

CLAXTON AND SAND HUTTON PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

DATE OF MEETING: Tuesday, 3rd January 2012

COUNCILLORS PRESENT: Dr C Hall (Chairman), Mr P Stott (Vice Chair), Mrs A Steele, Mrs S Field, Mrs J Whiteley

PARISH CLERK: Mrs Laura E J Edwards

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: County Councillor Clare Wood, District Councillor K Knaggs

ITEM 1: MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

CH welcomed the Parish Councillors and the parishioners to the meeting and thanked them for attending. The minutes of the previous Parish Council meeting held on 14th November 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.

NB Proposed actions are highlighted in Blue.

Apologies were accepted from County Councillor Clare Wood, District Councillors Keith Knaggs and Mr D Smith.

ITEM 2: PUBLIC FORUM

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

- 1) **Farm Vehicles Speeding in Claxton** - Mr P Orton alerted the Parish Council to the number of farm vehicles including very large tractors that come through Claxton. These very wide vehicles often appear to be doing faster speeds than is advisable, especially when they have to navigate past and between parked cars. Councillors discussed this point and agreed that they had also observed this occurring. **CLERK** to look back through minutes to see what action was taken when this was raised in previous years. **CLERK** to establish if there is any support available from the local police and / or request a speed check. **COUNCILLORS** to consider whether a letter to local farmers might alert them to the problem.
- 2) **Felling of Trees along Sand Hutton Lane** - Mr C Garner queried whether the Parish Council had any information about whether the area of trees that had been clear felled on Sand Hutton Lane would be restocked. **LE and CH** confirmed that the Forestry Commission had written before the felling and advised the area would be restocked. **PS** noted that rabbit fencing had been recently installed which suggests that saplings may be planted soon.

ITEM 3: PARISH CLERK VACANCY

CH informed the meeting that the Parish Council had received 10 responses to the advert for a new Clerk but unfortunately, due to a variety of reasons, this had not resulted in an appointment. The Parish Council is now going to re-advertise the role and focus on attracting a local applicant. The Parish Council is also going to examine the volume and nature of the work given to the Clerk and consider whether there are different ways to manage the workload.

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:-
 - 24, Main Street, Sand Hutton - Mr & Mrs Smith. Single storey extension. Approved.
- New planning applications received since previous meeting:-
 - Notice to Fell Trees - Holderness House, Main Street, Claxton - various trees to fell/prune in rear garden
 - Notice to Fell Trees - York House, Main Street, Claxton - Pine in rear garden. Insufficient information.
 - Notice to Fell Trees - verge near Whey Carr Farm, Main Street, Sand Hutton - Works on mature oak

Ryedale District Council correspondence: None to discuss.

NYCC correspondence: LE noted that the Parish Council had received a letter from Highways about some major road works at Brambling Junction which will commence in January. [CLERK to complete Highways survey online.](#)

OTHER correspondence: White Rose Update was noted and other correspondence has been circulated in binder.

ITEM 5: MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

LE introduced the discussion on the following outstanding matters:

NYCC HIGHWAYS ISSUES:

30mph Zone and Road Surfaces – LE highlighted to the meeting that the countdown bar markings on the road have not yet been installed. Highways have advised that they need dry road conditions so it may be a while before these are in place [CLERK to continue to monitor and advise on further progress at the next PC meeting.](#)

Village Signs - LE reported on various quotes obtained for a new metal finger sign with the wording 'Village Hall' to add to the existing metal post in Sand Hutton. The 'middle' option for a simple powder coated chevron finger still amounted £237 (inc VAT). [LE to forward the proposed design and look of the sign to Councillors for approval.](#) [CH to approach the Village Hall Committee to see if they would consider sharing the cost, considering it provides directions to the Village Hall.](#)

[Outstanding action - LE to remove one of the Claxton name plate signs and attempt repainting.](#)

Traffic Signs – At the previous meeting, there was a query about obtaining traffic signs to dissuade HGVs from using our village roads. LE asked Highways for advice and they informed the Parish Council that new signs have been reported in the media after the publication of a new central government Traffic Signs Policy Paper 'Signing the Way'. North Yorkshire County Council has not yet decided how to interpret the central government advice for local use. [CLERK to continue to liaise with Highways to establish if these signs will be used in North Yorkshire and the criteria for their use.](#)

Street Light, Whinny Lane – LE reported that fixing the street light in Whinny Lane turned into another street lighting saga with site visits from Balfour Beatty and NEDL. A piece of armoured cable has been replaced as well as a fuse and it is now operational again. LE was pleased to note that Balfour Beatty agreed to charge for just 1 visit considering the time it took to resolve. LE highlighted to Councillors that all the lighting columns are aging and that maintenance problems could increase in frequency. A replacement column is over £1000, funds we do not have.

