

CLAXTON AND SAND HUTTON PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

DATE OF MEETING: Monday 26th September 2011

COUNCILLORS PRESENT: Mr P Stott (Vice Chair), Mrs A Steele, Mrs S Field, Mrs J Whiteley, District Councillor K Knaggs/ County Councillor C Wood

PARISH CLERK: Mrs Laura E J Edwards

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Dr Caroline Hall (Chair)

ITEM 1: MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

PS welcomed the Parish Councillors, District Councillor Keith Knaggs, County Councillor Clare Wood and the parishioners to the meeting and thanked them for attending. The minutes of the previous Parish Council meeting held on 8th August 2011 had been circulated previously amongst the Councillors and published on the notice-boards and the parish website. The Councillors accepted them as correct and they were duly signed by the Chairman of the meeting (**PS**).

NB Proposed actions are highlighted in Blue.

Apologies were accepted from Dr Caroline Hall and **PS** explained that as Vice Chairman, he would chair this meeting.

ITEM 2: PUBLIC FORUM

The Chairman invited parishioners to raise any issues of interest or concern to the Parish Council.

- 1) **Roadside Grates** - Liz Heath noted that the roadside grates were noticeably full of leaves and other debris, especially in Sand Hutton. **PS** responded that he had also observed this problem and had already reported it to North Yorkshire County Council. **CW** confirmed that Highways should keep roadside grates clear where possible. **PS and LE to continue to liaise with Highways and monitor the status of the grates.**
- 2) **Playing on Claxton Village Green** - Mr D Smith queried whether the Parish Council had scheduled a public meeting to debate the use of the village green and the concerns of some residents. **PS** replied that the Parish Council had debated this issue in depth but there were currently no additional scheduled meetings to discuss the use of the green. However, the Parish Council is investigating whether there may be other plots of land that could be bought or leased but finding a suitable piece of land will be difficult. Mr D Smith again emphasised that he believed there was still a safety issue with children playing on a small green next to the road. **PS** responded that the Parish Council noted his concerns but must bear in mind that parents are responsible for their children and where they play. There will be further discussion of play spaces in item 5.
- 3) **Matrix Warning Signs** - Mr M Young queried why villages in North Yorkshire did not often have roadside flashing signs which detect speeding. When travelling in North Norfolk, Mr Young had noted that many villages had illuminated signs to deter motorists from speeding and remind them of the speed limit. **CW** offered to explain the North Yorkshire approach to the use of such signs. The key reasons for not using the signs were that 1) the police do not believe they are effective unless backed up enforcement 2) those who ignore speed limits will also ignore a flashing sign. However, **CW** acknowledged that speeding is a key concern for many local villages, including ours, and encouraged the Parish Council to request a speed check.

ITEM 3: RYEDALE DISTRICT UPDATE AND COUNTY UPDATE

PS invited District Councillor Keith Knaggs to address the meeting. Keith highlighted various Ryedale issues to the meeting focusing on planning, finance and local issues for Sand Hutton and Claxton.

- **Planning and Local Plan** - KK explained to the meeting that we should expect a public enquiry on the Local Plan next summer with adoption by the end of 2012. Specific sites determined in 2013. There is some concern over the impact of the National Planning Policy Framework and what impact that may have on planning decisions. The framework includes a presumption in favour of sustainable development - but what does sustainable development mean? There is a requirement to meet 'objectively assessed housing demand' using forecasts prepared in a pre-recession era. The Forecast for Ryedale is 200 houses a year rising to 400 a year. So over a 15 year period, an

average of 267 houses per year. There may be changes to the Framework before it is implemented but councils need to be alert to the risk of inappropriate development in their area which may not be in the interests of local people. Large landowners may have a different view of the framework.

- **Finance and Budget Cuts** - KK asserted that the council budget at Ryedale has been cut by £1million this year without the public noticing. Next year there will be a further £700k to cut and there will be some impacts eg sports development, play rangers, CCTV, opening hours for cash payments, pest control are all possible target areas. A further £500k will be cut the following year. Staff numbers will reduce this year and next year but so far there have been no compulsory redundancies. There can still be improvements to Council services eg expanding glass and cardboard recycling. It is expected that there will be no increase in Council Tax for a third year.
- **New Homes Bonus** - Funding from Central government which may amount to £5M over 6 years split County 20% and Ryedale 80%. KK has concerns that if it is split up into 'penny packets' then it will have diluted value. There may be a community fund and a business grants scheme.
- **Local Issues for Sand Hutton and Claxton** - The Sand Hutton Walled Garden application will be presented to Planning Committee on 25th October. FERA may be expanding research into anaerobic digestion (food manufacture waste and farm waste converted into electricity) - this may have implications for the FERA site at Sand Hutton.

