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Thirkleby High & Low with Osgodby Parish Council

Clerk: Carolyn Potter
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Minutes of ordinary meeting – 24th January 2013

There was a public session prior to the start of the meeting.

Public session

Items were raised by members of the public:

1. Mrs Theresa Linton
 - Remarks regarding the removal of the phone box (comments attached)
2. Mrs Jacqui Smith
 - Comments regarding the discussion in the public meeting of 10th December, that the Parish Council had agreed at that meeting to pay the amount allowable under section 137 to A4R.
3. Mr Richard Linton and Mrs Anne Hornsby (on behalf of Ms Alison Turner)
 - A statement was read to complain about the way the Chair had dealt with correspondence from Mr Hornsby. This was accompanied by 46 signed letters from residents requesting the Chair to write letters of apology to Mr Hornsby and his firm, Goodman Derrick LLP. (The letters are not in the PC's possession as the Chair returned them to Ms Alison Turner after the meeting.)

Start of meeting agenda: the meeting started at 8:00pm

The Chair welcomed Cllr Jewell to his first meeting.

Item 1: Apologies were accepted from Cllr Pearson.

Item 2: Declarations of interest:

Cllr Jewell commented that he had signed his declaration and it had been sent to HDC, but that, as there was a fault with their website, his register of interests was not available to be read currently. Cllr Jewell declared his employment.

Item 3: The minutes of the ordinary meeting of 12th November 2012 were considered.

Cllr Jewell stated that, in his opinion, the Parish Council's view of S.137 was incorrect. The Chair explained that Item 3 was solely to confirm or otherwise the accuracy of the minutes as a true and correct record of proceedings to which they relate. She invited Cllr Jewell to raise his point about S.137 in the Participatory Budgeting item on the agenda following.

The Chair requested that points 74 and 75 of the Ombudsman's report should be added to the record as the Parish Council had referred to these comments at the meeting of 12th November.

In attendance:

Cllr Catherine Lumb (Chair)
Cllr Stuart Jewell
Cllr Douglas Gorranders

Cllr Nigel Atkinson
Parish Clerk: Carolyn
Potter.

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Parish councillors who were in office on 12th November 2012 voted to accept the minutes as a true and correct record of proceedings at that meeting and the minutes were signed by the Chair

It was agreed to swap the order of agenda items and take item 8.1 next.

Item 8.1 Announcements

The Chair read out an announcement, which is attached to the minutes.

Cllr Gillanders gave a vote of thanks to the Parish Clerk.

Item 4.1 Parish Website

The website is almost ready to be launched.

Cllr Atkinson advised the PC that there are two options for a hosting company for the website: 1) one which will charge; or 2) one where advertising is used which funds the website. This seems to be the route favoured by most parish councils.

Parish councillors voted to go with option 2.

It was noted that, when the website goes live, the developer needs to be paid.

Item 4.2 Noticeboards – it was agreed to move this to the next item.

Item 5 Participatory budgeting process

5.1 Other projects

The Chair commented that she had secured £712.50 of HDC funding for additional projects, via a last-minute application to HDC in December. She emphasised that the Parish Council is not committed to accepting these grants. She had made the application for additional funding following the PB meeting, listening to projects which had been suggested by residents, and had added the new noticeboard to the list. HDC have approved in principle funding for the noticeboard, a grit bin, grit spreaders and internet access for the village hall. The grants represent 75% of estimated costs, and the PC would need to fund 25% of the projects. The projects need to be completed by 31st March.

The time frame for accepting the money is quite short – only 30 days from the 2nd January. It was considered that the village hall internet access would take a considerable amount of work, and this project would need to go through the PB task group. However, the noticeboard, grit bin and grit spreaders could be purchased imminently hence the PC could be confident in accepting the grants for these items..

Cllr Atkinson agreed to return the grant forms accepting funding for the grit bin, spreaders and the noticeboard by the due date. The village hall could not be included as the PC could not know whether or not this project would eventually proceed.

As the noticeboard has already been approved by the Parish Council, Cllrs Atkinson and Gillanders (?) agreed to purchase the noticeboard. It was also agreed that the grit

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bin and 2 grit spreaders should also be purchased relatively quickly – action to Cllr Jewell to purchase.

5.2 Participatory budgeting

The Chair clarified that the PB meeting on 10th December had been a public meeting, not a Parish Council meeting and so no action could have been agreed as the Parish Councillors could not make binding decisions at that meeting.

Consequently, the Parish Councillors agreed that there had been no decision at the PB meeting in December to give the £1400 (or maximum allowable under section 137) to A4R. However, it was acknowledged that Cllr Jewell had suggested this would be a good compromise to help a move forwards for the community.

