thursday, 16 March 2023** were accepted as an accurate record of the meeting proceedings and signature agreed upon.

Acceptance was proposed by Cllr Jones and seconded by Cllr Walker.

3. Matters to Report

Playground

The Lawson family have acknowledged the letter to Mr Lawson from the Chair of the Parish Council to seek permission to establish outdoor play equipment on the village green. Initial verbal exchanges would suggest that the request is to be declined. It is hoped that a formal written response is received, so that the Parish Council can assess reasons associated with any decision, with a view to review future submissions.

Chapel Crescent, Great Fencote

The hedgerow obstructing the pavement at Chapel Crescent has now been pruned by the Housing Authority. The cuttings have been returned to the tenant, for the tenant to duly dispose of.

Community Emergency Plan

Cllr Herbert will continue to evaluate the content of the Community Emergency Plan.

Parish Charter Consultation

Cllr Jones submitted the single consultation response from the Parish Council to North Yorkshire Council before the 12 April 2023 deadline.

4. Community Policing

PCSO Lees, unfortunately, could not attend the meeting. The agenda point will move to a future meeting.

5. Burial Grounds

a) Parish Cemetery

The pest control treatment has been carried out again at the Parish Cemetery after a number of molehills have reappeared and the maintenance contractor has started the schedule of groundworks for the 2023/24 season.

The Clerk has reported the pothole at the entrance of the cemetery to Highways, NYC.

The Clerk will update the maintenance rota duties to include emptying the St Andrew's cemetery general waste bin, on collection days, where spare capacity allows. The Clerk will circulate the rota to the Councillors.

Four heaped graves remain in the cemetery after twelve months plus of internment, the Clerk has contacted funeral directors and gravediggers to level the graves.

Burial Authority regulations are in the process of being reviewed to incorporate omissions and clarifications.

Cllr Walker has received a number of quotes for the 'Parish Cemetery' roadside signage. Councillors discussed the comparison table, of costs and specifications. Subsequently, Cllr Walker proposed to accept the quote from Regency Graphics Print Services at the cost of £200.00 + VAT, for the manufacture and delivery of the sign. The Councillors resolved to accept the proposal.

b) St Mary's Churchyard

Glade Trust has started the work schedule for the 2023/24 season.

The metal entrance gate to the churchyard is becoming very difficult to open and close. Cllr Herbert will contact the Churchwarden to report the fault.

c) St Andrew's Churchyard

Dales of Thirsk has repaired and repositioned the 28 headstones they were commissioned to complete, as a programme of corrective works to counter the outcomes of the headstone stability test. Outstanding is the large headstone that was broken into several pieces when toppled over. This replacement stone is on order and will be engraved and repositioned once the stone arrives with the stone mason.

6. Correspondence

NALC Chief Executives Bulletins (0104/23), Headstone (0204/23), The Rural Bulletins (0304/23), NYCC bulletins (0404/23), White Rose Updates (0504/23), Training E-Bulletins (0604/23), Changes made to the 2023 Practitioner's Guide (0704/23), All partner LGR update (0804/23), LT Climate Parish and Town Communications Pack - Update (0904/23), NYC Code of Conduct for Members (1004/23), YLCA Law and Governance Bulletin (1104/23), Draft parish charter (1204/23), SW-39131-Low Street, Little Fencote (1304/23), UK Shared Prosperity Fund query (1404/23), North Yorkshire Council Standards Arrangements (1504/23), DLUHC Consultation On Infrastructure Levy (1604/23).

These were all circulated via email.

North Yorkshire Council Standards Arrangements

The Parish Council has received North Yorkshire Council Standards Arrangements, in the form of the Code of Conduct for Members and Standards Committee Complaints Procedures.

North Yorkshire Council (NYC) has now been established, and all previous North Yorkshire District and Borough Council functions have transferred to the unitary authority. This includes the responsibility for upholding high standards of conduct by elected members by having a process in place for considering complaints against NYC Councillors and all Town and Parish Councillors in the North Yorkshire area.

Cllr Jones proposed that the Parish Council formally adopt the NYC Code of Conduct for Members and the Standards Committee Complaints Procedures from our principal authority with immediate effect. The Council unanimously agreed.

7. Finance

a) It was resolved to pay the following and the payments were signed accordingly:

Chq	Amount	Payee	Service
BACS		N.Lowe	Wages for Apr
BACS	£346.00	AW Dick	Erecting fence at St Mary's
BACS	£35.00	AW Dick	Burial ground cut and strimmed
BACS	£220.00	YLCA	Membership Subscription 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024 INV-0075
BACS	£605.00	KFF Burial Authority	Transfer for Burial Authority income

This was proposed by Cllr Jones and seconded by Cllr Walker.

b) Income:

There has been no income for this month.

c) Financial Statements 2022/2023

The financial statements were circulated to the Councillors ahead of the meeting. Councillors accepted the statements of accounts. The Clerk will now collate all the financial information together and send it to the internal auditor to independently analyse and evaluate the parish accounting documentation.