PS thanked Keith Knaggs for the update and then invited County Councillor Clare Wood to update the meeting with any county level issues. **CW** explained that she has had a change of role and her remit is now Adult Social Care rather than Waste Management / Public Transport and other Environmental issues but still had contacts in those areas.

Finance - **CW** explained to the meeting that the County Council has similar concerns and challenges to the District Council but that they had to manage much larger budgets and consequently, larger savings. The County has to try to save £69M over 4 years and there will be changes in the services that can be provided.

Highways are focusing on maintenance and repair rather than new projects and we may find that Highways are slower to fix problems as resources are stretched. **CW** was pleased to note that the 30mph speed limit in Sand Hutton was finally ordered. Buttercrambe Bridge consultation is complete and the agreed changes will be going ahead soon - the costs of repairs over recent years have been enormous. Speed enforcement is key in many villages like ours that may be used as 'rat runs' and **CW** encouraged us to request a speed check. **CW** emphasised that although resources are tight, we should still pursue Highways to mend potholes, clean out roadside grates etc.

Libraries - Mobile libraries have had to be reduced as it was costing £8 to take out 1 book. However, there is a Home Library Service and also many volunteer led schemes emerging in the area. Malton library will remain open. (more information at <http://www.northyorks.gov.uk/libraries>)

Planning - **CW** agreed with Keith Knaggs that the National Planning Framework is key to planning in the next few years. **CW** hopes that there will be focus on utilising brown field sites and that green belts around towns and villages will still be preserved.

Parish Clerk role - **CW** expressed disappointment that **LE** wanted to resign as Clerk and hoped that **LE** would be active in training a new clerk to support the Parish Council.

Keith Knaggs and Clare Wood invited questions from Councillors and parishioners.

JW asked whether any of the Claxton Grange Cottage development was going to be affordable housing. Keith responded that the proposed housing did not meet the official definition of affordable housing but ultimately, the size of the dwellings meant they would be more affordable than many others in the area. The developer will have to make a financial contribution towards off-site affordable housing.

JW expressed deep concern that there had been a suggestion that pest control would be an area that may be targeted for budget cuts. Rat numbers are increasing and rats are carriers of various diseases including Viles disease so this seemed to be a false economy to **JW**, given the health risk. Keith responded that there were commercial pest control options which local business could use but that the in-house pest control was not proving viable. Nothing had yet been agreed, there would be further consultation and Keith noted **JW**'s concern.

PS then thanked Clare Wood and Keith Knaggs for their input and they left the meeting.

ITEM 4: GENERAL BUSINESS SECTION

RYEDALE DISTRICT COUNCIL PLANNING MATTERS:

Current Plans - The following planning applications received since the previous meeting were discussed:-

- Planning application outcomes received since the previous meeting:-
 - The Dovecot, Sand Hutton - Mr D Brittain. Air source heat pump. Application withdrawn
 - Cherry Garth, Claxton - Mr Sharma. Single storey extension around house. Application approved
 - Low Far Cottage, Sand Hutton. Mr and Mrs Stott. Single storey extension. Application approved
 - Update on outstanding plans - The Walled Garden development - Site visit completed in September.

- New planning applications received since previous meeting:-
 - Keepers Lodge, Sand Hutton, Mr Shepherd - new access track across land. Response to RDC by 17th Sept. No objections from Councillors as long as trees are not subject to preservation orders.
 - Avalon, Main Street, Claxton, Mr Eastman - garage alteration and extension. Response to RDC by 19th Sept. No objection from Councillors.
 - Whincott, Whinny Lane, Claxton, Mr Goodrick - 2 storey extension to side. Response to RDC by 23rd Sept. No objection from Councillors as extension mainly affects rear and side within a large plot.

Ryedale District Council correspondence: Letters concerning the allocation of New Homes Bonus in Ryedale and an update on the Draft Ryedale Plan were noted.

NYCC correspondence: Buttercrambe bridge alteration consultation has been completed.

OTHER correspondence: None to discuss.

