



Ulley Parish Council

Draft Minutes of the meeting of Ulley Parish Council held on 2 October 2019, Village Hall - 7.00 pm

Chairman - Cllr Richard Robson - Chairman of Ulley Parish Council.

Other Councillors in attendance - Richard Steel, Patricia Smith and Ian Stones

Clerk - Andrew Towleron.

Present - 8 members of the public and Borough Councillor Bob Walsh.

To receive any questions from members of the public - Several issues were raised.

Neighbourhood Watch. Linda Maxted the Rotherham Neighbourhood Watch coordinator gave a presentation. She explained the background to Neighbourhood Watch and their main areas of activity. Volunteer led, it could make an important contribution to reducing crime and anti social behavior, she explained. She emphasised the need for members of the community to report incidents of crime to the police. She outlined some of the great work being undertaken by the small number of Neighbourhood Watch volunteers in Ulley, but explained that they were after more volunteers/points of contact across the parish. A general discussion then took place on how more volunteers could be attracted. These suggestions included an article in the newsletter, through Facebook and the Open Day in the Church. The Chairman thanked Linda Maxted for attending. ✓

Fly tipping. This was raised as a significant and recurring issue in the Parish. The various hot spot locations were highlighted. The need for tougher action by the responsible agencies, especially the courts, in dealing with contraventions was highlighted. Cllr Bob Walsh reported that Rotherham MBC was improving its process for giving feedback to individuals who report incidents of fly tipping and other forms of anti-social behaviour. ✓

Unauthorised parking of cars by residents in the Village Hall Car Park. This was raised as an issue. The Council agreed that it should consider what action, it as the landlord, should take. Various actions that could be taken were then discussed. These could include sending a letter to the concerned individuals that they have no right to park on council owned land, improved signage and closing ✓

RR

the gates at night. Reference was made to previous Parish Council correspondence on this issue.

Trees in Ulley Recreation Ground. A letter was presented and read out to the on behalf of a member of the community. This raised a number of issues relating to the extent the Parish Council knew about the condition of the trees when they agreed to the transfer of the park, the independent report the council had commissioned by Andersons and that there were examples of other trees in parks in Rotherham that were in a similar or worse state which Rotherham MBC appeared to have determined not to take action. The member of the community asked that a further independent report should be commissioned on their condition. He also raised whether members should be declaring an interest in this matter. A further letter was then read out to the Parish Council concerning the trees in Ulley Recreation Ground as well as the overall management of the Recreation Ground. A wide ranging and detailed discussion then took place on this issue. This included that the council understood that the trees were in a good condition when they were transferred over to the council, that what action Rotherham MBC took with regard to trees in their management was essentially matter for them to consider and the types of interest that members of the Council should declare were outlined in the Council's Code of Conduct Scheme. ✓

The Council was asked whether it would post on its website the finding of the independent report it had commissioned on the condition of the trees. It was explained that some of its contents covered financial issues and may be covered by the Freedom of Information Act. Those parts of the report that specifically looked at the condition of the trees requiring works (including the one subject to the proposed TPO) had been included in the notification to Rotherham MBC for the works to the trees. This notification was publicly available via the Rotherham MBC website. The Council was also asked whether it would publish the Rotherham MBC report on their justification for the TPO on one of the concerned trees. It was explained that this report had been produced by Rotherham MBC and it was understood this could be viewed on the Rotherham MBC website.

The Chairman noted that some of the issues raised here would be covered later on the agenda.

Meeting of the Parish Council

53/19 - To receive and approve any apologies for absence - There were none. ✓

54/19 - To record any declaration of interests and dispensation - There were none. ✓

55/19 - To consider any matters which should be dealt with in open, or confidential session (items for which the Press and Public may be excluded further to the Public Bodies (Admission to Meeting) Act 1960 - There were none. ✓

56/19 - To approve and sign the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 21 August 2019. ✓

It was noted that payment for £19.60 on page 4 should read Heels 'N' Key.

