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# Ulley Parish Council

## Draft Minutes of the meeting of Ulley Parish Council held on 27 November 2019, Village Hall – 7.00 pm

Chairman – Cllr Richard Robson

Other Councillors in attendance – Patricia Smith, Ian Stones and Chris Myers.

Clerk – Andrew Towleron.

Present – 7 members of the public and Borough Councillor Bob Walsh.

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

**Repairs to the wall on Main Street.** A resident confirmed that he had secured three quotes for the proposed improvements to the wall on Main Street. He then provided copies of these for the Clerk. These, he envisaged, would form the basis of a future bid to the Halifax Fund, he explained.

**Xmas Decorations in the Village.** The Ulley Millennium Trust were congratulated on the quality of these.

**Fly tipping.** A resident asked if an update could be provided on the 'Piggotts Court Case', which had been brought by Rotherham MBC partly in response to fly tipping incidents in the Parish. He understood that a judgement had been reached. Both the Clerk and Cllr Bob Walsh reported that they were not aware of the outcome of this court case but it should have been recorded on the South Yorkshire County Council website.

**Trees in Ulley Recreation Ground.** A wide ranging discussion took place on this issue. Some of the issues raised were the contents of the further independent report prepared by AWA, the content of an article in the parish newsletter prepared by the Chairman, specifically the reference to 'dangerous' and the need for the Parish Council and wider community to be clear and have a shared understanding on its long

term vision for the Park. The Chairman explained that the article in the parish newsletter reflected his opinion drawn on advice and guidance he had been provided with. He also noted that some of the issues raised here would be covered later on the agenda.

In addition, the Council was asked about the progress with the Tree Preservation Order proposed by Rotherham MBC for one of the trees in the Park. The Clerk reported that Rotherham MBC had yet to make a formal decision on this.

### **Meeting of the Parish Council**

**72/19 - To receive and approve any apologies for absence** - There was one from Cllr R Steele, which was approved.

**73/19 - To record any declaration of interests and dispensation** – There were none.

**74/19 - 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.

**75/19 - To approve and sign the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 27 November 2019.**

They were approved as a true record.

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

**76/19 – To receive information on the following on-going issues and decide further action where necessary –**

**Unauthorised parking of cars by residents in the Village Hall car park** - The Clerk explained at the previous meeting he had been asked to provide a report on previous Parish Council correspondence on this issue. He had tracked down a letter from 2004 the contents of which he reported. It was noted that the management of the Hall had since transferred to Ulley Millennium Trust and that the use of the car park was now the responsibility of the Trust. The Chair of the Trust, who was in attendance, agreed that the Trust would seek to resolve this, including potentially taking advice from its insurers. She agreed to update the Parish Council on progress.

**Condition of the paddock land off Main Street in Ulley** – The Chairman confirmed that he had written to the landowners about this issue, but was still awaiting a reply. Once he had received a response he would report it to the next meeting of the Parish Council.

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Latest Crime Update – It was reported that there have been 3 recorded incidents between September and November, a total which was lower than previous reports. These comprised a theft, fraud and 'domestic'

**77/19 – To consider any applications for the office of parish councillor and to co-opt a candidate to fill the existing vacancy.**

It was confirmed that the Council had received one nomination – Dr Chris Myers. Dr C Myers explained that he had recently retired as a GP. He had lived in the parish for many years and was active in the community, including as club doctor for Rotherham RUFC.

**Resolved: That Dr Chris Myers be co-opted as a parish councillor onto the Council.**

**78/19 - To consider the findings from the report of AWA Tree Consultants on the trees in the Park.**

It was explained that the Council had agreed to commission a further independent report on the condition of the trees in the Park and next steps. A suitably qualified body, AWA Tree Consultants of Sheffield, had been commissioned to undertake this and had inspected the site. Their recommendations were produced in a report, which was attached to the main report.

They had recommended the removal of one tree (T6) "either to ground level or left as a 5m tall 'monolith", as it "is in a very poor condition". They also recommended that "This work should be carried out as soon as is reasonably practicable". It was noted that the Parish Council had already agreed to remove this tree following previous advice it had received from an arboriculturist.

They had also recommended that remedial works be undertaken to two trees (T3 and T5) 'as a moderate priority' and tree T1 'may need pruning back from neighbouring residential property in future'. In addition, that the trees be inspected again in about 18 months.

These findings were then considered. It was noted that any works relating to trees in a Conservation Area (as was the case here) would require consent from Rotherham MBC to them beforehand.

**Resolved: that**

- The Sycamore tree, T6 should be removed to ground level.
- Consent be sought from Rotherham MBC for remedial works to the two trees (T3 and T5) and pruning to tree T1 as detailed in the AWA report.

- The trees are to be inspected again in about 18 months.

**79/19 – To consider the findings from the latest monthly independent inspection of the Park (see Attachment 9.1) including those items identified as requiring inspection and repair and health and safety issues in the Park more generally.**

The latest independent play area inspection for the children's Play Area was considered. This had highlighted a few areas requiring attention. This included one equipment that required immediate moderate attention – the Pallisade Logs.

In addition, the inspection had highlighted that some of the equipment would benefit from routine servicing, perhaps on an annual basis. It was considered that it would not be appropriate for the 'Work About Group' to undertake this servicing. The Clerk agreed to seek quotes from suitably qualified bodies to undertake an annual service of the play equipment.

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The Clerk also explained that he had twice emailed the company (Wickstead Play Equipment) that had provided the See Saw to provide a quote for a replacement bearing and seat. He had still not received a reply.

