
GRANTLEY, SAWLEY, SKELDING AND EAVESTONE PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

DATE: Tuesday 26th May 2015
TIME: 19.30 hrs
LOCATION: Sawley Village Hall
PRESENT: Parish Councillors John Scannell (Chairman), Martin Kirbitson (Vice-Chairman), Stuart Green, Trevor Kitchen, June Learoyd and Mike Lumb.
IN ATTENDANCE: Iona Taylor (Clerk)
District and County Councillor Margaret Atkinson
Howard Mountain

1. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN AND SIGNING OF THEIR DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE AND AGREEMENT TO ABIDE BY THE COUNCIL'S CODE OF CONDUCT

It was resolved that Councillor Kirbitson be elected as Chairman for the forthcoming year. His declaration of acceptance of office and agreement to abide by the Council's Code of Conduct was duly received.

2. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN AND SIGNING OF THEIR DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE AND AGREEMENT TO COMPLY WITH THE CODE OF CONDUCT

It was resolved that Councillor Lumb be elected as Vice-Chairman for the forthcoming year. His declaration of acceptance of office and agreement to abide by the Council's Code of Conduct was duly received.

3. WELCOME

Councillor Kirbitson welcomed all those present to the meeting.

4. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received and accepted from Councillor Soley due to illness.

5. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN ITEMS ON THE AGENDA – none.

6. REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS – none.

7. REPORT ON PARISH COUNCIL BUSINESS 2014/15

Councillors

John Scannell (Chairman), Martin Kirbitson (Vice-Chairman), Stuart Green, Trevor Kitchen, June Learoyd, Mike Lumb and Martin Soley have all served on the Council throughout the year.

Meetings

The Parish Council has met 7 times since the last Annual Parish Council meeting. An extraordinary meeting was held on 2nd March 2015 to consider a large number of consultations on planning applications.

Planning

- The Parish Council has considered 20 planning applications throughout the year – a 150% increase on 2013/14!
- Proposals have ranged from a riding arena to extensions to dwellings, flues and agricultural buildings.
- The Parish Council has noted developments with the preparation of Harrogate Borough Council's Local Plan and has been represented at workshops on this subject. The abolition of the settlement hierarchy and emerging policies are likely to have a potential impact on future development in this parish.

General

- The Parish Council has continued to operate the Grantley & Sawley Oil Club which now has 29 members. 8 orders have been placed throughout the year, with an exceptionally low price of 32.35p/l being achieved in January 2015.
- The Parish Council continues to operate the parish caretaker scheme whereby DTMS Ltd from Fellbeck are contracted to carry out 8 hours of maintenance works each month. Tasks undertaken this year include inspecting and maintaining the playgrounds, strimming at Picking Gill and litter picking.
- The Parish Council has taken legal advice in respect of the access and maintenance issues across Sawley Village Green. This matter is ongoing.

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- The Parish Council has ascertained the ownership of the common land in the parish. It is looking in to registering those areas which are in its ownership.
- A Himalayan Balsam Picking Party was held in conjunction with volunteers from BT Openreach to reduce the amount of this pernicious weed at Picking Gill. A trial control of the bracken on this site has also been undertaken with the results imminently expected.
- Results from speed monitoring exercises in Sawley are still awaited.
- North Yorkshire County Council's decision to stop paying for verge cutting through villages will have an impact on the Parish Council's budget. The Parish Council continues to contract Farm & Land Services Ltd to carry out regular cuts of the public areas in Grantley and Sawley.
- The Parish Council continues to support the work of Ripon Citizens Advice Bureau and the Friends of the Nidderdale AONB.
- After inviting representatives from Galphay's successful community broadband scheme to address the September 2014 meeting, Councillor Lumb co-ordinated ongoing efforts to bring this service to Grantley. Sawley is now served by a mainstream fibre-optic service.
- The Council has responded to consultations by North Yorkshire County Council on the future of library and bus services in this County.
- The Parish Council will work to meet the requirements of the new Transparency Code for Smaller Authorities by increasing the amount of information it displays on its website: www.gssepc.btck.co.uk

8. COUNCIL'S DOCUMENTS

It was resolved that the following documents be approved without amendment, but that they be updated during the course of the next few months:

- 8.1 Standing Orders
- 8.2 Risk Assessment
- 8.3 Financial Risk Assessment
- 8.4 Code of Conduct

It was resolved that the following documents be approved without amendment:

- 8.5 Publication Scheme
- 8.6 Retention of Documents and Information Policy.

Asset Register

- 8.7 Updated Register

An updated register, taking account of the investments held for the parish room funds, was considered and approved.

Financial Regulations

- 8.8 Amended regulations.

It was resolved that an amended and updated set of financial regulations be approved and adopted by the Parish Council.

- 8.9 Schedule of payments to be made between meetings.

It was resolved that, in accordance with financial regulation number 5, the Clerk be given the delegated authority to make the payments listed below between meetings of the Parish Council. This is subject to the protocols in the newly adopted financial regulations being adhered to.

- Payments to the Clerk (wages and expenses).
- Payments to HMRC to cover any PAYE incurred.
- DTMS Ltd (Parish Caretaker)
- Farm & Land Services Ltd (Grasscutting)

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8.10 Payments to be made electronically by direct bank transfer.

