

# Roecliffe and Westwick Parish Council

Correspondence Address:

Clerk: David Taylor,  
c/o Thornfield, 57 Whitcliffe Lane, Ripon, North Yorkshire., HG4 2LB  
Email: roecliffe.westwick.parish.council@gmail.com  
Telephone: 01765 602 402  
www.roecliffe.org.uk

## Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Parish Council held on Tuesday 26th September 2017 at 7.00pm Roecliffe CE Primary School, Roecliffe

**(2017 – 020) Parish Councillors present** at the meeting were Cllr Jim Bolland (Chairman), Cllr Dave Siswick (Vice Chairman), Cllr Diana Bishop, Cllr Scott Green, Cllr John Newberry, Cllr Stuart Varley.

**(2017 – 021) Also present** were David Taylor - Clerk, Cllr Robert Windass and one member of the public

**(2017 – 022) Apologies** were received and approved from Cllr Joyce Reeve.

**(2017 – 023) No Declarations of Interest** were received and no Applications for Dispensation required.

**(2017 – 024) The resignation** from the position of Chairman, due to ill health, was received by Cllr Jim Bolland. Cllr Bolland will continue as a Parish Councillor. After nearly 10 years as Chairman of the Parish Council, heartfelt thanks were given to Cllr Bolland for all his efforts in the service of the Parish Council and those present wished him all the very best.

**(2017 – 025)** Cllr Siswick was **elected** as Chairman by a unanimous show of hands. He as **nominated** by Cllr Bolland and **seconded** by Cllr Green.

**(2017 – 026)** Cllr Newbury was **elected** as Vice-Chairman by a unanimous show of hands. He as **nominated** by Cllr Bolland and **seconded** by Cllr Siswick.

**(2017 – 027)** It was **resolved** that the Chairman's allowance should be carried over for the duration of the year.

**(2017 – 028)** It was **resolved** that the minutes of the meeting on 8th May 2017 were true and correct records. The Chairman signed them accordingly.

**(2017 – 029)** Cllr Robert Windlass **reported** on the following from North Yorkshire County Council:-

- a. Cllr Windlass had checked with Melissa Burnham at NYCC (Area 6) regarding the progress of planned restrictions of HGVs through the village. He reported that the contractor is due to put up the signs.
- b. With regard to the proposed sugar beet factory at Allerton Park, please see Appendix A, attached, for details of his report.
- c. Police and Crime Commissioner has applied to take on responsibilities for fire and rescue services in the area.
- d. There is also a Fire Service plan being finalised to introduce area "Tactical Response Units". Outlying area units will be staffed with crews of 4 in order for them to be able to tackle fires.

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e. School exam results are satisfactory with some improvements across the region.

f. Cllr Windlass reported that he had investigated the handling of the sink hole outside the Roecliffe Primary School earlier this year. He found that the first reaction when it was reported to NYCC was that it was a private road. Area 6 were advised otherwise. The situation arose following work carried out by Northern Power-Grid. Cllr has since had a meeting with the NYCC call centre manager and he believes the situation is resolved.

**(2017 – 030)** The Clerk **reported** that:-

g. Following the application to the transparency fund, the Parish Council has received an award of £1751.71 in order to fulfil its obligation under the Transparency Code.

h. He explained his plans for Parish Council IT infrastructure as out lined in "Appendix B" below. It was resolved by the Council that in principle this should be implemented but that ownership of equipment and insurance should be clarified.

i. He had attended a meeting with Deborah Flowers at NYCC Highways – Area 6 in order to familiarise himself with the system in general and the new Parish Portal specifically.

k. He has a meeting with the planning department at Harrogate Borough Council on 5th October in order to familiarise himself with the systems there.

l. He had attended a course given by YLCA on "Procedures, Powers and Policies"

**(2017 – 031)** It was **reported** that the Neighbourhood Plan was progressing well with the news that a grant in the sum of £4818.00 had been awarded and that the NP Committee would now be able to instruct a consultant to prepare the draft plan for submission.

**(2017 – 032) Planning Matters:-**

m. 17/03856/FUL Church Garth, Mr & Mrs Webster – the Parish Council has no objections.

n. Progress on the Hen Huts, they are now being built.

**(2017 – 033)** Cllr Siswick **reported** that he had now completed the survey of the village trees and that necessary work had been identified. The work had been put out to tender with 2 quotations for works being received. It was resolved that JC trees should be instructed to carry out the work and that it should be done during half term in order to alleviate traffic disruption in the village.

**(2017 – 034)** Cllr Siswick prompted a **discussion** regarding the funding of the village trees on the future. He proposed that as the trees were a village asset, enhancing the appearance and amenity of the village, thus providing benefit to all, they should be paid for by all village residents via the precept rather than the fund-raising efforts of a few

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people. The matter was left unresolved to be revisited when the precept was set in January 2018.

**(2017 – 035)** It was also **noted** that Roecliffe Common and the village pond are Parish Council responsibilities. The Clerk is to find out about costs of making both these areas safe and the extent of the liability the Parish Council has in these regards.

**(2017 – 036)** It was **resolved** that the Clerk should request from Farm & Land Services Ltd – the grass cutting contractor – that a designated member of the Parish Council should be notified prior to grass being cut in order that the work can be monitored. No person was designated. See report below at "Appendix C".

**(2017 – 037)** It was **resolved** by unanimous show of hands – proposed by Cllr Bolland and seconded by Cllr Newberry – that the following **delegated powers** should be handed down to the Clerk:-

- a. That when Planning Application papers have been circulated to all members of the Parish Council and the Clerk has received comments from Councillors, the Clerk shall have the power to submit view of the Parish Council, in the correct form, to the Planning Authority.
- b. That subject to the controls in the Council's Financial Regulations, the following schedule of payments can be made via internet banking or by cheque (when such authority is handed to the incoming Clerk or by cheque, as the case may be) between ordinary meetings of the Council:
  - i. Monthly salary and expenses payments to David Taylor (Clerk)
  - ii. Monthly PAYE and NIC payments to HM Revenue and Customs.
  - iii. Payments to suppliers of services that are in accordance with an agreed quotation.

**(2017 – 038)** The proposed **Sugar Beet factory** was discussed at length – see "Appendix A" below for notes and action.

**(2017 – 039)** Cllr Green **proposed** registering certain properties in the village as Amenity Assets. It was resolved that the Village School should be registered as such and that Cllr. Green would proceed with paperwork accordingly.

**(2017 – 040)** It was **resolved** that the Clerk should contact Community Speed Watch at North Yorkshire Police and Pannal Parish Council and seek advice about joining the scheme. <https://northyorkshire.police.uk/what-we-do/road-policing/community-speed-watch/>

**(2017 – 041)** With regard to the land opposite Alexanders on Bar Lane, it was **reported** by Cllr Bishop that the land is being used by youths who on occasion are acting in an anti-social and intimidating manner. It was resolved that the Clerk should find out the status of the path way across the land and notify the safer Neighbourhood Group accordingly. It was also noted that the land adjacent to Payne's Dairies was being used as a toilet by, it was thought, drivers at the depot. The clerk should write to Payne's Dairies and point this out.

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**(2017 – 042)** It was **reported** that Cllrs Bolland and Siswick attended a recent meeting regarding the restriction of HGVs to pass through the village. They were told by Police representatives that the procedure for implementing the prohibition HGVs passing through the village is:

- i. To form a "Lorry Watch Group".
- ii. A co-ordinator from the group then informs Trading Standards of any prohibited vehicles who are passing through the village.
- iii. They must pass on the time & date as well as the vehicle registration number and Company name.
- iv. Trading Standards then inform VOSA who look at the possibility of prosecution.
- v. It was noted that foreign vehicles are outside of the scope of the scheme.

**(2017 – 043)** **Payments** to the following were authorised:-

- i. The Clerk, salary.
- ii. HMRC, PAYE re the Clerk's salary.
- iii. Farm and Land Services Ltd re grass cutting.
- iv. Harrogate Borough Council re tree services.

**(2017 - 044)** The external auditors report was **received** by the Council.

**(2017 - 045)** Correspondence was **received** from – Adrienne Bellwood by email.  
Noted, Clerk to respond.

**(2017 – 046)** There were no items to be considered at the next meeting forthcoming from Councillors.

**(2017 – 047)** It was confirmed that the next **meetings of the Parish Council** would be on:-

- Monday 27th November 2017 at 7.00pm
- Monday 5th February 2018 at 7.00pm
- Monday 9th April 2018 at 7.00pm, to include the Annual Roecliffe Parish Meeting
- Local Elections are due to take place in May 2018

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

Signed as a true record by Cllr Dave Siswick, Chairman

Date:

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## **Appendix "A" – The proposed sugar beet factory**

1. There will be a public meeting at Boroughbridge Primary School at 19.00hrs on 27<sup>th</sup> September 2017. This will consist of a presentation by Northern Sugar the company proposing to develop and operate the site.
2. The operators of the Waste Recovery Plant at Allerton Park AmeyCespa, whose parent company the Spanish waste management firm Ferrovial, began talks with interested parties who would utilise the energy output from Allerton Park.
3. Al Khaleej Sugar the Dubai based, Cayman Island registered company were quickly very interested and entered into negotiations. They formed Northern Sugar.
4. NYCC agreed to sell them land near Rabbit Hill at 2.5 times the agricultural value the sale is contingent on planning permission being granted by Harrogate Borough Council.
5. The land is in Cllr Windlass's constituency.
6. There is concern over flooding as water from the refining process will be discharged into the rivers Nidd and Ouse and a rate of 20,000 tonnes per day. The refining season will be during winter months.
7. HGV vehicle movements will be at a rate of 2/minute 24 hours per day when the plant is operating at capacity.
8. Cllr Windlass was keen not to give his views on the proposal because he sits on the HBC planning committee.
9. It was noted that certain members of the HBC planning committee have already been judged to have predetermined the matter of planning consent and that there were scarcely enough members of the Council who were trained to sit on this committee.
10. Cllr Windlass said that the sale of the land by NYCC to Northern Sugar was an executive decision and that it was never put before elected councillors.

There was further discussion on the subject by members of the Parish Council as follows:-

11. Cllr Scott Green wanted to know the process followed for the sale of the land site by NYCC.
12. He wanted a letter to be drafted by the Clerk from the Parish Council asking NYCC to clarify the process and powers used for the sale of this

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valuable asset and the rationale behind it. He thought that the meeting should have been minuted and wanted to see a copy of the minutes.

13. He also wanted to know the official position of NYCC Highways department. The Clerk is to start drafting a letter and take advice from YLCA.
14. Notable Councillors are Carl Les, (Catterick Bridge division, Leader, Conservative), Gareth Dadd (Thirsk division, Conservative) & Andy Paraskos, (Ainsty division, Conservative).
15. The Clerk is also to begin drafting a letter in preparation for when the planning application is put in to Harrogate Borough Council.

## **Appendix "B" - The Transparency Fund**

I have made applications on behalf of the 4 Parish Councils that I serve (Azerley Parish Council, Grantley & Sawley Parish Council, Bishop Monkton Parish Council and Roecliffe and Westwick Parish Council) to the Transparency Fund.

To be clear, the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 sets out a new audit framework for local public authorities which are currently covered by the Audit Commission regime. This includes all 4 Parish Councils above.

Under the new audit framework, smaller authorities, including local councils with an annual turnover not exceeding £25,000 will be exempt from routine external audit

In place of routine audit, these smaller authorities will be subject to the new transparency requirements laid out in the Transparency Code for Smaller Authorities – "The Code."

This will enable local electors and ratepayers to access relevant information about the authorities' accounts and governance.

The Code came into force on 1 April 2015 but will be enforced from April 2018 and so Council's with an annual turnover less than £25,000 MUST be compliant!

Information which should be published includes the following:-

Annually

- All items of expenditure above £100
- End of year accounts
- Annual governance statement
- Internal audit report
- list of councillor or member responsibilities
- The details of public land and building assets (if you haven't got any say so!)

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More frequently

- Minutes, agendas and meeting papers of formal meetings
  - The minutes from all formal meetings (i.e. full council and sub-committee meetings) not later than one month after the meeting has taken place. (These may be draft because of this)
  - Meeting agendas, which are as full and informative as possible, and associated meeting papers not later than three days before the meeting to which they relate is taking place.
  - These documents need to remain on the website for as long as the council considers is reasonable. (10 years?)

In order to comply with these requirements, smaller authorities such as ours will be put to some burden; the cost of equipment and the costs of running a website. With this in mind, the Department for Communities & Local Government has created a Smaller Authorities Transparency Fund to which those eligible authorities (not Parish Meetings), can apply for funding to cover some of the financial burden of becoming compliant with the Code.

A local council is eligible to apply for the fund if it has an annual turnover of less than £25,000 or if it usually has an annual turnover of less than £25,000 but has been 'tipped over' this threshold due to a one-off project or grant, provided the threshold is not exceeded for more than three years.

In order to implement the above requirements across the 4 Parish Councils:

I shall purchase a desktop PC, a tablet, a mobile phone, a printer/scanner and a telephone line/broadband service into my home office. There would be other purchases such as a sim for the mobile, a USB Hub, software etc. The insurance position regarding the equipment would need to be clarified per Parish Council according to what is "assigned to that Parish Council".

First and foremost, this will enable me to update and maintain the Parish Council websites, uploading documents and editing pages as required. It will also enable me to be in better contact with Councillors with emails coming into one account across all three devices.

## **Appendix "C"**

Meeting with Farm & Land Services Ltd - Alastair Downie, Director.

On 27<sup>th</sup> September I met with Alastair Downie of Farm & Land Services Ltd in order to discuss the problems with the quality of grass cutting encountered by all 4 Parish Councils at times this season.

Mr Downie was, it appeared, genuinely surprised to hear specific complaints but welcomed the observations as he wishes to provide a first rate service.

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He commented that it has been a wetter than normal season and that as a consequence the grass itself has held more water thus making it almost impossible for the cuttings to 'fly away'. Another consequence of the grass holding more water is that his team could not use the usual gang cylinder mowers because they would clog. Very often they had to use rotary mowers which although they cut the grass also leave the cuttings clumped and not quite as presentable.

I stressed that I worked with F&LS Ltd across all 4 Parish Councils and was reflecting the feedback received from both Councillors and members of the public.

We agreed that he would email me the approximate times when he would be cutting grass in our areas, I could then forward these to Councillors. He could not guarantee to let us know precise days because of the changing weather patterns but let us know to within a couple of days.