Central reservation in A64 – No news to report to date.

OTHER VILLAGE ISSUES:

Community Police Officer and Ryedale Policing - Recent Police reports were noted and PC Andy Grant has recently attended Sand Hutton School to talk with the children and staff.

Sand Hutton Walled Garden - Councillor Caroline Hall declared a personal interest in the following topic as she is both an immediate neighbour and a friend of the owners of the Walled Garden, Hall Drive, Sand Hutton. CH explained to the meeting that the Parish Council had been approached by a parishioner who was concerned about the news that the Walled Garden was going to be demolished, commencing on 9th January. The Walled Garden is owned by Colin and June Garner and they have explored various options to preserve the walled garden but have met various obstacles. Planning permission for 3 houses to fund repairing the walls was refused by the Planning Committee at RDC in October 2011 and so the owners have now decided that the best option is to demolish the garden, particularly as they have Health and Safety concerns about the structure. The Parish Council is not yet clear on role for the Council in this matter but would like to open up the issue for discussion. **Councillors** addressed the meeting and expressed sadness that the Walled Garden may be demolished. **Councillors** saw the walled garden as an important part of village heritage since it was one of the last vestiges of Sand Hutton Hall. **Professor Colin Garner and June Garner**, the owners of the site, then added that they had utilised best endeavours to get funding to preserve the Walled Garden. Since the walled garden is not a designated Heritage Asset, it has been harder to protect, even though they felt there was a strong argument for 'enabling development'. The Garners felt that their application would have benefitted from more expressions of formal support eg letters from local groups. They now wish to focus on making the site safe - as private owners, they believe that they are liable for any incidents on the site. Other local residents then expressed opinions, again emphasising shock and sadness that the Walled Garden may be taken down in the next few weeks. **Mr W Miers** highlighted that Planning Permission had been refused because of the heritage argument but also because of Highways issues around the access track. **Mr W Miers** hoped that there could be a delay in the demolition to allow other options to be explored for preserving the walls. CH then asked the Councillors to vote on a formal request from Parish Council re the demolition. It was resolved to request a delay in demolition and to arrange an additional meeting to discuss further plans. [CH to write to Professor and June Garner to formally request delay in demolition.](#) Discussion then continued and Professor Garner expressed his hope that Councillors would be willing to meet with District Councillors. Councillors noted that at present, there is no live planning application to discuss. **ALL** agreed that there was a requirement for further discussion and exploration of other possible outcomes.

Play Spaces for Children - Deferred until the next meeting.

Resilience - Snow Clearance. There was a discussion about some of the practical aspects of the Snow clearing plans eg storage of snow clearing equipment. Councillors resolved that:-

1) Peter Stott would be the lead volunteer for Sand Hutton and phone other volunteers

- 2) Laura Edwards would be the lead volunteer for Claxton and phone other volunteers
 - 3) Equipment provided by RDC eg gloves, shovels would be stored at the homes of lead volunteers
 - 4) If the lead volunteers are away, they should pass on equipment and phone list to another resident. Snow clearing equipment can be stored in the Village Hall shed during the summer months but needs to be closer to site in the winter.
- CLERK to publicise the Snow Code on website/ notice boards etc so that parishioners and volunteers are reassured by the government stance on litigation following snow clearance.

Benches - Deferred until the next meeting.

Communication - CH reminded the meeting that there had been a 'Saturday Social' event on Saturday 10th December in Sand Hutton Village Hall and she was pleased to report that it had been lively and well attended. AS summarised some of the key pieces of feedback from the event. The response to the Saturday Social idea had been very positive and residents had enjoyed the refreshments, the book exchange, the website demonstration and the chance to socialise. AS listed a variety of ideas from the suggestion box eg bulk oil purchasing scheme, community 'shopping' eg local producers, skills evenings eg baking/ photography, regular litter picks, etc. AS to summarise the suggestions and combine with the ideas from the Annual Parish Meeting so that Councillors can identify themes/priorities. It was resolved to hold another Saturday Social this spring - date to be decided. AS noted that not everyone eg new arrivals to the village, seems to be aware of the valuable Enews service or the new parish website. It was noted by Councillors that by subscribing to updates on the parish website, residents will receive an email when a new event / news item is published to the site - please see <http://www.claxton-sandhutton.org.uk>

High Speed Broadband - AS, as a member of Local Steering Group, updated the meeting on progress on the broadband project. The Steering Group is meeting on 9th January and the group includes Andrew Fawcett from Claxton, a broadband specialist and also 6 members from local villages in our area. There will be further information to report after that meeting. There is more information and FAQ on this topic on the parish website <http://www.claxton-sandhutton.org.uk>. AS to update the Council with any progress at the next meeting. (If you want to express interest in this project, please email jos.holmes@ryedale.gov.uk).

