

PRESTON-UNDER-SCAR PARISH COUNCIL

Draft Minutes of the Annual Parish Council Meeting held on 19 May 2022

Present: Councillor Councillors Amsden, Fletcher, and Knight
Clerk: Linda Stevens

In attendance: District Councillor Amsden and County/Unitary Councillor Sedgwick

1. Election of Chairman

Resolved:

That Councillor Amsden be elected Chairman of Preston Under Scar Parish Council.

2. Declaration of Acceptance of Office

Councillor Amsden signed the prescribed declaration of acceptance of office.

3. Casual Vacancy on the Parish Council

Councillors noted that following the resignation of former Councillor Brooks there was now a casual vacancy on the Parish Council. The Clerk had notified Richmondshire District Council and was waiting to hear whether or not it was necessary for formal notice to be given or whether the Parish Council could commence the co-option procedure straightaway.

The Chairman paid tribute to the work undertaken by Councillor Brooks, who had been elected to the Parish Council in 2014 and had been its Chairman since 2017, and to his work in supporting the Village Hall Committee. All agreed that Councillor Brooks presence on the Council would be sorely missed.

Resolved:

To place on record the Parish Council's appreciation of former Councillor Brooks' work as a member and as Chairman of the Parish Council and also in the wider village community.

4. Apologies for absence: Councillor Sayers

5. Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 13 January 2022

Resolved:

That the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 13 January 2022 be confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

5. To declare Councillors' interests in items on the agenda: None

6. Action taken since the last meeting

Resolved:

To note the following decisions taken by the Clerk since the last informal meeting of the Parish Council on 24 March 2022:

Subject of decision:

Parish Council Risk Register

Summary of information considered:

Updated Risk Register submitted to the informal Parish Council Meeting on 24 March 2022
Recommendation from the Informal Meeting of the Parish Council held on 24 March 2022

Decision:

To approve the updated Risk Register submitted to the informal Parish Council meeting on 24 March 2022

Date of Decision: 30 March 2022

Subject of decision:

Parish Council Asset Register

Summary of information considered:

Updated Asset Register submitted to the informal Parish Council Meeting on 24 March 2022
Recommendation from the Informal Meeting of the Parish Council held on 24 March 2022

Decision Taken:

To approve the updated Asset Register submitted to the informal Parish Council Meeting on 24 March 2022

Date of Decision: 30 March 2022

Subject of decision:

Parish Council Standing Orders

Summary of information considered:

Model Standing Orders published by the National Association of Local Councils
Revised Standing Orders submitted to the informal Parish Council Meeting on 24 March 2022

Recommendation from the Informal Meeting of the Parish Council held on 24 March 2022

Decision Taken:

To approve and adopt the revised Standing Orders submitted to the informal Parish Council Meeting on 24 March 2022 with immediate effect

Date of Decision: 30 March 2022

Subject of decision:

Parish Council's subscription to the YLCA for 2022-23

Summary of information considered:

This is a contractual payment – the Parish Council's membership of YLCA would cease if not paid.

Decision Taken: To authorise payment of the YLCA invoice for £60.00 so that the Council continues to be a member of the association for a further year

Date of Decision: 8 April 2022

Subject of decision:

Payment for Grass Cutting during April in the village, The Stanney and the Cemetery

Summary of information considered:

Invoice received and confirmation from Councillors that grass cutting had been carried out to a satisfactory standard

Decision Taken:

To authorise payment of £240.00 to DCN Landscaping and Fencing Contractors for grass cutting during April 2022.

Date of Decision: 10 May 2022

Subject of decision:

Payment for Insurance Renewal for 2022-23

Summary of information considered:

Invoice and renewal documentation received from the Council's insurers BHIB

Decision Taken: To renew the Council's Insurance for 2022-23 at a cost of £298.10.

Date of Decision: 13 May 2022

8. Finance and Banking

Resolved:

To note that the opening balances as at 1 April 2022 were as follows:

- **Current Account: £9,219.16**
- **Savings Account: £2,287.50**

and that payments made since 1 April were as set out in minute 7 above.

9. Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2021/22(AGAR)

(a) Annual Internal Audit report 2021/22

The internal auditor had completed the Annual Internal Audit Report 2021/2022 which had been circulated to Councillors. His report showed under the main headings that:

- Appropriate accounting records had been kept throughout the financial year
- That the Parish Council had complied with its financial regulations and that payments had been properly approved and supported by invoices
- That the precept requirement resulted from an adequate budgetary process, progress against the budget had been regularly monitored and that reserves were adequate

- That the Parish Council's Website had been up to date at the time of the audit, in accordance with the Transparency Code for Smaller Authorities.

Resolved:

To note the contents of the Internal Auditor's report.

(b) The Annual Governance Statement 2021/2022

The Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer requested Councillors to consider in turn each of the statements 1 – 9 set out in the Annual Governance Statement, which had been circulated with the agenda and to respond either "yes" or "no" in each case. Councillors considered each of the statements in turn and affirmed that in their view the Parish Council had, to the best of their knowledge and belief, met all of the requirements in each case and were therefore able to answer "yes" to each statement, with the exception of statement 9 (Trust Funds) which was not applicable in this Council's case.

Resolved:

To approve the Annual Governance Statement 2021/22, as now completed.

(c) The Accounting Statement 2021/22

The Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer formally submitted the Accounting Statement 2021/22, which she had signed and certified presented fairly the Parish Council's financial position. Councillors were requested to consider the Statement, which had been circulated with the agenda for the meeting, and if satisfied with the statement resolve to approve it.

Resolved:

To approve the Accounting Statements 2021/22 as submitted by the Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer.

(d) The Explanation of Variances (including the Reserves) and the Bank Reconciliation

The Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer submitted the above documents which had been circulated with the agenda for the meeting. The Clerk drew attention to two adjustments to the reserves which the Council held:

- The creation of a new earmarked reserve of £5,000 in respect of the proposed extension to the village cemetery (see minute 12 below)
- An increase in the amount held in the reserve for new IT equipment/IT support

As a consequence, the Council now held the sum of £706 as an unrestricted/general reserve. This was in line with Practitioners Guidance that general reserves should not exceed 3-12 months of their total expenditure

Councillors were requested to consider and, if appropriate, resolve to approve these documents.

Resolved:

To approve the Explanation of Variances (including the Reserves) and the year end bank reconciliation for 2021/22 as submitted.

(e) Certificate of Exemption

Having considered the above sections of the AGAR, the Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer invited Councillors to consider and, if satisfied that the Parish Council met all of the criteria, to resolve that the Council was exempt from an external audit and authorise the Chairman and the Clerk to complete the Certificate of Exemption and submit it to the External Auditor.

Resolved:

Being satisfied that the Council met all of the criteria, to authorise the Chairman and the Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer to sign the Certificate of Exemption and submit it to the Council's external auditor.

(f) The Proposed Notice of Public Rights and Publication of Unaudited Annual Governance and Accountability Return

Councillors were requested to determine who would act as the named contact for the purposes of the inspection of the AGAR and the accounting records and otherwise consider and if appropriate resolve to adopt the draft notice which proposed that the dates between which the Council's various documents and records would be available would be Monday 13 June to Friday 22 July 2022 inclusive

Resolved:

That Councillor Fletcher be appointed as the named contact for the purposes of the public inspection period and that the dates between which the public would be able to inspect the relevant documents be set as Monday 13 June – Friday 22 July 2021 inclusive.

(Note: The Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer confirmed that copies of all the above documents would be displayed on the village notice board and/or on the Council's website).

9. Village Maintenance

Councillors noted that there were no issues arising in respect of village maintenance.

10. Issues Arising from the Annual Village Meeting on 19 May 2022

Resolved:

- (1) That, in relation to the dead trees in The Stanney, the Clerk write to the Bolton Estate to ask them to undertake the required work as soon as possible once the necessary licence had been received from the Forestry Commission**
- (2) That in relation to the Quarry, the Clerk arrange a meeting with the Quarry Manager**
- (3) That in relation to the concerns expressed about the need for sound baffles in the Village Hall, the Village Hall Committee be requested to consider the need for these.**
- (4) That in relation to potholes in the village roads, the Clerk be requested to report these via the Highways Portal.**
- (5) That in relation to the rabbit holes in the village play area and the outcome of play area inspections generally, the Clerk write to Richmondshire District Council to:**
 - request that copies of the inspection reports be sent to the Parish Council; and**
 - to clarify who is responsible for the maintenance/repair of the seating area**

and that Councillor Fletcher raise the condition of the seating area at the next meeting of the Village Hall Committee.

