

Minutes of the Remote Meeting of Fiskerton Parish Council held at 7.30pm on Monday 11th May 2020

Present: Cllrs Canner (SC); Darcel (CD), Harrison (MH), Hill (CH), Walker (AW), Wall (RW),
Also in Attendance: D/Cllr Welburn (AW), Mrs M Vail (clerk)
 There were no members of the public present.
Meeting started at 7.31pm.

001/20 Open session – suspension of standing orders for 15 minutes:

There was no open session as no members of the public were in attendance.

002/20 Apologies for absence: None

003/20 Declaration of interests: None

004/20 To approve the notes of the remote meeting held on 27/4/20 as a true record:

Item 17: amend this item so the last sentence includes additional information as referred to in the meeting (shown here in italics) to read: ‘A permanently fixed sign, powered by either solar panel or wired into mains electricity, would cost approx. £3,500 - £4,000 *plus installation costs; therefore up to £7K should be allowed.*

With this amendment, it was **RESOLVED** unanimously to approve the draft notes as a true record.

005/20 Chairman’s Comments:

Recent street parties to celebrate the 75th anniversary of VE day had been very successful and had brought the Fiskerton community together.

Item for next agenda – to work with LCC to widen the narrow section of Plough Lane.

Action: clerk

006/20 To consider ways of advertising to fill the vacancy of councillor; and resolve to approve any associated expenditure:

Suggestions included: contacting those who had stood in the 2019 elections; using the website; noticeboard; village e-newsletter; and word of mouth. Proper procedure must be followed in filling the vacancy; and FPC should do all it possibly can to attract applicants. The clerk noted that the Notice of Vacancy was on the noticeboard; and that WLDC would advise her after 28 May as to whether 10 parish electors had applied to the Returning Officer for an election to be held (*Note: any election cannot take place until 6 May 2021 due to Covid 19 restrictions*). If this was not the case then WLDC would, after 28 May, advise that co-option to the vacancy could now take place.

007/20 To note the approved Zoom discounted package deal has expired; and resolve on whether to purchase a Zoom package via LALC at £7.99 per month; or to continue with the free Zoom sessions:

Noted. It was **RESOLVED** unanimously to continue using the free Zoom sessions.

008/20 Accounts:

A. To resolve to approve the following accounts for payment:

| | Accounts to be passed for payment | |
|---|--|---------------|
| A | Clerk’s wages – April 2020 | 329.72 |
| B | PAYE – April 2020 | 50.80 |
| C | Glendale – grasscutting April 2020 | 216.00 |
| D | SAGE Payroll – April 2020 | 8.40 |
| E | SAGE Accounting software trial period | 3.65 |
| | Total to be paid | 608.57 |

It was **RESOLVED** unanimously to approve the abovementioned accounts for payment.

B. To receive update on query that the Lark Energy Grant of £2280 thought to be incorrect:

Reported that on the 2019/20 Accounts; £2280 expenditure entered under the budget heading ‘Lark Energy Grant’ is for ACM Homes Flood Alleviation.

C. To note Hodgson Trust income:

Reported that on the 2019/20 Accounts; £1140 income is included under the budget heading ‘Other’ for ‘grant aid for allotment drain work and rebuild of outlet headwall.’

Noted that FPC and the Hodgson Trust had split the cost of this work equally. **Action: clerk** to check records for a £1140 reimbursement from the Hodgson Trust.

009/20 To resolve on internal auditor arrangements and approve associated expenditure:

Two quotes had been received; of £40; and of £187.50 inc. VAT. It was **RESOLVED**, with two abstentions (RW and SC) to accept the quote for £40. **Action: clerk**

010/20 To resolve that the authorised signatories in the current bank mandate, for the bank accounts of Fiskerton Parish Council (as detailed in section 1.3 of the Natwest Universal Mandate form), be changed in accordance with the completed authorised Signatories section of the same Universal Mandate form (namely; to remove as authorised signatories Cllr Wendy Adams and the previous clerk, Mr S Hall; and to add in the new clerk, Mrs Michelle Vail).

