

Alvingham Parish Council

Minutes of Parish Council Meeting

Held on 14th January 2020

Present: Councillor N Ashley (Chairman)
Councillor S Shucksmith
Councillor A Graves
Councillor G Cummings
Councillor R Wahlberg

In Attendance: Councillor E Mossop

Clerk: Mrs S McFarland

The Chairman opened the Meeting and wished everyone a Happy New Year.

Apologies

No apologies were received prior to the meeting

Minutes of previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 17th September 2019, had been circulated prior to the meeting. These were declared to be a true record. They were proposed by Councillor Cummings and seconded by Councillor Graves and signed as a true copy by Councillor Ashley.

Matters Arising

Regarding the grass cutting, Councillor Shucksmith confirmed that he had spoken to Mr Parker who has adopted a community spirit towards the grass cutting. It was nevertheless agreed that the cost of his fuel for cutting the grass should be met from Parish Funds. Councillor Ashley has spoken to Mr Jackson regarding the areas of the village he continues to maintain namely the grass in the churchyard, the path to North Cockerington and the area around the trees. He has suggested a reduction in his fee of £100 to £400. It was agreed that paying Mr Parker £100 for cutting the grass along the side of the canal would be insufficient for what he does. It was noted that the cost of cutting the grass has not increased for a considerable time. It was therefore suggested that £200 per annum would be more suitable. This was proposed by Councillor Shucksmith and unanimously agreed by all the Councillors. It was noted that Mr Jackson cuts the grass around the trees near to Puddleducks woodland area. This area is full of badgers sets and potentially unstable as a result. It was felt that it is dangerous for heavy grass cutting equipment to be driven in this area and that Mr Jackson would be asked to stop cutting the grass in this area as a result.

Planning

A Planning application has been received in relation to the conversion of a barn at Poplar Farm on Highbridge road. This was discussed in some detail. Consideration was given to whether the development was appropriate as it is some way outside of the main village. It was noted that as this is a conversion of an existing structure the same rules would not apply as for a new building provided that new property did not exceed the footprint of the existing barn. On the basis that we would seek confirmation from the council that it does follow the same footprint as the existing barn no objections would be raised.

In relation to the development on Lock Road it was noted that this had been refused.

Precept

Currently the precept is set at £21.50 per household. There is now 1 more property that last year which would give an annual precept of £2130 in total. There are no grounds to seek an increase in this amount. Consequently, it was proposed by Councillor Cummings that the precept should remain the same as last year. This was unanimously agreed. The papers were duly completed ready for the clerk to return to ELDC.

Treasurers Report

The current balance in the bank stands at £3411.68. There are cheques to be issued for the grass cutting to Mr Jackson and Mr Parker as well as a cheque for the Clerk. We will be left with £2847.87 after all payments have cleared. It was noted the PKF Littlejohn are chasing a payment of £48.00. This was paid via cheque on 26th July 2019. However, it was noted that this cheque has never been cashed. A further cheque was written, and a letter of explanation will be sent.

Correspondence

We have received a request from the CAB for a donation. We have in past years supported the CAB with a donation of £25. It was felt by most of the councillors that the CAB offer a valuable service to the community and therefore should be supported again this year in the same amount.

Other relevant business

The bridge on Abbey Road is still broken even though this has been reported. This will be followed up. There are also several potholes to report, in particular those along Ticklepenny Lock and the big pothole opposite Pridgeon's gateway is reforming. The clerk will submit reports in relation to both.

There are concerns about the volume of water in the Westfield Drain. It was unclear whether this is due to the amount of debris in the area or whether the new housing development is in some way affecting this. The dyke has been cleared a little although access is an issue. It was noted that the new housing development should make use of a

sustainable drainage scheme avoiding water being pushed into the Westfield drain when it is already full. What is not clear is how this scheme works or who will be responsible for its maintenance moving forward. In order to pre-empt any future issues it was agreed we would seek such information from the builder/land owners at this stage so that it is clear who is responsible if an issue arises at any time in the future. The clerk will draft a suitable letter.

Date and Time of next meeting

Tuesday 24th March 2020 7.00pm.

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 8.35pm and thanked everyone for attending.