11. Village Signs

Councillors were invited to consider whether the Parish Council should make representations to North Yorkshire County Council in respect of their reference to the village as "Preston" on some directional road signs, ie those at Wensley and on Moor Road.

County Councillor Sedgwick offered to raise this in her next regular meeting with County Highway Officers and to report back to the Clerk.

Resolved:

That County Councillor Sedgwick raise the naming of the village on the directional road signs in question at her next meeting with Highway Officers and advise the Clerk of the outcome.

12. Cemetery

The Clerk reported that there were now very few remaining plots available in the Cemetery which were not already reserved, particularly adjacent plots. Councillors were therefore requested to give initial consideration to the work and funding available and required, to bring the extension to the Cemetery into use.

The following work was identified as being required:

- Removal of the hedge and netting which currently divided the current area of the cemetery from the area for the extension
- Provision of rabbit proof fencing around the perimeter of the extension
- Running a Pasture Topper over the extension to bring it into a condition where it could be maintained by the Parish Council's grass cutting contractor
- Provision of vehicle access and a hardstanding to accommodate vehicles and equipment
- Roadside Kerb
- Mapping of plots in the new extension

The Clerk confirmed that a sum of £5,000 was available to help towards the costs of the above work and that she was researching the availability of grants to help fund the required work.

Resolved:

That the items listed in the above preamble form the basis of a project plan for extending the Cemetery and that the Clerk report back on possible sources of grants towards the cost of the work.

13. Village Emergency Plan

Councillors were invited to consider the need for an updated Village Emergency/Resilience Plan, using the template provided by the North Yorkshire Resilience Forum.

Councillors agreed that there was a need for this to be done to ensure that the village was able to respond to any emergencies in an organised and methodical way and noted the potential need to involve a wider group of residents in the process. It was felt that it would be helpful if representatives from the Resilience Forum could give a presentation/attend a meeting to advise on how best to develop a Plan.

County Councillor Sedgwick offered to obtain a copy of the Community Emergency Plan for Leyburn to share with the Council.

Resolved:

That the Clerk enquire whether representatives of the North Yorkshire Resilience Forum would be willing to attend a meeting (remote or face to face) to give a presentation/advise on the development of an updated Village Emergency Plan.

14. Planning Applications

New Applications:

Application 22/00200/FULL - Planning Permission to Create a New Avenue from Bolton Hall to Lords Bridge by Converting a Corridor of Intensive Dairy Grassland to Low Intensity, Species Rich Grassland, a New Avenue of Trees, a Drive Down the Centre and a Carriage Sweep in Front of Bolton Hall at Bolton Hall, Wensley, Leyburn, North Yorkshire, DL8 4UF – *Parish Councillors had no objections to this application.*

Upcoming Applications: None notified

Update on Previous Applications:

Application 22/00003/FULL - Planning Permission for Erection of Outbuilding, Alteration and Extension of Dwelling and Amendment of Approved Plans for Detached Garage and Studio at Thorfin, Preston Under Scar, Leyburn, North Yorkshire, DL8 4AD – *planning permission granted.*

21/000720/FULL - Full Planning Permission for Proposed Two Storey Detached Dwelling with off Street Parking and New Highways Access at Hillcrest, Preston Under Scar, Leyburn, North Yorkshire, DL8 4AJ – *awaiting decision.*

Councillors commented in relation to application 21/000720/FULL (Hillcrest) that revised plans recently submitted did not appear to show any changes to previous plans and it was noted that the Parish Council had not been consulted on any amended plans.

15. Date and agenda items for the next meeting

Resolved:

That the next meeting of the Parish Council take place on Tuesday 5 July 2022 at 7.00pm in the Village Hall.

The meeting closed at 19.57 hrs.