It was **RESOLVED** unanimously to approve the abovementioned agenda item as written. **Action: clerk**

011/20 To receive update and consider arrangements for moving forward with the questionnaire results and the Neighbourhood Plan:

Reported that: 1) AW had circulated a Powerpoint presentation of the results; 2) CD should have completed slight revisions in the next few days ahead of circulation for a discussion; and suggested that others should be included who have an interest in the Neighbourhood Plan; and 3) noted that WLDC will not be progressing referendums until May 2021 due to Covid 19 situation, but that draft plans will carry additional weight in the planning system once they have reached a certain point. AW will also input his thoughts by end of this week. CD and MH both expressed concerns about using weighted data.

012/20 Website accessibility compliancy – to consider a proposal that, as it will most likely be Cllr Walker who makes any changes to the website to comply with the accessibility regulations, it would be better for another councillor to be nominated to audit the website against the regulations to detail where the council currently falls short:

An update is currently awaited from LCC regarding timescales for going live; the legislation has been in place for two years; and the deadline for compliance is mid- September. A link sent by LCC provides access to a marking guide, allowing an assessment of the existing website to be carried out against a list of criteria. It was **RESOLVED** that Cllr Walker carry out this audit and produce a report; and for all councillors to help and support him as needed. Noted that AW will undertake this audit if the check sheet is straightforward.

013/20 To approve final draft letter to Morris Holmes re concerns about PLIC on Holmfield Estate: It was **RESOLVED** to approve the final draft letter. **Action: clerk**

014/20 To note any response from WLDC enforcement officer regarding containers on the airfield:

WLDC had advised that they had written to the farmer requesting either an application in 28 days for a temporary permission with a justification for the need or to remove the containers. If the farmer does not submit an application WLDC are not sure how easy it will be to organise removals at the current time given the Covid 19 situation; although the situation may be getting better by then. **Action: clerk** to follow up for an update at the appropriate time.

015/20 Update on Church Clock Repairs, and consider any actions required:

A resident had been in contact asking for FPC's financial support in respect of the church clock refurbishment. The clock hands are slightly bent and require removing, straightening and replacing. There are three options of work as follows:

- Scaffolding
- Above plus also refurbishing the mechanism
- Both the above plus clean/repaint clock face; apply gold leaf lettering to face.

Noted that FPC is not currently paying the annual maintenance contract of £500 for three years. The resident would like to know if FPC will reinstate this budget from 2021; considers that applying for a grant is the only option in the current financial year to access financial support. Full works will cost £3800 and it is not known how much of this FPC may be asked to fund. A proposal was made by MH, seconded by CH, to reinstate the maintenance budget in 2021 for a three-year period; and to give consideration to a grant application as and when one is received. It was **RESOLVED** unanimously to approve this proposal. **Action: clerk** to e-mail resident

016/20 Update on School/ road sign artwork:

AW continues to look into this, so nothing to report at this time.

017/20 Village Hall Deeds: to consider a proposal to acknowledge the seven points set out in an email from Cllr Walker on 4 May 2020 and for the clerk to write to the Village Hall Management Committee (VHMC) stating the Council's acknowledgment and offering support in amending the governing document if requested.

This item was taken together with agenda item 22 (minute ref 022/20 below) as follows: A summary of the background leading up to this point was given; and noted that this is a job for the VHMC, not for the parish council; but that the parish council can agree the seven points set out by AW in an e-mail which will then put the VHMC in a position to proceed. Following discussion, a proposal was made by Cllr Walker that the seven points set out in his email of 4th May 2020 be acknowledged; and for the clerk to write to the VHMC stating the Council's acknowledgment and offering support in amending the governing document if requested; and this proposal did not receive a seconder.

A proposal by Cllr Wall, seconded by Cllr Canner, that the VHMC constitution be the 1968 document pinned to the 2004 document with the addition of a document of the users group was **RESOLVED** to be approved with five votes for and 1 abstention (although the abstainer stated that they would, with further clarification, support the proposal).