Resolved: that subject to the minor change identified above the minutes of the meeting held on 21st August 2019 be approved.

57/19 - To receive information on the following on-going issues and decide further action where necessary -

Drainage Ditch/Telephone Box Issue - Cllr I Stone reported that this issue had hopefully been resolved. The telephone box should be fully operational soon.

Car parking issues associated around Reservoir Road Ulley Country Park - The Clerk explained that Rotherham MBC Community Safety Team were still undertaking periodic inspections. They had asked if members of the community could confirm (including photos) to the Council the most problematic times. They would then inform the Community Safety who would seek to target patrols at these times.

Latest Crime Update - The Clerk reported that there have been 17 incidents between July and September. These covered a range of illegal activities including theft, 'domestic' and burglary. He explained that he had spoken to the Police and they had confirmed that due to data protection regulations it would not be possible for the Parish Council to make publicly available the specific recorded crime incidents, including via its website.

58/19 - To consider any applications for the office of parish councillor and to co-opt a candidate to fill the existing vacancy

It was agreed that this item should be deferred until the next meeting of the Parish Council. The Clerk outlined the criteria that need to be met to be eligible to stand as a councillor.

59/19 - To consider the maintenance of the trees in the Park including those proposed to be covered by the Tree Preservation Order

The Clerk reported that Rotherham MBC had kindly agreed to an extension to the middle of the month for the deadline for any observations on the proposal to protect one of the trees by a Tree Preservation Order (TPO). He also explained that he had discussed the situation with the Council's insurers who had confirmed that the other tree that was not proposed to be protected through a TPO, should be removed as soon as possible. The Clerk and Cllr Steel agreed to action this.

This item was then the subject of a wide ranging discussion. This included that the council would require professional support to help it challenge the decision by Rotherham to place a TPO on one of the trees and the need to get a further qualified opinion on their condition. It was reported that a member of the community had identified a suitable and competent local company (AWA) which the Council could obtain this further independent opinion on the condition of the trees and next steps. It was agreed to seek their input.

Resolved: that the Clerk is delegated to spend up to £200 in seeking professional advice to oppose the Tree Preservation Order proposed by Rotherham MBC and up to a further £325 in a seeking a further independent report on the condition of the trees and any resulting actions.

60/19 - To consider the findings from the latest monthly independent inspection of the Park (see Attachment 9.1) and health and safety issues in the Park more generally.

The latest independent play area inspection for the children's Play Area was circulated and considered. This had not raised any significant concerns with the condition of the play equipment, though did highlight a few improvements and repairs which would be addressed by the 'Work About Group'. It was noted that there were no other known health and safety issues.

61/19 - To consider the adequacy of signage in the Park

Cllr P Smith agreed to look into options and bring her findings to the next meeting of the Parish Council.

62/19 - To consider funding opportunities for improvements in the Park.

It was reported that there was a good chance that the Rother Valley Ward Capital Budget could help fund capital improvements to the Park. This was then discussed. It was agreed that the Council should make a bid for about £1000 for improvements to various items of play equipment in the children's play area, including new bearings for the see-saw. The Clerk explained that he would require the support and input of the councillors to determine the specific equipment or works required. Councillor Bob Walsh was thanked for his support with securing the support from the Rother Valley Ward Capital Budget.

Resolved: that the Council determines to make a bid for about a £1000 to the Rother Valley Ward Capital Budget for improvements to various items of play equipment in the children's play area.

63/19 - To consider reports of anti-social behaviour in Plantation Woods and consider any next steps.

The Clerk reported that there had been reports of anti-social behaviour in Plantation Woods. The councillors and members of the community confirmed that this was an issue. The Clerk asked that any reports be forwarded to him who would then share them with Halifax Estates who controlled the concerned woods. Cllr I Stone said that he would lead on collating this on behalf of the Council.

64/19 - To consider Council representation on the Rother Valley Ward Meetings.