A general discussion then took place on health and safety issues in the Park. It was reported that routine inspections by the 'Work about Group' had not highlighted any particular concerns. The Clerk reported that it was good practice that a formal annual risk assessment of the Park should be undertaken. He had spoken to officers at Rotherham MBC who had kindly offered to provide the 'Work About Group' with guidance on how to undertake this.

**Resolved: that**

- Quotes should be sought from suitable bodies to provide an annual service of the equipment of the Park.
- The identified repairs to the Pallisade Logs should be treated as a priority repair by the 'Work About Group'.
- That a formal Risk Assessment of the Park should be undertaken by the Work About Group as soon as practicable and on at least an annual basis thereon.

**80/19 – To consider the adequacy of signage in the Park.**

Cllr P Smith explained that she had approached one body to see if this might provide this on a no cost basis. These discussions had not been fruitful and it was likely that the Council would need to purchase the new signage. It was agreed to look in detail at options at the next meeting of the Parish Council.

**81/19 – To consider the arrangements for the management of the Park including the establishment of a working party.**

Nearly a year after its transfer it was considered timely to consider the arrangements for the management of the Park. It was explained that there were a number of options. These could make its day to day management the responsibility of the Clerk; using the services of an outside agency; the establishment of "Friends Group" or indeed seeking its transfer back to Rotherham MBC. It was emphasised whatever arrangement was agreed it was important that the level of physical and financial support provided was adequate and clearly identified in the budget. The various options were discussed. The general view was the preferred option was to establish a properly constituted "Friends Group" that would be responsible for the day to day management of the Park as well as related activities such as securing grant funding. This Group would then be supported by the activities of the 'Work About Group'. The main challenge in doing this might be seeking enough interest from residents to join it. A few names of people who might be interested in joining it were highlighted. It was also suggested that the Chairman could seek nominations via the parish newsletter. Cllr Bob Johnson highlighted the various Rotherham MBC and other funding opportunities available to support the management of the Park.

**81/19 To confirm Council representation on the Rother Valley Ward Meetings.**

It was agreed to defer a decision on representation on this body until after the local elections.

**82/19 Planning update (including to consider/approve any planning applications) – (The Council has been notified of one - RB2019/1602, land at Green Lane Ulley 9999, Conversion of stables to 1 No. dwellinghouse. Further details about which can be found at <http://planning.rotherham.gov.uk/fastweblive/>)**

Resolved: That the Parish Council had no comments to make on this planning application.

**83/19 To consider and agree the Council's proposed Financial Regulations (the draft revised Financial Regulations for the Council are attached as Attachment 14.1, proposed changes are shown in red on the document).**

These were considered. It was suggested and agreed that the introductory sentence of para 4.5 should be amended to include the phrase in consultation with the Chairman so as to read, "the clerk may authorise in consultation with the Chairman revenue expenditure on behalf of the council which in the clerk's judgement it is necessary to carry out".

**Resolved:** That subject to the amendment above that the Financial Regulations (2019) be approved.

**84/19 - 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 October/November 2019, including the following items for payment.

**Resolved:** that the following payments be authorised:

- £330 to AWA Tree Consultants for inspection of trees in the Park.
- £180 to Anderson Tree Care for consultancy support in respect of the Tree Preservation order in the Park.
- £9.33 to Inkredible for new printer cartridge for the Clerk's printer.
- £11.52 to Royal Mail for stamps.
- £1200 to Hobson Nurseries for summer and winter planting.
- £550 to Hobson Nurseries for supply and deliver play bark to Ulley play area site.

- 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 £10,060.49 at the 22 November 2019. This comprised £6,445.53 in the Co-operative Bank Current Account and £3,614.96 in the Co-operative Bank Reserve Account. It also held 13,452.19 in the Halifax Grant Account.

The Clerk provided a budget update. He explained that the Council was forecast for an overspend of between £1-£2k for this year. This was mainly due to a number of approved exceptional or unbudgeted items of expenditure in relation to the Park, for example, in relation to works to the trees in the Park, the transfer of the deeds for the Recreation Ground and Insurance Cover. A close eye should also be kept on utility bills in relation to the Hall, though it was still hopeful this would come in on budget. It was noted that this forecast overspend would have been greater had the Council not been successful in securing additional income to off-set it.

**85/19 - To receive feedback from Halifax Estates on any bids supported by the Parish Council and forwarded to them for approval and consider the following Halifax Bids:**

- From Ulley Millenium Trust for £575 for Village Parties.
- From Ulley Millenium Trust for £340.50 for Xmas Decorations.

**Resolved that the bids from Ulley Millenium Trust for £575 for village parties and £340.50 for Xmas Decorations be supported.**

It was reported that the Council had received two bids from Ulley Millennium Trust for £340.50 to purchase Xmas decorations for the Parish and £575 for Village Parties.

**86/19 To consider holding an extraordinary meeting to agree the budget for the Council for the coming financial year.**

The Clerk noted that it may be useful to hold an extraordinary meeting to agree the budget for the Council for the coming financial year. There were a number of budget pressures that may require detailed consideration by the Parish Council. The deadline for submitting its precept to Rotherham for the next financial year was the end of January. The next planned meeting of the Council was on the 27 January.

**Resolved: it was agreed in principle to hold an extraordinary meeting of the Council to agree the budget for the Council for the financial year 2020/21.**

**87/19 To consider any agenda items for the next meeting of the council.**

It was agreed that the focus should be setting the budget for the next year.

**Any other business/information exchange.**

It was confirmed that the Council would be participating in Rotherham MBC's Town & Parish Council Winter Partnership Scheme.

It was also explained that the Council had received correspondence from Rotherham MBC with regard to the festive fixings that had been attached by the Ulley Millennium Trust to street lighting columns in Ulley. The Clerk explained that he had forwarded a copy of this correspondence to the Trust for them to action as appropriate.