018/20 Village Hall roof repair – to receive update on advice from roofing company; and consider proposal that one of the Councillors takes the lead with this project:

Noted that it is feasible to re-roof one side of the roof; and that the tiles are in good order but had not originally been laid to overlap sufficiently. It was **RESOLVED** unanimously to approve the clerk to obtain two more quotes for 1) repairing half of the roof 2) repairing the whole roof; noting that it is an ideal time to carry out repairs whilst the village hall is closed.

Action: clerk

Action: Cllr Walker to re-approach one builder. **Cllr Walker** to send spec details to clerk.

Action: Cllr Darcel to send details as originally from Cllr Adams to the clerk.

019/20 Fix My Street App - to receive update on the trial and consider next steps to expend its use:

AW has successfully trialled the app, which is straightforward to use; so will forward instructions for use to councillors so all can begin reporting issues. He will then analyse data and report this back to future meetings. A roll out to residents will follow. It was **RESOLVED** to approve these actions. **Action: AW**

020/20 To give initial consideration to ideas to celebrate end of Covid 19 lockdown:

Following discussion, it was **RESOLVED** unanimously to approve a proposal by Cllr Harrison for a celebration, and have an annual village fair/festival, with a suggestion made of open gardens, to be held on the first May Bank Holiday weekend (May Day); and ask for ideas via the website.

021/21 To consider a suggestion that a financial limit is set in respect of parish council expenditure on the Christmas tree this year (suggested £100 - £150):

Noted that, previously, FPC has paid for a tree and the VHMC have erected it; and that to pay for erection will be an additional expense. It was **RESOLVED** unanimously to approve FPC paying a maximum of £150; and that any expenditure above that amount will fall to the VHMC to pay. It was confirmed to the clerk that the VHMC arranges the purchase and erection of the tree.

022/20 To consider revised contract between the Village Hall Committee and the council, which will also need approval from the Village Hall Committee:

Item was considered earlier in the meeting under minute ref: 017/20).

023/20 Accounting Package trial – to approve Cllr Walker providing a better Excel accounts package than the one currently used to aid the side by side trial of both packages:

CD raised concerns about using Excel software; noting that FPC had already agreed a Sage trial. The clerk confirmed that, should FPC decide to remain with Excel, that an improved Excel package would be required.

024/20 To consider a request from an allotment user to keep bees on the allotments:

The following points were noted:

- Professional advice received in 2019 stated that, as long as the bees were checked for overcrowding, and a 6ft fence erected to allow bees to exit above head height, there would be no reason not to have bees.
- The beekeeper should take out insurance; and also sign to agree to remove the bees immediately if asked by the parish council
- The allotments are on rented ground and the council has a duty of care to users

After consideration; it was **RESOLVED**, with RW, MH AND CH against; and AW, CD SC for; with the chairman having the casting vote in favour, to approve the request. Noted that a consultation of all allotment holders should take place. **Action: clerk**

025/20 Village Footpaths – to consider that a farmer recently ploughed the footpaths whilst ploughing the fields; and; consider a proposal that a councillor takes the lead on a footpaths project, to include the paths in the village, regeneration of Mucky Lane and pushes for link paths to Reepham and Cherry Willingham:

Noted that the farmer has subsequently rolled the fields therefore the paths are now fine to walk; and confirmed that a farmer has the right to plough and has, in law, two weeks to reinstate footpaths; and that they must maintain paths shown on the definitive plan.

D/Cllr Welburn has previously initiated a ‘footpath connectivity’ initiative across nearby parishes; involving the various parish council chairmen; but lack of funding is holding this project back. Noted that FPC needs its own definitive map – a leaflet would be useful -; there is support from LCC for additional paths around the solar panel farm and LCC have this on their proposals for consideration. Mucky Lane is on the definitive map as a footpath.

