

Farington Parish Council

Minutes of the remote Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 14 December at 7.00 pm.

Present:- Councillor Paul Wharton-Hardman (Chairman); Councillor Michael Green (Vice-Chairman); Councillor Paul Buckley; Councillor Mike Otter; Councillor Elaine Robb; Councillor Chris Wharton-Hardman and Councillor Mrs Karen Walton.

In attendance:- Sue Whittam - Clerk to the Council
David Williams – South Ribble Borough Council
3 members of the public.

19. (20/21) Sound Check, Muting, Voting and Chairman's welcome to attendees

The Chairman, Councillor Paul Wharton-Hardman welcomed everyone to this month's remote Parish Council meeting.

20. (20/21) Apologies for Absence

None.

21. (20/21) Declarations of interest and written requests for dispensation

The Clerk confirmed that written requests for dispensation had been received from all present if required, in order for them to consider the precept up to the 31 March 2023 in accordance with Section 33 of the Localism Act 2011.

22. (20/21) Minutes of the Last Meeting

Resolved

That the Minutes of the Annual Parish Council Meeting held on 9 November 2020 are an accurate record and it was agreed that these would be signed at the next face to face meeting in accordance with LGA 1972 Sch. 12 Part VI para 41 (1).

23. (20/21) Adjournment for Public Participation

The Chairman, Councillor Paul Wharton-Hardman adjourned the meeting for public participation and welcomed the members of the public to the meeting. He asked if anyone had anything to raise under this item.

Councillor Elaine Robb gave feedback on the recent LALC meeting that she had attended on behalf of the Parish Council. She said that there had been an interesting discussion on Combined Authorities and County Councillor Geoff Driver, Leader of Lancashire County Council had explained the benefits of becoming a Combined Authority. In particular the issues revolved around funding and using funds more efficiently and effectively. Being part of a Combined Authority would allow local authorities to access more funding and there would also be an enhanced

role for Town and Parish Councils. The implications were that a Combined Authority could be formed without causing major redundancies. Issues such as climate emergencies, roads, drainage and flooding were all having a major impact on local authority funding and many Councils were struggling to deal with all the issues. Councillor Elaine Robb also said there had been an interesting discussion on Public Rights of Way (PROW) and that they needed to be cleared by 2026 or they would be lost as an official PROW.

The Chairman, Councillor Paul Wharton-Hardman thanked Councillor Elaine Robb for the feedback and then welcomed David Williams from South Ribble Borough Council to the meeting. David informed the Parish Council that he was the new Community Development Officer for Leyland and Farington and was also the Lead Officer for Health Inequalities. David said he had met with Councillor Mrs Karen Walton and the Farington Lodges had been discussed. He was looking at what improvements could be made to the Lodges and how this could be funded. Councillor Elaine Robb said that the Lodges were well used and there were genuine concerns regarding their disrepair as they were currently not a good standard. Residents had raised concerns about the missing gate at the Church Road end, as this was dangerous as children and dogs could possibly run straight out onto the road. David said he was looking at quotes to get a gate put in place, however it was noted that this was general maintenance and was the responsibility of South Ribble Borough Council to provide. Councillor Mrs Karen Walton said she had been in contact with Withnell Anglers and Jo Beaman at South Ribble Borough Council regarding the Lodges and ultimately any maintenance costs should be funded through the Leyland and Farington Forum and not the Parish Council. Concern was raised by Councillor Mrs Karen Walton about South Ribble Borough Council changing dates of meetings, especially the Community Hub meetings due to Councillors being unavailable and this was supported by Councillor Michael Green. The Chairman, Councillor Paul Wharton- Hardman thanked David Williams for attending the meeting and looked forward to hearing regular updates from South Ribble Borough Council.

The Chairman, Councillor Paul Wharton-Hardman then welcomed a member of the public to the meeting who had listed a number of issues in Farington regarding missing and damaged street signs and speed signs/highways issues. The Chairman, Councillor Paul Wharton-Hardman thanked the member of the public for bringing these matters to the Parish Council's attention and asked the Clerk to forward the list to Lancashire County Council and South Ribble Borough Council as these were the responsible authorities for the issues raised.

The Chairman, Councillor Paul Wharton-Hardman then welcomed a local resident to the meeting. She explained that the barrier near to her house had still not been replaced even though the Highways Manager had stated that this would be carried out during the October half term. Councillor Michael Green stated that he had chased this on numerous times in his capacity as a County Councillor but without success. It was agreed that the Clerk should contact the County Council on behalf of the Parish Council to see if this issue could be sorted. The lady agreed to forward the reference details to the Clerk.

The member of the public also informed the Parish Council that the new Planning Application for Chain House Lane was due to be heard by the Planning Committee on 17 December 2020. She also said that the Planning Appeal for the original application would be heard by the Planning Inspector in March 2021. The remote hearing was scheduled for four days starting from 16 March and that anyone who wished to be present would need to register with the Planning Inspectorate by 7 January 2021.

The Chairman, Councillor Paul Wharton-Hardman thanked the member of the public for attending the meeting.

