

LOW CONISCLIFFE & MERRYBENT PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of Parish Council Meeting held on 17 Sept 2019

St Edwin's Church Hall, High Coniscliffe, 7pm

ATTENDANCE: Cllrs: K Marshallsay (Chair), C McLay, M Ellerton, L Steel, A Craggs, S Clark, M Bailey (Clerk).

Apologies: BC G Lee, BC P Crudass

1 Declarations of Interest: None

2 Public Forum: The meeting was attended by one member of the public.

Mark Armstrong was welcomed to the meeting as a representative of the Planning Action Group and to contribute his expertise in planning matters.

3 Minutes of Last Meeting:

The minutes of the meeting held on 9 July 19 were signed by the Chair.

4 Matters Arising from the Minutes of the Previous Meeting:

4.1 Housing development off Gate Lane (east). A meeting has been held between the PC and Robertson Homes to present suggestions to minimise adverse impact of the development. It was reported that the meeting had been constructive. An information drop to residents on Gate Lane has been well received. The PC are pursuing suggestions for expenditure of S106 funds on areas that will benefit the community.

It was also reported that works to remove hedgerow at the site had commenced and been stopped by DBC pending submission of a valid application by Robertson Homes to discharge the planning conditions.

Robertson Homes have suggested Front Lane as the street name for the development. This was discussed alongside other potential names and was agreed this would be confirmed to DBC by 23 Sept in the absence of any further thoughts.

Action: M Bailey

4.2 Support to independent evaluation of DBC Local Plan. It has emerged this is associated with a political party and therefore it is not appropriate for the PC to give financial support.

4.3 Talk on bronze age site. This is to be held at the November PC meeting and will provisionally commence at 6.30pm. To be confirmed with the speaker closer to the time.

4.4 Planning application for untidy land in Low Coniscliffe. It was reported that the site has been cleared and looks much better although concern was expressed about the walls on adjacent properties being at risk of deterioration unless made good.

4.5 Salt boxes. Street Scene to be asked about the possibility of replacing the current boxes.

Action: M Ellerton.

4.6 Banking arrangements. Additional signatories for approval of expenses are now in place.

4.7 Website accessibility requirements. The website provider has confirmed the content is accessible to the visually impaired by using appropriate content recognition software.

4.8 Risk management plan. No progress since last PC meeting.

Action: M Bailey to review status of draft plan and identify next steps for progress.

4.9 Dog signage. It was reported that signs have been produced and will shortly be posted.

Action: L Steel to arrange for posting of signs.

4.10 Replacement of speed visor, Merrybent east. The damaged speed visor is to be replaced by a solar powered version. Costs will be met by claiming on the insurance of the third party that caused the damage.

Action: M Bailey to raise purchase order for replacement speed visor

4.11 Repair / replacement of speed visor Merrybent west. It has been suggested the obsolete speed visor at Merrybent West is to be replaced by a unit that is 240V and wired into a nearby street light, if possible and dependant on cost.

Action: M Bailey to ask P Crudass to obtain estimate for wiring of speed visor into street light.

4.12 Litter Bin, Devonshire Court. It was reported this has not yet been provided.

Action: M Bailey to enquire on progress with DBC.

4.13 Damage to street light Low Coniscliffe. This is now repaired.

5 Finance and Accounts:

5.1 Balance in bank account as at 1 Sep 19 was £21109.33 and £11.96 in petty cash. The estimated bank balance at the end of financial year is £11094. It was agreed that the balance of £501.55 held in the Business Reserve account should be transferred to the Current account.

Action: M Bailey to arrange

5.2 Expenses approved since last meeting: Plan committee expenses (£2.50, £6.60 and £14.65), Printing and printer ink (£42.28), Legal fees regarding land ownership enquiry (£212.00), Parish maintenance (£85.00).

5.3 Expenses approved at the meeting: CPRE annual subscription (£36.00), Clerk expenses printer paper (£4.00), Clerk salary Aug / Sep 19 (£232.00), Tax on clerk salary to HMRC (£58.00), Printer paper / ink (£10.49).

5.4 The draft budget for 2020/21 was presented and discussed. Feedback on likely planning expenses over the next 18 months is required to finalise the budget at the November PC meeting.

Action: M Ellerton to advise on budgetary provision for projected planning expenses for next 18 months. M Bailey to finalise budget and precept for next financial year.

5.5 It was suggested the Parish Council move to on-line banking.

5 Planning applications and decisions:

Planning application 19/00711/FUL for 2 bungalows in Merrybent (field ref 0083) was approved by the PC with no objections or comments.

6 Highway Matters:

7.1 It was reported the hedgerow north of the A67 from Merrybent Drive to the bus shelter is overgrown and in need of strimming.

Action: M Bailey to request maintenance from DBC

7.2 The illegal dumping of waste in the lay-by adjacent to the Baydale Beck was promptly removed.

7 Parish Matters:

8.1 A vacancy for Parish Councillor has arisen following the resignation of Peter Ellerton. The PC expressed gratitude and appreciation for Peter's dedication, commitment and expertise in serving the needs of the local community over the last 28 years. There was some discussion of a presentation / token gift in recognition of the service and this will be arranged by the Chair once contributions have been made.

Notices will be posted in the church newsletter and on Parish noticeboards / website to invite individuals to show an interest in the position. These will be posted once it is known whether an election will be necessary. It was noted that representation is currently biased towards Low Coniscliffe.

Action: M Bailey / K Marshallsay to arrange for notices.

8.2 Constitution. The original PC constitution dated 1949 has been located. This needs to be updated and a revised draft was distributed. Feedback is required to formulate a final version.

Action: PCllrs to review draft constitution and provide feedback for M Bailey to consolidate into a final version. Vote for approval at Nov PC meeting.

8.3 Code of Conduct. A template code of conduct (NALC) was circulated for PCllrs to review.

Action: PCllrs to read and provide any feedback for M Bailey to consolidate. Vote for approval at Nov PC meeting.

8.4 Christmas carols. This event is to be held on 16 Dec 19 at 6.30pm. Arrangements are to be made for a leaflet drop and booking of the brass band.

Action: L Steel and M Ellerton

8 Items for future consideration:

Defibrillators. Some of the factors associated with installation and operation of defibrillators were discussed. Costings to be circulated.

Action: S Clark to request.

9 Correspondence: None.

10 Feedback from meetings attended: None

11 Date of next meeting: 12 Nov 19 at 6.30pm (provisional)

The meeting closed at 8.45pm.