

Garsdale Parish Council

Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 14th August 2014 at 7.30 pm at Garsdale Village Hall.

Present:
Sue Ryall –Chair
Thomas Todd –Vice Chair
David Labbate
Pauline Fozard
Annette Colton
Michael Roper

Apologies for absence: Councillors Nick Cotton, Evelyn Westwood, Kevin Lancaster

1. Welcome

The acting chair welcomed the new members to the council

2. Election of Chair and Vice Chair

An election was held for the position of chair and vice chair. Sue Ryall was proposed as chair by Thomas Todd and seconded by Annette Colton, and Thomas Todd was proposed by Michael Roper and seconded by David Labbate. Both people were duly elected into their respective roles.

3. Future of the council

A discussion was held over the future of the council and how it is very difficult for the council to function without a parish clerk. Sue mentioned that she may know of someone who would be interested in the role and she would make some enquiries. It was noted that in the past the council had only been able to afford to pay a clerk about £600 to £800 per annum. This is significantly less than most other clerks receive; but as Garsdale does not have any other form of income all the salary must be found from the precept.

4. Declaration of interest

There were no declarations of interest which had not been formally declared.

5. Minutes of last meeting held on 16th June 2014.

Annette pointed out that in the May meeting her declaration of interest was in relation to the planning application for West Cote Weggs. It was agreed that the minutes would be corrected and signed as approved.

6. Adoption of the 'Code of Conduct'

The code of conduct was discussed and it was agreed that the version as supplied by SLDC would be adopted; however, the councillors did not think that any gift to a councillor was appropriate and this should be removed.

7. Public session

There were two members of the public present. In response to a letter from the previous Chairman of the Parish Council to fibre GarDen, John Colton asked if the Parish Council had any further questions. After some discussion, the Council agreed that all questions in the letter had now been answered. Some discussion followed about the definition of a community project, and what restrictions would apply to a councillor with a financial interest in such a project.

John Colton was then asked by the council about the progress of the wayleaves permissions and also the proposed route through the dale. John responded that a route had been decided upon, but remained flexible depending on further discussions with farmers and land holders. John mentioned that whilst it was not practical to print a map as it kept changing, people were welcome to view the latest version at his Lucid offices.

8. Finance Matters

Audit Report – Michael commented that the 2013-2014 audit documents had been sent to BDO for approval and that they had come back with some questions. One main point was that the council is now required to undertake a financial risk assessment and template documents had been sent. However, it was too late to submit this document for the previous year, but one would be required for the 2014 – 2015 accounts. The balance in the bank account as of 12 May 2014 was £4,272.65. An action is needed to reclaim the VAT on council expenditure.

8. Planning.

The YDNP has notified the parish council that the planning application for the agricultural storage building at West Cote Weggs has been withdrawn.

There was only one new planning application for a barn conversion to a holiday cottage at Low Scales as part of the agricultural business under the FP3 clause in the Local Plan. The councillor unanimously agreed to support this application and a response would be sent to YDNP.

10. First Responder

Sue commented on the progress of the First Responder group and said that 3 volunteers had been booked in for training in September and that once they had been through the training they would be in a position to provide support in the dale. They are also hopeful for two new members.

11. Post 16 Travel

Michael reported that he and Claire had been invited to a meeting with Nick Cotton and Cheryl Cowperthwaite of CCC on the basis of their challenge to CCC's decision to remove support for Post 16 Transport. In the meeting it was established that CCC are keen to find solutions to the withdrawal of post 16 transport but would be unable to provide any funding. The first solution would be to provide a core bus service from Sedbergh that provided for the needs of the young people studying in Kendal and Kirby Lonsdale. Cheryl commented that she had had meetings with Kendal College and QKS to look at a workable solution where the council organised the bus service, but it was paid for by users with subsidy from educational establishments. Cheryl was also trying to make contact with QES in Kirby Lonsdale, but they had so far not responded to any of her emails. Establishment of core bus services is a start, but it will still not provide a solution to replace the feeder busses bringing young people to the hub in Sedbergh. Claire will continue to work to get something established to cover these feeder routes.

12. Red Squirrels

Sue reported that there had been little action from the Sedbergh red squirrel group and that some of the residents of Garsdale had decided to set their own group. The group plan to hold public meetings and also assist in the trapping of grey squirrels found in the dale.

13. Highways Issues.

The lengthsman scheme was discussed and it was agreed to make an application to remove the trees along the retaining wall on the A684 through the street and to the east. Photographs will be taken and an application put together.

It was also discussed that a letter should be sent to Sedbergh Parish Council regarding the encroachment of hedges into the highway, particularly in the vicinity of Moss House.

14. Village Hall

Lease

There has been no progress on the lease; however, Michael will continue to raise the matter with the Diocese to see if it can be resolved.

Water Treatment and Maintenance

On the water treatment Michael reported that he was just waiting for quotes from equipment suppliers after which he would be able to submit these costs to the council for approval. Some of the costs could be reduced if renovation of the out buildings were undertaken by the community.

15. Patients Forum

Pauline reported that there had not been a meeting and the next one was in September.

15. Memorial tree for Elizabeth Colton

The planting of a tree in memory of Elizabeth was discussed. The council agreed to seek advice from Weasdale Nursery near Ravonstonedale on the variety that would be best suited to our local climate. It was agreed that Sue would take this forward and that it would therefore drop off the minutes. Annette asked if this matter would not be included on future agendas.

16. Garsdale Website/ Parish Newsletter.

The web site has been updated.

17. Healthcare Cumbria.

A leaflet was distributed on Healthcare Cumbria and their contact details.

18. Correspondence

a. Request from Fibre GarDen to use the village hall to locate equipment. This was discussed and the council was in favour of this. Michael reported that he would bring this up with the Diocese as the Landlord of the property. John Colton said that Fibre GarDen would be prepared to cover any additional increase in insurance or electricity for the village hall.

b. Vodafone 3G – An e mail has been received from Vodafone who are offering to supply 3G signals to more remote communities. Michael said he would forward the e-mail to Sue.

19. Parish Newsletter/Council Website

Michael mentioned that there was now a government requirement to make declarations of interest of councillors available to the public. He suggested that as SLDC already do this for all councilors and parish councillors it would make sense to have a link from the parish council web site. In this way we will comply with the requirement. The link to the web site is

<http://democracy.southlakeland.gov.uk/mgParishCouncilDetails.aspx?ID=319&LS=3> Management of the web site was discussed and Annette volunteered to take over the running of the web site.

20. Other Business

Michael said that he had recently met an elderly gentleman struggling on one of the stiles on the footpath along the Clough River between Bridge End and Swarthgill. One stile in particular is very high and also extremely slippery when wet. A number of other stiles on that stretch of river are also in poor repair and slippery. It was suggested that the parish council could help with stile upkeep, but other councillors thought that the NYDNP should maintain stiles. It was decided to discuss further at another meeting.

Date of Next Meeting

Thursday 9th October 2014 at 7.30 pm.

Paragraph 7 amended before approval, following a decision at the council meeting on 4th December

Annette Colton, Chairman

19/2/2015

Date