ITEM 5: MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

LE introduced the discussion on the following outstanding matters:

NYCC HIGHWAYS ISSUES:

30mph Zone – As CW had reported, the 30mph zone Order has been ‘sealed’ and officially comes into force on 3rd October. Highways have advised that the 30mph zone signs will be moved by a contractor but could not say when that would occur. [LE to continue to monitor and advise on further progress at the next PC meeting.](#)

Village Signs - LE reported that PS and LE had been cleaning the road signs and street name plates with the cleaning materials provided by RDC. This had proved quite successful, lots of algae and dirt had been removed and it was also a chance to assess the state of individual signs. [LE and PS to continue a programme of sign cleaning.](#) PS asked whether there should be finger post sign within Sand Hutton to indicate where the Village Hall is since so many people ask for directions. [LE to investigate the costs of a finger post and check the Highways rules about erecting a new sign.](#) **Outstanding action** - [LE to remove one of the Claxton name plate signs and attempt repainting.](#)

Surface Water and Drainage Problems - Flooding of Main Street, Claxton – LE was very pleased to report that contractors working for Yorkshire Water are coming to Claxton to remove sludge and silt from the sewer and surface water drain system this week. Contractors had been to Claxton this afternoon and had looked into the drainage system and concluded it was congested with silt and sludge and had ordered the de-silting works. [LE to continue to liaise with the contractors and Yorkshire Water and report any findings to the next meeting.](#) JW highlighted that this should really be an annual de-silt because of the run-off from local fields.

OTHER VILLAGE ISSUES:

Community Police Officer and Ryedale Policing - Recent Police reports were noted.

Play Spaces for Children - As discussed in the public forum, the Parish Council is investigating possible sites for a play area for children. SF provided an aerial photo of Claxton showing potential sites and the Councillors discussed the options. The difficulties of finding a convenient location which could be safe for the children and also acceptable to residents were debated. It was concluded that the maximum required would be 1 acre and there were no plans for play equipment at this stage - the key focus was an area of grassland to play games and socialise. [LE to write to Smiths Gore to try to establish whether any parcels of land in Claxton could be sold or leased to the Parish Council.](#)

Resilience - Snow Clearance. LE asked the Councillors to decide which approach they wanted to pursue for snow clearance. The options were 1) Rely on Highways and Streetscene clearance only 2) Supplement Highways basic service with an additional clearing of pathways by small teams of volunteers 3) Opt into the new voluntary Highways scheme which would involve much more ownership of clearance and salt storage etc. Councillors had concerns over option 3 - AS stated that there was a risk that Highways might allocate lower priority to our villages if we had our own salt/ equipment. Councillors resolved to pursue option 2. The areas to be cleared need to be decided at a future meeting.

Benches - Parishioners will have noted that the bench on Main Street, Claxton has been taken away for repairs and a new bench placed in situ on a temporary basis. JW reported to the meeting that the original bench is drying out at her farm but needs considerable repair and restoration including new slats. Councillors were very pleased that JW and Ken Whiteley were willing to restore the bench. [JW to report progress of the bench restoration at the next meeting.](#) **Claxton green bench**

- At a previous meeting, AS had reported that parishioners had inquired about the possibility of additional wooden bench for Claxton green. Councillors and parishioners contributed to a debate on this idea and whether the existing circular bench was sufficient provision. No conclusion was reached. [LE to add bench positions etc to future agenda.](#)

Footpaths through local woodland - LE reported that CH has been in contact with Harrison Spinks, a luxury bed company who now have the long term lease for Whey Carr Plantation and Scroggs Bottom Wood. CH has arranged a meeting between Parish Councillors and representatives from Harrison Spinks in October which should be a chance to understand their plans for the woodlands. Some woodland on the Stamford Bridge Road is being sold by ‘Woodlands.co.uk’ and it is reassuring to note that this organisation has strict covenants included in the ownership agreements to “ensure the

quiet and peaceful enjoyment of adjacent woodlands and meadows". There is still more investigation required into implications for walkers. **CH to report to the next meeting following the meeting with Harrison Spinks in October.**

Communication - LE explained that the Parish Council is exploring additional ways of communicating following ideas raised at the Annual Parish Meeting. The Parish Council is planning to host a 'Saturday Social' on Saturday 10th December in Sand Hutton Village Hall. This will be an informal meeting where residents can come along for a chat over a cup of tea and exchange ideas. There may also be a book exchange, perhaps a plant swap and local groups would be able to come and promote their activities. There will be further information on this event soon and a piece in the next edition of 'The Circular'. **CH and LE to ensure that meeting dates and Saturday Social information included in the next Circular / Website / Enews.**