In their statement (attached reference to “Announcements”) Cllrs Atkinson, Gillanders, Pearson and Lumb recommended that, should the PB process be at risk of breaking down, the Parish Council should return the £5000 to HDC for subsequent administration to projects of community benefit.

However, several names for the task group had been received by the Parish Clerk prior to the meeting, and several more residents stepped forward to have their name considered. Therefore, it appeared to the Parish Council that the intention of residents was to progress the PB process and not allow it to break down.

Consequently, the Parish Councillors took forward Cllr Jewell’s proposal for compromise.

The following motions were passed:

1. To pay, with immediate effect, as much to A4R as possible under the Section 137 rules having regard to payments already made during 2012-2013.
2. To put the remainder of the money into the Community Chest and run the PB process.
3. The PB process to be overseen by Cllr Jewell as the Parish Council representative.

The following names were pulled out of a hat by Mrs Caroline Patmore:

- Iain Clough
- Ruth Shield
- Sara Atkinson
- Peter Hornsby

Cllr Jewell will arrange the first meeting of the task group.

Item 6: Village phone box

The Chair pointed out that the Parish Council had given consent for the telephony to be removed, but had never given consent for the phone box to be removed. However, Councillors acknowledged that, from the correspondence with BT, the phone box would not be re-instated without the parish incurring unfeasible expenditure and there was little that could be done. It was noted that it was open to any resident to purchase

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a phone box, and the Parish Council agreed to assist with planning permission, in that event.

Cllr Jewell suggested that the PC should put up an apology to residents and it was agreed that Cllr Gillanders would draft the apology for circulation to the parish council.

Item 7: Grass cutting

Cllr Gillanders explained that the tender is ready for submission and that he has 6 possible contractors on his list.

There would be two quotations requested:

- 1) For the areas which are cut at the current time
- 2) To find out how much it would cost to cut the verge by the noticeboard at Osgodby and also to deal with the Butterbur on the village green.

Councillors voted to send out the tender as soon as possible.

Item 8: Parish council organisational issues

Item 8.1 – see above

Item 8.2 Parish Council responsibilities:

- Election process: The Chair explained the process which would be required in order for parish councillors to resign and leave the parish council quorate at all times. It is necessary to maintain 3 parish councillors for the PC to be quorate. The process to be used is explained in the YLCA Advice Note No.13, as described by Cllr Lumb.
- Temporary Clerk: it was proposed to replace the parish clerk with a temporary clerk until the new parish council is up and running and a new clerk can be appointed. Nigel Knapton, who is an experienced parish clerk, has kindly offered his services, but this is estimated to cost the parish council £20/week. The alternative is for a parish councillor in office to carry out the Parish Clerk role, but this would be in a voluntary capacity. Councillors voted unanimously to appoint Nigel Knapton.
- Finance officer: Cllr Pearson is currently the Finance Officer for the Parish Council, so transferring these responsibilities also needs to be managed.

Item 8.3 Training programme – it was noted that YLCA provides a number of courses, which could be of use to the new parish council.

Item 8.4 Complaints procedure: Cllr Jewell had asked for this item on the agenda, but requested it be withdrawn.

Item 9 : Planning

9.1 Comments regarding planning applications:

9.1.1 Alterations and Extensions at Osgoodby Hall – granted

9.1.2 LBC at Hambleton Cottage, Thirkleby Park – the PC did not have any observations to make. There is no decision yet.

Item 10: Financial matters

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Due to the absence of the Finance Officer, there was no update. The clerk advised the council that the membership fee for the SLCC had been paid and that there is an outstanding £40 owing to the Village Hall for use for meetings. The current bank balance is £6777.60, which includes the £5000 compensation money.

Item 11: To review the list of correspondence

The correspondence list is attached.

The Chair commented on two items received from Mrs Hornsby:

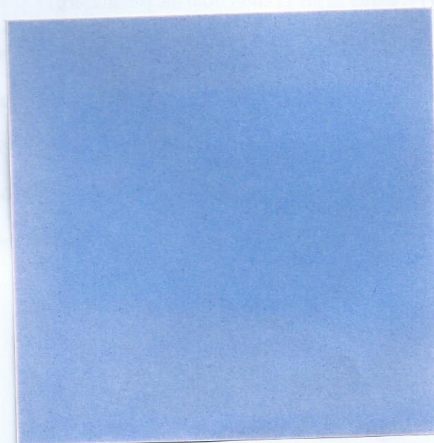
- 04/01/13: regarding the letter of thanks to residents. The Chair reiterated the Parish Council's response to Mrs Hornsby, namely, that the Parish Council had difficulty in finding a suitable form of words for an open letter and subsequently the volume of FOI requests received had taken priority. The Parish Council would not be progressing the letter of thanks.
- 21/01/13: Regarding the PC's statement for the PB meeting 10th December; Mrs Hornsby asserted that the Chair was "misleading" residents concerning the Ombudsman's comments. The Chair read out the Ombudsman's comments and said that the PC stood by its view and would not be responding further to Mrs Hornsby.

