

Haslington Parish Council

Minutes of Meeting held on Monday 13th March 2023

Attendance: Cllrs. Lee Allen; Howard Blake; Yvonne Bushill; Connie Davis; Steve Edgar; Samantha Green; Janet Griffith; Alison Heler; Richard Hovey; Richard McCarthy; Graham Sawyer; Melissa Mews. Also in attendance: Gill Ayres, Parish Clerk and three members of the public.

Meeting commenced at 7.00pm

1. Apologies

Apologies received from Cllrs. Tony Peake and Martin Deakin.

2. Declarations of Members Interests

Cllr. Edgar declared an interest in item 9 and Cllr. Green in item 10.

3. Parish Clerk.

The appointment of Gill Ayres as Locum Parish Clerk was approved and it was agreed that she should work up to 15 hours per week.

4. Public Participation

Members of the public spoke on the following matters:

- Planning Application 22/2692N – Land off Crewe Road, Winterley. It was requested that a site liaison group be established (as this had previously worked well) and that consideration be given to an additional pedestrian access. This matter was considered under item 7 below.
- Governance – it was requested that further information be communicated by the Parish Council about its roles, responsibilities and accountability. It was agreed that more details on this, including the Good Councillor Guide, will be provided on the Parish Council website in due course.
- MapRun – an offer was made to set up a MapRun around the village for residents of all ages to use during the month of August. This is a form of orienteering using GPS on a smartphone. There would be no physical markers at the locations listed on the route. It was agreed that the matter will be considered at the next Parish Council meeting.
- Allotments – further information was provided in support of the grant application considered at item 9 below.

5. Minutes of Previous Meeting

It was resolved that the minutes of the meeting on 6th February be approved subject to the deletion of reference to a personal donation in item 8.

6. Cheshire East

Cllr Edgar reported that

- he will be speaking at the Southern Planning Committee on 15th March about the two planning applications listed in item 7 below;
- tree felling at Winterley Pool has been stopped ;
- public footpath issues at Moss Cottage are awaiting a decision regarding kissing gates being installed;
- maintenance work is being carried out at 425 Crewe Road and they are fully aware of the Tree Protection Orders in place.

7. Planning

- **22/2692N Land off Crewe Road, Winterley.** It was agreed that, at the Southern Planning Committee meeting mentioned above, Cllr. Edgar will raise the issues highlighted by members of the public in respect of this application, namely the need for a site liaison group, and a pedestrian access. The latter would help satisfy Local Plan policy SC3. He will also urge that more bungalows be provided within the development to meet the needs of an aging population. 10% of the total, ie 5 bungalows, would be appropriate.
- **23/0101N Land off Crewe Road, Haslington.** It was agreed that, at the Southern Planning Committee meeting, a developer donation will be requested by Cllr. Edgar on behalf of the Parish Council, to go towards community projects such as the rebuilding of The Gutterscroft and possibly an outdoor gym circuit.

8. Election

Nomination forms were distributed. All information about the elections (including how to apply for a Voter Authority Certificate if an elector has no acceptable photo ID) and nomination forms can be found on the slide presentation previously circulated. The Cheshire East Election Office (01270 685922) can be contacted for any queries, electoral register details, and appointments to deliver nomination forms by hand to Westfields in Sandbach

Cllr. Edgar left the room.

9. Grant Application

It was resolved that the application for a grant of £750 by the Allotment Society be approved in principle but that the timing of payment will depend on a detailed look at the Parish Council finances by the Finance Committee. If not paid in the year 22/23 it will be paid early in 23/24.

Cllr. Edgar returned.

Cllr. Green left the room and Cllr. Sawyer chaired the meeting.

10. Financial Matters

a) **Payments.** It was resolved that the following payments be approved:

- £65 and £125 to JD Services for emergency work and bin emptying.
- £138 to Kompan for inspection of Play Area and report
- £181.83 to Walker Fire for fire extinguisher check and certificate
- £22.49 to Cllr. Green to reimburse expenditure on supplies for Gutterscroft
- £10.30 to Cllr. Peake to reimburse expenditure on first aid supplies

Renewal documents and an invoice for £2889.77 have been received from Zurich Municipal Insurance. It was resolved that the categories of risk, sums insured and list of property /items to be insured set out in the policy schedule are appropriate subject to increasing the number of benches to 12 and changing the address for computer equipment, The Clerk will seek a new quotation and make payment.

b) **Quotations.**

Parish Council Financial Regulations require 3 quotations for contracts between £3,000 and £25,000. Below £3000 and above £100 the Council shall strive to obtain 3 estimates.

- **Grass-cutting.** It was resolved to approve the specification for quotations subject to making it clear that 8-10 cuts is an average over the months April to October. Councillors were happy with a two year contract and the level of discretion for the contractor to vary number of cuts in response to weather and growing conditions. It was considered more appropriate to have a flexible approach rather than a regular date for cutting the grass each month. The Clerk will check with the current contractor to ensure grass is cut in April.
- **Floriculture.** It was resolved to approve the specification for quotations for this 11 month contract. In future years consideration will be given to more sustainable approaches that avoid the replacement of plants twice a year.

The Clerk will create a separate new email address for the quotation process, and send the specifications out to a wide range of potential contractors with a deadline of 5pm on 21st April, so they can be considered at the Council meeting on 9th May.

c) **Odd Jobs**

It was not considered appropriate to employ a member of staff (Parish Ranger) to carry out the odd-jobs identified in the list circulated. So, it was resolved that hourly rate quotations will be sought from businesses or self-employed individuals with appropriate insurance, equipment and means of disposing of rubbish.

The Clerk will draw up a specification for an Odd Jobs contract to reflect this and seek quotations. There will be two parts to this:

- **Regular checking and maintenance works** - the quotation should include an hourly rate and an estimate for the number of hours required each month to undertake these works on a regular basis;
- **Other small scale ad hoc works** – the quotation should include an hourly rate but these works will be instructed, as and when required, by the Clerk. An estimate of the number of hours to complete the work will need to be provided by the contractor for each ad hoc task, and checked by a Councillor, before the work commences.

An advert for the Odd Jobs contract will be circulated as widely as possible to attract interest. It will be placed on the website, noticeboards and on social media.

d) **Other Larger Maintenance Works**

Most regular maintenance works will be covered by the grass-cutting, floriculture and odd-jobs contracts. Quotations for other works will be specified separately and sought in line with the Financial Regulations.

Pending the formalisation of an Odd Jobs contract, quotations have recently been sought for work to the football pitch and war memorial. Two quotations were received. One for £601.58 and one for £390. It was resolved to accept the lower quotation.

Cllr Green returned.

11. Website

It was noted that the website is now live and recent security issues have been addressed. The Clerk will begin the process of uploading agendas and minutes for the current year together with financial information and policies such as Standing Orders and Financial Regulations. Over time more information on events and local services / societies will be uploaded.

12. Events Committee

Proposals for the Coronation weekend were discussed. Concerns were raised about likely interest, costs and use of a marquee. It was resolved that:

- commemorative coins will be distributed to primary school children at a total cost of £1680 (excl VAT).
- Cllr. Green will approach the Cricket Club about the possibility of staging an event inside the Club on the Saturday evening and a picnic + stalls in the grounds on the Sunday.

13. Gutterscroft Management Committee

It was reported that the preparation of Terms of Reference for the Committee is in hand and ways of improving the signage with regard to dogs and phone number are being investigated. This will be discussed further at the next Parish Council meeting.

14. Yoxall Village Hall

The Clerk will confirm in writing to the Yoxall Village Hall Management Committee that the hall has been in use for 15 years. If evidence of this is required, there may still be historic Council meeting agendas on file, or Cllrs Allen, Bushill and Hovey will be able to personally confirm this.

15. Generators

Cllr Edgar reported that according to ZZoom the generators only run during the day and use battery at night. Cllr Green disputed this and will contact ZZoom for further information.

16. Matters related to Winterley Ward

No matters were raised.

17. Matters related to Oakhanger Ward

Three issues were raised:

- Potholes are a serious problem. They have been reported and Cllr Edgar will chase action from Cheshire East;
- A request for a Parish Council donation towards community events to celebrate the Coronation, namely an afternoon tea and planned walks, will be brought to the next Council meeting;
- The Clerk will liaise with Cllr. Blake to seek quotations to get the speed monitors moved in response to a request from a member of the public.

18. Matters related to Haslington Ward

Two issues were raised:

- The car park at the skatepark is in a very poor condition. This is the responsibility of Cheshire East and Cllr. Sawyer will speak to ANSA about this;
- Damage to road name signs on Primrose Ave and Holmshaw Lane were reported.

19. Urgent business.

No urgent business was raised.

20. Exclusion of public

The public were excluded prior to a discussion of recruitment matters.

21. Recruitment

The closing date for applications for the post of Parish Clerk and RFO is 24th March. Applications will be circulated to all members of the Personnel Working Group. There is a clear process for consideration of these applications which involves a checklist to match skills / experience with that required, then a long list will be prepared and a shortlist of candidates will be interviewed.

The meeting closed at 9.55 pm.