PARISH PLAN UPDATE

- **School playing field - LE** reminded the Council that there had been a trial of 4 Tuesday afternoons in the summer when the Parish Council hired the school field for local families to use. **LE and SF** reported mixed results from the trial - the open space was ideal for rounders and other games but the attendance from families was disappointingly low. **LE and SF to arrange to meet the Head Teacher of Sand Hutton school and discuss the results of the trial and investigate the viability of weekend hire in term time eg Saturday afternoons.**
- **Development of village website - LE** reported that the Web team (Pete Tidball, Martin Wheldon and Andrew Fawcett) had held a very successful website relaunch event at the Village Hall on the 25th September. Councillors who had attended the event had been impressed with the new look and capabilities of the site - please have a look <http://www.claxton-sandhutton.org.uk/>. **ALL COUNCILLORS to consider what material the Parish Council could add to the website and any additional uses eg feedback on a particular parish idea.**
- **Footpath between villages -** Highways had previously agreed that an approved weed killer such as Round-up could be used to kill the longer grass in the drainage channels so that at least the hazard was clearer to walkers. Regular walkers had reported that the weed killing by **PS** had made it easier to identify the channels but that walking was still quite difficult. Liz Heath requested that there was a late cut of the 'path' at the end of October to keep the grass short for winter. **LE to talk to George Ellis to see if a late cut could be arranged within the remaining budget.** Rachel Baker requested that the Council find out how Foston and Thornton-le-dale managed to get a footpath between villages. **LE to ask Highways why these villages qualified for a footpath.**

ITEM 6: FINANCIAL STATEMENT

LE delivered an overview of the finances. A copy of the accounts spreadsheet had been supplied to each Councillor prior to the meeting.

Cash Position as at 21st Sept 2011 (including cheques issued):-

Current Account	£1,210.64	
Deposit Account	£1,520.77	Includes Parish Plan funds of £496.95
TOTAL	£2,731.41	Including Parish Plan funds as above

Expenses since the last meeting:-

- Expense £487.89 = Qtr 1 Clerk Salary
 - Expense £18.44 = Administration expenses - printer ink and postage
 - Expense £144.00 = External Audit fee 10/11 from Mazars
- **Current Finances LE** reviewed the current financial situation and Councillors noted that there was a small budget for village maintenance. Councillors signed relevant financial documents. The new bank mandate is nearly active.
 - **Accounts 2010/11 -** The external audit has been completed by Mazars and no issues were found.
 - **Grass Cutting Contract for 2012 - LE** asked the Councillors to consider the grass cutting contract for next year and the specification for cuts. The Parish Council has taken on the verge grass cutting rather than Highways and the Highways policy is currently for 6 cuts per season. Councillors considered the specification and concluded that we should ask for quotes based on the current pattern of 6 cuts of the inner areas of the villages (within the village name signs) and 2 cuts of the outer areas which go further down the approach roads eg Sand Hutton Lane. There was a debate over some of the challenges of managing the grass cutting contract and **AS** felt that the Parish Council should have greater control over when the grass cuts occurred. **LE** and parishioners highlighted that contractors have to fit grass cutting in between farming commitments and the weather. **LE to prepare a grass cutting specification to send out to contractors to request quotes.** **AS** felt that the process should be very open and that we should advertise that the contract was up for renewal. **LE to include a notice on the notice boards and website.**
 - **Npower dispute over historic invoices - LE** had prepared a detailed letter to Npower, outlining what the Parish Council believes we owe Npower which is £50.48 rather than the £369.54 that Npower are claiming. **AS** had very bravely read through many of the background papers and spreadsheets and felt that the Parish Council could be even bolder and refuse to pay anything, given the poor standard of billing from Npower. Councillors decided to

leave the letter unchanged at £50.48 and adopt a more blunt approach if that offer was rejected. **LE** thanked **AS** for her research into this difficult conflict. **LE** to submit letter and supporting paperwork to Npower and report any response to Councillors.

ITEM 8: ANY OTHER BUSINESS or ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS

Items for future agendas:

Awarding grass cutting contract

Completing Resilience Scheme for the parish

Items carried forward from this meeting - Benches on Claxton green / More details of Winter Maintenance plan

ITEM 9: DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next Parish Council Meeting will be held on Monday 14th November 2011 at 7:30pm in the Village Hall, Sand Hutton.

Please note that minutes, agendas and other information can now be found on the new Parish website:-

<http://www.claxton-sandhutton.org.uk/>

Questions to: Laura E J Edwards, Clerk to the Parish Council

[Email:laura.edwards@claxtonandsandhuttonparishcouncil.org.uk](mailto:laura.edwards@claxtonandsandhuttonparishcouncil.org.uk)

Freedom of Information Act 2000 Publication Scheme - please contact Clerk, or in her absence the Chairman ,Caroline Hall, if you want to know any information about this Council and its workings.

FERA CAR PARKING SCHEME REMINDER

If you live within the Parish and want to take advantage of FREE weekend parking at FERA visitors car park so you can catch the bus into York / the coast, please email the Clerk with your name, full address and car registration number. Parish Clerk email =

laura.edwards@claxtonandsandhuttonparishcouncil.org.uk