It was resolved that the following payments be made by direct bank transfer, subject to the protocols in the newly adopted financial regulations being adhered to:

- Payments to the Clerk (wages and expenses).
- Payments to HMRC to cover any PAYE incurred.
- DTMS Ltd (Parish Caretaker)
- Farm & Land Services Ltd (Grasscutting)

8.11 Backup of Council's data.

It was agreed that investigations should be made in to whether 'cloud' storage would provide an appropriate method of backing up the Council's data and that a report should be made to the next Parish Council meeting.

9. FINANCIALS

9.1 2014/15 accounts.

It was resolved that the previously circulated, 2014/15 accounts be approved.

The accompanying bank reconciliation was approved and signed by the Chairman.

9.2 2014/15 underspend.

It was noted that there had been an under-spend of £691.48 on playground maintenance during the 2014/15 financial year. It was agreed that this should be added to the funds already ring-fenced for this purpose.

The Council now has £3,757.72 set aside for this future repairs or replacements.

9.3 2014/15 Annual Return.

It was resolved that the 2014/15 Annual Return (including the Accounting Statements and Annual Governance Statements) be approved and signed ready for submission to Littlejohn (the Council's External Auditor).

9.4 Internal Auditor's opinion on 2014/15 accounts.

It was noted that the Internal Auditor has now completed her examination of the 2014/15 accounts and affairs of the Parish Council, with a satisfactory outcome having been achieved.

The full report will be displayed on the Council's website; however the following points were brought to the Council's attention:

- Points raised during the 2013/14 audit have been acted upon appropriately.
- It is suggested that the two Councillors who sign cheques, should also sign the stubs and the corresponding invoice.
- It is recommended that the Council's standard documents (Standing Orders etc) should be kept up to date in light of recent changes to legislature.

9.5 Internal Audit Report.

It was resolved that the Internal Audit Report for 2015/16, including the Statement of Internal Control, Annual Audit Plan and the Annual Review of the Effectiveness of Internal Audit be approved and signed by the Chairman.

10. INSURANCE

The Council considered a number of options available for the provision of its insurance policy. This included quotations from AON, Zurich and Came & Company Local Council Insurance.

It was resolved that the Parish Council should enter a new three year agreement with Came & Company Local Council Insurance at a cost of £279.30 for the first year. The policy is underwritten by Hiscox.

11. ANNUAL DONATIONS AND SUBSCRIPTIONS

11.1 Sawley in Bloom.

It was agreed that the second annual donation, covering the 2015/16 financial year, should be made to Sawley in Bloom.

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11.2 Friends of Nidderdale AONB.

It was agreed that a donation of £33 be made to this organisation.

11.3 Ripon Office, Craven and Harrogate District Citizens' Advice Bureau.

It was agreed that a donation of £50 be made to this organisation.

11.4 Yorkshire Local Councils Associations.

It was agreed that the Council should renew its membership of this organisation at a cost of £183 for the 2015/16 financial year.

12. PARISH ROOM PROCEEDS

12.1 Update on administration of the funds, including current balance.

The following is a summary of activity throughout the 14/15 financial year and of the current position:

- 3 grants were made from the Sawley Small Grants Scheme, totalling £621.70.
- In addition the first annual donation to Sawley in Bloom was made - £320.
- The proceeds also paid for servicing the church clock and legal advice re. Sawley Village Green (a total of £625).
- At the end of the financial year £121,212.93 was placed in longer term investments:
 1. £50,000 – Co-operative Bank, 1.5% – matures on 21/7/15.
 2. £34,920.69 – Cambridge Building Society, 1.5% – matures on 21/7/15.
 3. £36,292.24 – Castle Trust, 2.75% – matures on 1/3/17
- The total balance of the Parish Room Proceeds as at 31/3/15 was £138,928.98.

12.2 Grants panel.

It was agreed that instead of holding a formal meeting of the Grants Panel every time an application is received, they should be circulated to both Parish Councillors and Arlene Flexman prior to a Parish Council meeting. Any questions or concerns should be ironed out prior to the meeting and a proposal on each application be formulated for inclusion on the agenda of the meeting at which the application is to be determined.

In the event of a contentious application being received then Grants Panel meeting may be convened, to be attended by any three of the Sawley Ward Councillors and Arlene Flexman.

12.3 VAT on purchases made from Parish Room Proceeds.

It was noted that £125 of VAT reimbursed by HMRC in to the Parish Council's current account has been transferred to the account used for the administration of the Parish Room Proceeds. The £125 was made up of £100 of VAT on the Chadwick Lawrence invoice and £25 on the Time Assured invoice.

12.4 Cost of administering Parish Room Proceeds.

It was agreed that the cost of the Clerk's time in administering the Parish Room Proceeds during the 2014/15 financial year (£151.14) should be transferred from the Parish Room to the Parish Council's bank account.

Meeting closed at 20.54 hrs.

These minutes were recorded and prepared by Iona Taylor, Clerk to the Parish Council.

SIGNED: (Chairman)

DATE: