

COTHERSTONE PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the Meeting
Wednesday, 9th March 2016: 7.00pm
Cotherstone Village Hall

The Chairman opened the meeting at 7.00pm.

Present: R Hunter, J Watson, D Rabbitts, K Harrow, J Gill, A Thorn

In attendance: E Gill (clerk)

- 1. Declaration of interest** DR and JW – cutting village greens
- 2. Apologies for absence:** J Birkett
- 3. Minutes of the February meeting** were signed by the Chairman as being a true and accurate record.
- 4. Matters arising**

Post on Moor Road Green: Encroachment of verge has now been cut back.

Annual Audit: Councillors investigated costs of local auditors and have decided to opt out of SAAAL. This is due to CPC having income/expenditure under £25K and no requirement to do an annual audit at all – just the annual return and a declaration. Opt out (Group 4) means that the charity can choose own auditor and negotiate costs, whereas if choosing to do an audit when opted in, SAAAL will allocate an auditor at a cost of £200. EG to formally opt out before 31 March.

Bog field water level: water level dropping slowly.

Drainage outside West Park: DCC have visited and tackled the problem, but don't yet know how successful it will have been.

Trees down on Teesdale Way between Balder and Tees footbridges: Some work has been done but appears unfinished. EG to ask Mike Murden what further action is still to be taken to remove the trees before the tourist season gets in full swing. Copy to Carole Icton, Hunderthwaite PC clerk.

Bin beside seat near Balder bank: DCC have taken away after it being blown over, EG to check with DCC that a bin will be returned.

Brook House café: EG to query whether car parking sign has been approved yet.

Neighbourhood Watch: PCSO Katie Bartle continues to correspond with KH regarding arranging a neighbourhood watch meeting.

- 5. (a) Cemetery, Greens, Allotments**

Cemetery noticeboard fixed and back in place.

Thompson grave: kerbstones not mended. Family member is being sent to fix – still outstanding.

Kerbstones: No new suggestions for use.

Allotments: Allotment rents all paid.

(b) Playarea: nothing to report.

- 6. Accounts for payment:** Clerk salary £300. Also payment for Zurich insurance £477.55 approved – cheque to be sent on 1 April as should fall into 2016-17 year.

Other finances: £763 grant gone into bank from Groundwork UK regarding Neighbourhood Plan.

- 7. Reports from representatives:** None

DR and JW declared an interest in agenda item 8. Grass cutting contracts and left the room while the item was discussed.

- 8. Grass cutting tenders:** There were five interested parties. A Whitehead declined to submit a tender due to already having organised work for the year. The four remaining applications (C Stamp, SE Landscaping, Thwaites and Watson, AR Toward) differed little in terms of overall cost. The rate for

additional hours varied a little more, ranging from £10 to £20 per hour. Due to positive experience gained from Thwaites and Watson in the previous tender period and their knowledge of what is required and when, it was agreed that Thwaites and Watson should be offered the contract. The additional work fee they quoted was also favourable. EG to offer contract subject to a check of public liability insurance. Reply to other tenders to thank for interest.

DR and JW were invited back into the meeting.

9. Planning

DM/15/02632/TCA: Felling of a sycamore tree on Fitzhugh Court – still outstanding.

Camping pods: There was advance warning from Simon Crow at Greystones that they plan to put two camping pods in the field to the rear of the property. However non-permanent structures.

10. Neighbourhood plan: Now formulating policies to go with the five objectives. The first one to be tackled is housing. Planning Advice Plus will continue to work on this while grant funds still available. Once the wording on this is correct, it will be possible to work on the others in a similar way. A further £1000 can be claimed from Groundwork UK in the 2016-17 year. Agreed that £1500 from general CPC funds to be reserved for NP purposes to get the plan finalised. Also noted that much of the remaining work after getting the housing policy completed would be done by volunteers.

11. Correspondence

Email from the office of Helen Goodman regarding CPC reserves: EG to notify of £5492 reserves in the year to 31 March 2015 and explain what reserved for.

Email from Stephen Ragg regarding the annual return. All councils will need to set a date for the commencement of the period for the exercise of public rights, a 30 day period which must include the first 10 days of July. Agreed would notify BDO of the chosen 1st to 30th July.

Letter from Clerk resigning due to personal circumstances. Agreed RH will contact prior applicant Lesley Hanson to see whether still interested in the role.

12. AOB

Blocked drains outside Mere Beck Farm, Baldersdale and Booze Wood Road: EG to report to DCC.

Website updates: EG to update financial information regarding precept for 2016-17, notifying of £500 increase to counteract the reduction in funds from DCC for the village hall.

Streetlight outside Cleveland House out. JW already reported.

Footpath slippery between Branton Cottage and Old Byre. Mary Hardy would like to out gravel down to make safer – no objections from CPC. JW to follow up.

Footpath – grass cutting on The Close to be considered for inclusion in future grass cutting contracts.

13. Date of next meeting: Wednesday 13th April at 7pm in the Village Hall.

As there was no other business the meeting closed at 8.35pm.

Signed