The Clerk reported that a local Councillor had contacted the Parish Council to advise that under Minute 168 (19/20) the cost of rebranding South Ribble Borough Council's logo was less than £10,000 and not as reported in the Minutes as it had been done inhouse. This was noted.

There were no further issues to be raised under this item and therefore the Chairman, Councillor Paul Wharton-Hardman reconvened the meeting.

24. (20/21) Planning Issues

It was noted that the Parish Council had been consulted by Lancashire County Council on Planning Application LCC/2020/0068 for Farington Moss Recycling Centre. The Parish Council had no comments to make on this application.

With regard to the Chain House Lane appeal as referred to in public participation above, it was agreed that Councillor Elaine Robb would speak on behalf of the Parish Council and that the Clerk would inform the Planning Inspectorate accordingly. Councillor Mrs Karen Walton confirmed that she would be speaking in her role as a South Ribble Borough Councillor.

Resolved

- i) That, with regard to Planning Application LCC/2020/0068, the Parish Council had no comments to make on this application.
- ii) That, with regard to the Chain House Lane appeal starting on 16 March 2021, it was agreed that Councillor Elaine Robb would speak on behalf of the Parish Council.

25. (20/21) Parish Council Vacancy

The Parish Council discussed how and when to fill the vacancy on the Parish Council. It was noted that the vacancy had been advertised by South Ribble Borough Council and an election had not been requested, therefore the Parish Council could now fill the vacancy by co-option. Councillor Elaine Robb said that she would personally like to see more diversity on the Parish Council.

The Parish Council agreed to advertise the vacancy after Christmas on the Parish Council noticeboards and website, with a view to co-opting at the February meeting of the Parish Council. It was agreed that each applicant would be asked to submit

around 250 words to the Clerk in advance of the February meeting, then at the meeting the Parish Council would ask each applicant to talk for a maximum of three minutes and the Parish Council would have an opportunity to ask questions. This was unanimously agreed.

Resolved

That, the Parish Council agrees to advertise the vacancy on the Parish Council after Christmas on the Parish Council noticeboards and website, with a view to co-opting at the February meeting of the Parish Council. In addition to this, each applicant would be asked to submit around 250 words to the Clerk in advance of the February meeting, then at the meeting each applicant would be asked to talk for a maximum of three minutes and the Parish Council would have an opportunity to ask questions.

26. (20/21) Projects for expenditure 2021/2022

The Clerk reported that she had currently received two quotes for St Paul's Park and she was awaiting a third quote. The cost of the park refurbishment would be discussed under the budget heading this evening.

27. (20/21) Financial Matters

Resolved

1) It was noted that we had £87,884.52 (bank statement up to 9 November 2020) in the bank.

It was noted that since the last meeting we had paid: -

16/11/20 South Ribble Borough Council 2 invoices maintenance July – September £794.58 and bins April – October 2020 £1,983.96 = total £2,778.54 (cheque no 941).

18/11/20 Farley's Solicitors for Landlords Legal Fees £1,020 (cheque no 942).

18/11/20 PKF Littlejohn External Audit Fee £360 (cheque no 943).

01/12/20 Clerk's Salary £1,022.50 (cheque no 944).

04/12/20 Lengthsman's wages - £879.00 (cheque no 945).

Lonsdale Chase Sheltered Accommodation	£200.00 (cheque 946)
Bashall Grove Sheltered Accommodation	£200.00 (cheque 947)
St Catherine's Hospice	£300.00 (cheque 948)
North West Air Ambulance	£200.00 (cheque 949)
Farington South Senior Citizens	£300.00 (cheque 950)
Derian House	£300.00 (cheque 951)
St Catherine's Church	£300.00 (cheque 952)
St Ambrose Church	£300.00 (cheque 953)
Farington St Paul's Scouts	£200.00 (cheque 954)
Leyland & Cuerden Valley Lions	£300.00 (cheque 955)
Turbary House Birds of Prey	£200.00 (cheque 956)

St Paul's Church	£150.00 (cheque 957)
Leyland Food Bank via St Mary's RC Church	£300.00 (cheque 958)
Clare's House Women's Refuge	£200.00 (cheque 959)
British Legion	£300.00 (cheque 960)

It was also noted that we had paid the following direct debits: -

British Gas for BTR field – 22 October £108.41 and Pension Clerk - 6 November £54.32.

2) There were no further invoices for payment at the meeting.

3) Budget for 2021/2022

The Parish Council gave consideration to the budget for 2021/2022. A copy of the draft budget had been circulated to the Parish Council for discussion and approval. The Clerk reminded the Parish Council that this was the opportunity to add any further projects for support by the Parish Council. Councillor Michael Green proposed that the Parish Council should support a pandemic related scheme to help businesses and in particular to support local shops. He proposed £5,000 to support this scheme. This was seconded by the Chairman, Councillor Paul Wharton-Hardman and agreed in principle, subject to further information on how the scheme could be progressed.