Telephone Boxes - LE advised the meeting that Liz Heath had requested that Councillors consider adopting the 2 phone boxes in our Parish for the purpose of housing defibrillators for the community. LE reminded the meeting that BT is encouraging Parish Council to adopt phone boxes and that they are being used for a whole variety of purposes. Call statistics from the phone boxes indicate that the Claxton phone box is used more than Sand Hutton. Councillors debated the idea but had some concerns over becoming responsible for the electricity supply and the painting and maintenance and also whether the phone boxes should remain as operational phones. CLERK to provide additional background information and statistics to Councillors and include on a future agenda for further consideration.

PARISH PLAN UPDATE

- **School playing field** - Deferred until Spring.
- **Development of village website** - <http://www.claxton-sandhutton.org.uk> LE updated the meeting that Martin Wheldon will be setting up dedicated email addresses for the councillors ASAP and also an email for the Clerk (rather than a named individual). PT to ask Martin Wheldon to create the email facility for Councillors / for advice on set up.
- **Footpath between villages** - LE noted that additional cuts of the grass to create the rustic 'path' between the villages need to be factored into the budget next year.(see item 6)

Parishioners were free to stay for the remainder of the meeting but all opted to leave at this point.

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 28th December 2011 (including cheques issued):-

Current Account	£2,240.24	
Deposit Account	£1,520.77	Includes Parish Plan funds of £496.95
TOTAL	£3,761.01	Including Parish Plan funds as above

- Invoices paid /receipts received since previous meeting were noted:
 - Expense £35.99 = Email server costs in 2011
 - Expense £487.89 = Qtr 3 Clerk Salary
 - Expense £11.99 = Administration expense - printer ink
 - Expense £46.64 = Street lighting maintenance - Column 6, Whinny Lane, Claxton
- **Current Year** - LE highlighted key figures from actuals vs budget as at 28th December and Councillors noted that even though there was only 1 quarter left before the year end, only about half the costs for the year had been spent.

However, the grass cutting costs are due very soon. Councillors resolved to pay Ryedale Citizens Advice Bureau £25 as a donation towards their work for local people - this is in line with the Charitable Donations policy. **LE to prepare payment of £25 to Ryedale CAB prior to next meeting and collate any other outstanding charges.**

- **Npower dispute over historic invoices** - LE was delighted to be able to report that since the last meeting, LE had contacted the Business Complaints team again and after further exchanges with a new Complaints Advisor, Npower have agreed to write off all the outstanding items! Councillors expressed relief that this saga appears to be resolved after several years of challenging the poor standard of billing and the disproportionate administration charges.
- **Budget 2012/13** - LE presented a draft budget to Councillors based on a forecast for the year end 2011/12. Known changes were then added to develop a budget for income and costs in 2012/13. LE then highlighted the key considerations for deciding the Precept level for next year in order to cover the core service requirements and maintain reserves of at least £1,500. The costs proposed are very similar to 2011/12 - there are a variety of small increases eg YLCA fees up 3%, etc and the budget for grass cutting costs has increased to incorporate the regular cutting of the strip between the two villages.
- **Precept 2012/12** - LE presented Councillors with a summary showing a range of possible precept levels and trying to put the Precept in context within Ryedale. Councillors debated the level of Precept funding required to support the cost budget next year. Councillors were concerned about increasing the Precept in the current financial climate but the £200 increase suggested only covers the provision of current services without one-off projects / additional maintenance / Jubilee plans etc. AS felt that any changes in the Precept should be communicated to local residents. It was resolved to submit a request for £4,400 for 2012/13. **LE to submit precept request of £4,400 to RDC by Friday 6th January 2012.**

ITEM 7: ANY OTHER BUSINESS or ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS

No items of AOB raised.

Items for future agendas:

Awarding grass cutting contract / Completing Resilience Scheme for the parish / Use of Phone boxes for Emergency Equipment - further discussion / Themes from Annual Parish Meeting and Saturday Social Suggestions

ITEM 8: DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next Parish Council Meeting will be held on Monday 13th February 2012 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, Acting Clerk to the Parish Council,
[Email:laura.edwards@claxtonandsandhuttonparishcouncil.org.uk](mailto:laura.edwards@claxtonandsandhuttonparishcouncil.org.uk)

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