The RFO will investigate the frequency of Parish Council reclaim VAT form submissions.

8. Planning

a) Application

No planning applications

b) Outcomes

No planning outcomes

9. The Coronation of His Majesty The King

It was proposed by Cllr Herbert to purchase 36 commemorative coronation mugs at a cost not to exceed £350.00. The mugs will be presented to every child of Primary School age within the Parish, by the Parish Council, to mark the Coronation of His Majesty The King. The Council unanimously agreed.

The Parish has organised a number of events to celebrate the Coronation of His Majesty The King over the 6-8 May bank holiday weekend.

Cllr Herbert will source an oak tree to plant on the Village Green, Great Fencote to mark the Coronation.

10. Community Transport

After concerns were raised about the potential loss of the local bus service in the parish, Cllr Lamperd investigated transport services offered within the Community

National Transport is not planning to change the local bus service, and a new 3-year contract has been signed with Hodgson's operator. The 54-bus timetable remains the same and will be displayed in the Village Hall to encourage residents to use the service.

Bedale Community Minibus aims to provide affordable transport for Community Groups, elderly and disabled people, and others in need in the Bedale and surrounding area, to assist with community/social events to maintain an independent lifestyle and prevent social isolation.

A Wheels2Work scheme is in place that helps young people get to work, apprenticeships, or training, where no other form of transport is available.

Hambleton Community Action offers a car transport scheme to help people who are unable to access public transport in Northallerton, Bedale and surrounding villages. Community Car Scheme users may have mobility difficulties, a disability or live in a remote rural area.

The council will advertise these services in the coming weeks and months through the mediums of the Social Newsletter, InfoNet, Parish notice boards and Village Hall.

11. Lychgate - National Lottery Heritage Grant

The Parish Council has been successful in securing a £46,087.00 National Lottery Heritage grant for Kirkby Fleetham and Great Fencote Commemorative Garden Space.

Cllr Walker will lead the project and will be assisted by Cllr Edwards-Heathcote and Mrs Alison Booth. Cllr Walker will circulate the outline project supporting paperwork to the Council for full situational awareness.

Next steps for the project team will be the publication of a Project Plan, that details the outline timetable and responsibilities. First draft is to be distributed ahead of the May Parish Council meeting.

Thereafter, there is a need to secure the Grant Notification letter and submit the online Permission to Start and Payment Request form.

The Council discussed the five tenders received for the construction of the Lychgate. Cllr Walker proposed to formally award the contract to build the lychgate to Contactor A, and the Councillors unanimously agreed. Cllr Walker will contact and engage with Contractor A to discuss a provisional start date.

12. Parish Council Website

The storage capacity on the Parish Council's website has been reached. The Parish Council discussed the options, either to remove the facility of looking at old documents which go back to 2016 or upgrade to the next level of capacity.

The Clerk informed the Council that Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities has stated *"There is no requirement to retain information indefinitely online, and your authority should follow its own records management policy. Any information about decision-making and records of decisions should be made available for the current financial year, plus the previous three financial years"*.

This said it is important to be transparent as a public body. Access to information about how public money is spent is an integral aspect of local accountability and the democratic process.

At present the cost of the website is £4.00 per month for 500 MB capacity plus hosting, the next level is £7.50 per month for 3 GB and the removal of the Wix logo banner.

The Councillors unanimously agreed to increase the capacity of the website.

13. Solar Farm Grants

After the award of the National Lottery Heritage Grant (Item 11), the Councillors discussed the previous application of part funding the lychgate build. A requirement of the heritage grant is £8,000 of Parish Council monies will go towards financing the project; £6,000 from the Solar Farm Community Grant and £2,000 from the Burial Authority funds.

The Councillors agreed to support the application and award the applicant with £6,000 towards the Commemorative Garden Space project.

The Clerk has published a list of applications received with a detailed breakdown. The Clerk will update the document and publish it on the Parish website.

14. Any Other business

Vehicle Activated Speed sign (VAS)

The VAS has been installed in Great Fencote for 3 months and is scheduled to be rotated 180 degrees, to record traffic speeds approaching from an easterly direction along Fleetham Lane. The Clerk will extract the data for analysis from the VAS sign before the VAS is moved.

Emergency UK Alarm Test

Emergency Alerts is a UK government service that will warn you if there's a danger to life nearby. The service is being rolled out with a nationwide test on Sunday, April 23 at 3.00 pm. A notification is to be made on InfoNet to inform the Parish.

Annual Parish Meetings

The Annual Parish Meeting and Parish Council Annual Meeting are to take place on 18 May 2023. The first item of business at the Parish Council Annual meeting is to elect a Chair and Vice Chair.

The meeting closed at 9:40 pm.

Date of Next Meeting: 18 May 2023.