With regard to the project to refurbish St Paul's Park, the Clerk reported that two quotes had been received so far and the estimated cost was between £68,000 and £75,000. It was proposed by Councillor Mrs Karen Walton that £20,000 be earmarked for this project and this was seconded by Councillor Elaine Robb and unanimously agreed. The Clerk would contact Carole Scrivens and Howard Anthony at South Ribble Borough Council to see what help they could give and what funding streams could support this project.

Councillor Mike Otter proposed that £3,000 should be earmarked for a container for the Lengthsman to use on the BTR field to store Parish Council materials, and to use for carrying out repairs during bad weather. Councillor Paul Buckley suggested that the Parish Council should contact Amazon to see if they could help and the Chairman, Councillor Paul Wharton-Hardman suggested that the Parish Council may be able to obtain this from local businesses for free. It was agreed to try and obtain the container with no cost to the Parish Council.

Councillor Paul Buckley proposed that to brighten up Farington and support local people that hanging baskets would be a good idea and suggested a budget cost of £5,000 for this. This was seconded by Councillor Michael Green. Councillor Mrs Karen Walton said that this had been looked at before and the problems were that they were expensive to provide and maintain, and that wildflower areas would cover a larger area and be more beneficial. On being put to the vote the Parish Council voted six members in favour and one member abstained.

The Clerk would update the budget and add the new projects to the list. The budget was unanimously agreed by the Parish Council and a copy is presented in the Minute Book.

4) Consider and approve the Precept for 2021/2022

The Parish Council gave consideration to the precept for 2021/2022. There was a lengthy discussion regarding this, however the Parish Council had to consider the cost of any proposed projects, the additional projects as agreed, and its impact on the budget.

Councillor Mike Otter proposed that the precept was set at £86,500 for 2021/2022. This was seconded by the Chairman, Councillor Paul Wharton-Hardman. Councillor Michael Green asked for a named vote. Those voting in favour of the proposal were:- Councillor Mike Otter, the Chairman Councillor Paul Wharton-Hardman; Councillor Chris Wharton-Hardman and Councillor Paul Buckley. Those voting against the proposal were:- Councillor Michael Green; Councillor Elaine Robb and Councillor Mrs Karen Walton. The proposal to set at the precept at £86,500 was therefore agreed by the Parish Council.

5) Report from the external auditor

The Clerk reported that the accounts for year end 31 March 2020 had now been signed off by the external auditor and there were no matters/issues to report.

28. (20/21) Borough Council and County Council reports – for information only

Councillor Mrs Karen Walton reported that she had a number of issues with mud on the highway which was from the ongoing development on Croston Road and she had reported this to the Planning Officer.

Councillor Michael Green reported that a number of Highway's resurfacing schemes would be coming forward in South Ribble over the next 12 months.

There was nothing further to report.

29. (20/21) Clerk's Report – For Information Only

The Clerk reported that the lease for BTR field had now been agreed by our Solicitor and the Landlord's Solicitor and that we were awaiting the final copies of the lease for signature.

30. (20/21) Next Meeting

It was noted that the next scheduled meeting was due to be held on 8 February 2021 and that this would be held remotely. The Clerk would circulate the link and make this available to the public.

Local Government Act 1972

That the public be excluded from this meeting during consideration of the following items of business on the grounds that there is likely to be disclosure of exempt information which is described in the paragraphs of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 which is specified against the heading to each item, and in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing it.

31. (20/21) Maintenance Tenders for 2021/2022 (Para 3)

Resolved

That South Ribble Borough Council and any other interested parties be invited to tender for the maintenance work at St Paul's Park and the BTR field in line with the following specification: -

St Paul's Park

Grass Cutting (10 cuts)
Cutting of hedge bordering Croston Road (4 cuts)
Spring dressing (feed/weed)
Autumn dressing (feed/weed)
Additional weed treatment around the play equipment as necessary
Emptying of litter bins - weekly
Monthly inspection of the play equipment – including schedule provided by Wicksteeds.
jet washing play area surface twice a year to fit in with South Ribble Borough Council's playground regime.

BTR field

Hedge cutting twice a year to fit in with South Ribble Borough Council's cutting regime.

32. (20/21) Lengthsman's Salary (Para 1)

The Parish Council considered the Lengthsman's salary for 2021/2022 and unanimously agreed to increase his pay to £15.00 per hour with effect from 1 April 2021.

Resolved

That the Parish Council agree to increase the Lengthsman's salary to £15.00 per hour with effect from 1 April 2021.

33. (20/21) Clerk's Salary (Para 1)

The Clerk left the meeting while her salary was discussed. The Parish Council agreed to place the Clerk on SCP 28 in line with LALC guidelines/pay scales and receives the scale increase each year as appropriate. The Financial Rules and

Regulations would be updated to include this and it was noted that in the event that the Clerk should leave, the replacement Clerk would be placed on the relevant SCP in line with their qualifications/experience.

The Chairman, Councillor Paul Wharton-Hardman asked for Staff Appraisals to be placed on the February agenda.

Resolved

That, the Clerk is placed on SCP 28 in line with LALC guidelines/pay scales and receives the scale increase each year as appropriate.

The Clerk returned to the meeting and the Chairman, Councillor Paul Wharton-Hardman closed the meeting.