Item 12: Items for the next meeting

Cllr Jewell had requested at the start of the meeting that there should be a debate regarding the complaint received during the public session concerning how the Chair had dealt with correspondence from Mr Hornsby. The Clerk noted this request.

The Chair closed the meeting (at around 21:30) as the public made it difficult to continue. The only Parish Council agenda item that had not been addressed was date and time of next meeting.

Carolyn Potter
Parish Clerk



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January 2013 PC meeting

Summary of correspondence:

By post:

- 11/12/12: Copy of letter from Mr and Mrs Queen to NYCC regarding gritting at the end of Long Causeway
- 13/12/12: HDC Meetings of Area Forums regarding a review of the usefulness of the meetings. These will be held on an adhoc basis in the future as issues of community interest arise.
- 18/12/12: Rural Action Yorkshire – details on keeping warm, healthy and safe over the winter (including some posters for the noticeboard)
- Dec 12 HDC Update review
- 20/12/12: Changes to Council Tax Base and Parish/Town Council Precepts in 2013/14 (includes potential for capping Parish Council precept)
- 15/01/13 – County Committee for Hambleton – agenda for meeting 28th January
- 15/01/13 – Renewable Heat Information day (Yorkshire Energy Partnership)
- 18/01/13 – Community Infrastructure levy (from HDC) - consultation

By email:

- Various dates: Rural Services Network updates
- FOI requests:
 - 05/12/12: Mrs Ruth Shield regarding resignation of Cllr Benson
 - 02/12/12: Mrs Theresa Linton regarding the phone box
 - 28/12/12 & 01/01/13: 2 more request from Mrs Theresa Linton regarding the phone box
 - 04/01/13: Mrs Maureen Ballantyne: regarding the HDC Standards meeting of 26th July 2012.
 - 04/01/13: Mrs Anne Hornsby regarding the letter of thanks to residents (and further responses)
- 12/01/13 & 18/01/13: Further correspondence from Mrs Linton regarding the phone box
- 03/01/13: Letter of resignation from the parish clerk
- Various: Correspondence with BT regarding the phone box
- 26/11/12: YLCA request to reply to consultation on examining the speed limit for HGVs>7.5 tonnes on single carriageway roads
- 21/01/13: Statement re ombudsman's money from Mrs Hornsby

Planning

- 12/02279/LBC: Application for Listed Building Consent for installation of external flue at Hambleton Cottage Thirkleby Hall
- 12/02204/FUL: Alterations and extensions at Osgoodby Hall (Granted)

Financial

- Two bank statements – balance of £6777.60
- SLCC cheque
- Grit bills to come in next month

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ANNOUNCEMENT

Our Parish Clerk, Carolyn, has tendered her resignation to take effect from 8th February 2013. Carolyn has fulfilled the role of Parish Clerk with unstinting commitment and integrity for more than 6 years and the Parish Council is very sorry indeed to lose Carolyn. Cllrs Atkinson, Gillanders and Pearson have advised the Chair of their intention to resign as soon as practicable, and in any event before the AGM date TBA in May. I will also resign during this period.

Over The last two years the work loading and level of responsibility associated with being a Parish Councillor has dramatically increased. This is largely due to the introduction of the Localism Act and the additional powers granted to Parish Councils. In the case of Thirkleby PC, the on-going planning issues associated with Bagby Airfield and the differences of opinion amongst the local community as to how to respond has placed further work loading on the Parish Council. The above Councillors believe that after three years of serving the village, now is the time for them to step away and allow other individuals with considerably more time on their hands to take over the running of the PC. We hope to maintain a quorate parish council and an orderly handover of outstanding matters.

The matter currently dominating PC business is the allocation of the £5000 awarded by the Ombudsman to the village. Following input from a number of concerned residents, the PC has decided to run a Participatory Budgeting Process to allocate the funds. However, it should be noted that some members of Thirkleby Parish Council are concerned that, given the current political situation in the village, they do not have the time and resources to run a robust PB process through to conclusion. The PC are committed to managing the PB process but if at any point they feel the process has broken down or is being significantly hampered or delayed by village politics, Cllrs Atkinson, Gillanders, Pearson and Lumb recommend that the PC follows the advice given by the NALC solicitor via the YLCA and return the £5000 to HDC, who would in turn allocate the fund to projects within the village.