It was explained that the Rother Valley Ward Meeting provides an opportunity for residents, local bodies and other stakeholders to discuss with ward councillors common issues and identify priorities for action. It would be helpful if the Council agreed on a lead councillor to represent the Council on this body. This was discussed and agreed as a good idea.

Resolved: that the Council agrees to appoint a representative to the Rother Valley Ward meeting and the Clerk in conjunction with the Chairman be delegated to confirm who this would be.

65/19 - Management of the Halifax Fund by the Parish Council

Following the recommendation made at the last meeting, the Clerk had looked into the various options for the management of the Fund. In doing this he had

consulted with Halifax Estates and other parish councils. There were three main options. Firstly, to continue with the existing arrangements with the Council managing it, including acting as its accountable body. Secondly, to return the funds to Halifax Estates and ask them to manage it. Thirdly, to establish a charitable body to manage the funds. Of the three options, the initial reaction from Halifax Estates to the first and third ones was not favourable. The Yorkshire Association of Local Councils had also indicated that the Council should consider the second option. It was noted that should the Council determine to support the second option, it was important that it should be clear on what role the parish council plays in its management. ✓

Resolved: that the Clerk is asked to bring more information to the next meeting about the process, duties and context for establishing a charitable trust to manage the Halifax Fund.

66/19 - To consider future spending priorities for the Halifax Fund

It was agreed to defer this item pending the outcome of the review of the future local management arrangements of the fund.

67/19 - Planning update

The Clerk confirmed that the Council had not been notified by Rotherham MBC of any planning applications for comment at the meeting.

68/19 - To consider and agree the Council's proposed Financial Regulations

It was agreed to defer this to the next meeting of the Council

69/19 - To receive a verbal and written report on bi-monthly accounts schedule and relevant Budget Update Information, including:

- a) To approve the monthly accounts for August/September 2019, including the following items for payment

Resolved: that the following payments be authorised: ✓

- £748.19 to SSE Electricity for electricity usage in the Hall.
- £22.95 to Yorkshire Water for water supply to the Hall.

The clerk noted that the electricity bill was much higher than anticipated. It was, however, based on an estimate. The Millenium Trust was asked to establish how accurate it was.

- b) To approve the bank reconciliation

Both a verbal and written report was provided. Members were then asked to consider and sign the various concerned associated bank statements and bank reconciliations associated with the Council's main account and Halifax account, which they did.

- c) To receive a verbal and written budget update report

It was confirmed that the Council held £7,616.14 at 30 August 2019. This comprised £4,010.17 in the Co-operative Bank Current Account and £3,605.97 in the Co-operative Bank Reserve Account. It also held 14,862.16 in the Halifax Grant Account.

The Clerk provided a budget update. He noted that the Council was forecast for an overspend of between £1-£2k. This was mainly due to a number of approved exceptional unbudgeted items of expenditure, for example, in relation to the pads for the defibrillator and works to the trees in the Park. Through efficiency savings and external funding, it may be possible to reduce some of the forecast overspend before the end of the financial year.

70/19 - To receive feedback from Halifax Estates on any bids supported by the Parish Council and forwarded to them for approval and consider any Halifax fund bids

It was reported that the bids from Ulley Parish Council for £609.07 to provide equipment and tools to keep the village looking neat and tidy for residents and villagers and Ulley Millennium Trust for £800.00 to purchase new Christmas decorations (internal and external) for the Village Hall supported by the Parish Council had been supported by the Halifax Estates. It was also agreed to make a bid to Halifax Estates for £1000 to support Ulley in Bloom.

Resolved: that the bid from Ulley Parish Council for £1000 for Ulley in Bloom be supported by the Parish Council.

71/19 - To consider any agenda items for the next meeting of the council

There were none other those previously agreed.

Any other business

Cllr R Steel explained that he had tested the monitoring sheet to facilitate its routine checking of the Defibrillator by him and other council members and subject to a few tweaks it worked well. He thanked Sue Hubbard for her help with this.