It was **RESOLVED** unanimously to approve appointing Cllr Darcel as lead councillor for this project. **Action: CD**

026/20 Setting dates for future meetings: to consider a proposal to schedule future meetings for the first Monday of every month for the rest of this year:

Noted that there should be a schedule of meetings which is advertised. After consideration it was **RESOLVED** unanimously to hold full council meetings on the second Monday of every month, excluding August and December when no meeting will be held. CD noted that if an FPC date clashed with a WLDC full council meeting then the FPC date may need to be changed. **Action: AW, clerk**

027/20 To receive observations of the District and County Councillors:

D/Cllr Welburn reported that WLDC are keen to hear about local small businesses opening up again as WLDC will advertise them. There are also small business grants available.

Action: AW to promote via website.

CH reported that the first online WLDC Planning Committee (29/4/20) had gone quite well.

CD reported that FPC had submitted several comments in respect of the Tanya application; and it was disappointing that these had been ignored by WLDC.

028/20 Matters for inclusion on next agenda:

- Footpaths
- The rejection, again, of the Tanya planning application – what does FPC want putting in the Neighbourhood Plan – where to get advice/support
- A suggestion was made to introduce either a Matters Arising or an Any Other Business section – the clerk advised that such agenda items would allow only for

report and discussion; and that decisions could not be made under them. D/Cllr Welburn noted that Chairman's Comments could be used for reporting under.

029/20 To resolve to move into Closed Session as the following items contain information of a confidential nature:

It was **RESOLVED** unanimously to move into Closed Session due to the following items containing information of a confidential nature. D/Cllr Welburn left the meeting at 9.56pm.

A) To consider final draft of Clerk's job description:

CD had circulated a NALC job description which all considered to be thorough; and only minor amendments were suggested. **Action: CD** to amend and circulate ahead of next meeting.

B) to review the situation regards the solar panels on the Scout Hut; and consider two proposals received:

i. to approve letter to the scouts:

CD noted that this had already been approved at the last meeting but one.

It was noted that the draft letter only contained one active sentence 'to read the meter and forward monies to FPC'. AW stated that 1) the Scouts never received the money; and 2) the meter had recently been read and the reading submitted, and that the scouts were not aware of the responsibility to read the meter as there is no written agreement between FPC and them to direct this. Further noted that the British Gas account is in dispute so they are not paying out any money.

CD noted that the lack of a meter reading is the scouts' problem.

Noted that CD considers that the scouts do owe FPC money; whereas AW considers that they do not owe FPC money, therefore the letter is meaningless. At this point, CD asked that AW left the meeting. Further noted that there is evidence to suggest that payments were made by cheque which was posted to the former Parish Council Chairman's home address and were made payable to the Parish Council.

CD opined that AW had had no authority to approach the scouts.

It was **RESOLVED** with five for and one against that the letter be sent, with minor alterations in view of AW's comments, noting that the scouts' help is needed to sort matters out.

Action: CD to redraft then circulate letter for comment, then **Action: clerk** to issue letter.

ii. to consider a proposal to send the draft Lark Energy Community Fund policy document to the Fiskerton Scouts and the Village Hall Committee to review and for the Council to support Cllr Walker to continue his investigations into the unpaid revenue from the Scout hut panels:

This item was not discussed.

C) To undertake a review to ensure that this council is fully compliant with its standing orders, code of conduct; and model financial regulations; and also works in accordance with the Good Councillors Guide:

CD noted the following perceived instances of veering from the abovementioned governing and guidance documents:

- o Not following Standing Orders in respect of reversing the Neighbourhood Plan.
- o A councillor acting without FPC authority to do so
- o Bringing an item on solar panels back to a meeting for further discussion within 6 months of a decision already having being taken on this matter

Meeting ended at 10.25pm

Mrs Michelle Vail, Clerk/RFO to Fiskerton Parish Council

Dated 18.5.20

Note: the next meeting will be held by Zoom online video conferencing at 7.30pm on 8th June 2020.

Agenda items to be submitted by the deadline of noon on Thur 28 May, 2020; and the agenda to be issued by 2nd June 2020