

## Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council held on 10<sup>th</sup> May 2023 at 7.00pm at St Paul's Parish Hall, Scotforth

**Present:** Councillor Nick Webster (Chairman)  
Councillors Kevan Walton and Heather Ward  
City Councillor Tim Hamilton-Cox and former City Councillor Tim Dant  
Derek Whiteway, Parish Clerk

### 23/011 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Denise Parrett and City Councillor Abi Mills.

### 23/012 Minutes of the previous meeting

- 1) The minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> April 2023, were approved without further amendment.

#### Matters arising:

- 2) **23/002(2) – Street Cleaning arrangements.** The Clerk had asked the City Council to review its street cleaning schedules and advise when Stodday would be visited. A response was awaited.
- 3) **23/002(3) Arna Wood Fields.** The City Council's Planning Enforcement Officer had advised that a planning enforcement notice was to be issued once some wording had been provided by the Planning office.

**Action:** The Clerk will continue to monitor progress with the City Planning Enforcement officer's proposed action.

- 4) **23/002(4) Aldcliffe Cycleway Wildlife Opportunities.** The Clerk was still awaiting a response from Thurnham with Glasson PC but was hoping to arrange a meeting with Natural England and other parties in the next month or two.

**Action:** The Clerk will continue to liaise with NE and other parties to arrange a meeting.

### 23/013 Items of Urgent Business Authorised by the Chairman

#### 1) Co-option of a Parish Councillor

The Clerk advised Councillors that, following the election of four Councillors on 4<sup>th</sup> May 2023, the Parish Council was now able to co-opt to the remaining vacant Councillor position. The Chairman reported that Mr Tim Dant (present at the meeting) had expressed an interest in becoming a co-opted Councillor. The Clerk confirmed that no other expressions of interest had been received.

The Chairman proposed that Mr Dant be co-opted as a Parish Councillor. The proposal was seconded by Councillor Ward and carried unanimously.

The Chairman welcomed Councillor Dant to the Parish Council.

**Resolved:** That Tim Dant be elected as a co-opted Parish Councillor.

## 2) Welcome to new Ward City Councillor

The Chairman introduced and welcomed City Councillor Tim Hamilton-Cox to the Parish Council meeting. Councillor Hamilton-Cox advised that he would aim to attend Parish Council meetings whenever he was able.

Councillors discussed ongoing matters involving the City Council and Councillor Hamilton-Cox agreed to pick up on continuing concerns over planning related issues on property at Arna Wood. Councillor Dant agreed to brief Councillor Hamilton-Cox on the issues.

## 23/014 Chairman's Annual Report 2022/23

The Chairman read out his Annual Report for 2022/23. The report was gratefully received by Councillors, and it was agreed that the report should be posted on the Parish Council website and circulated to email contacts.

**Resolved:** That the Chairman's Annual Report for 2022/23 is received and that it should be published on the Council's website and circulated to email contacts.

## 23/015 Election of Officials 2023/24

**Election of Chair.** It was proposed by Councillor Walton, seconded by Councillor Ward, and carried unanimously that Councillor Webster be appointed as Chairman for 2023/24.

**Resolved:** That Councillor Webster be appointed as Chairman of the Parish Council for the 2023/24 municipal year.

**Election of Vice-Chair.** It was proposed by Councillor Webster, seconded by Councillor Dant, and carried unanimously that Councillor Walton be appointed as Vice-Chairman for 2023/24.

**Resolved:** That Councillor Walton be appointed as Vice-Chairman of the Parish Council for the 2023/24 municipal year.

The Chairman authorised the Clerk to electronically sign his Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

## 23/016 Declarations of Interest

No further declarations or changes to existing declarations were made.

## 23/017 Councillors' Roles

Councillors agreed to defer this item to the June meeting of the Council

## **23/018 Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) and Final Accounts 2022/23**

The Clerk submitted the draft AGAR for approval. The Internal Auditor's report was included in the AGAR, the auditor's opinion being that expected arrangements were in place. No issues or recommendations had been raised.

The Clerk advised that in his opinion, all expected governance arrangements set out in Section 1 of the AGAR were in place and the statement could be approved. Section 2 set out the Accounting Statements for 2022/23, which the Clerk also recommended for approval.

The Clerk reported that the Council is eligible to claim exemption from external audit upon submission of a duly approved and signed Exemption Certificate. The deadline for submission of the completed certificate is 30th June 2023. The Clerk therefore recommended that the AGAR be approved, and that the Council claim exemption from external audit, with the statutory period of public inspection being set as Monday, 19<sup>th</sup> June to Friday, 28th July 2023 inclusive.

The Clerk also presented a more detailed report into the Council's final accounts for 2022/23. The accounts showed that the Council's 'General Account' balances as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023 stood at £8,165. Compared with established target reserves of £3,500, this indicated that up to £4,665 of funds could be available for purposes over and above 'normal business'. The Clerk recommended that a previously agreed formal review of the Council's reserves and the Reserves Protocol should be undertaken at the earliest opportunity.

The Clerk advised that he had produced an outline cash flow forecast for 2023/24 and concluded that £8,000 could be transferred from the Council's Current Account into the interest-bearing Instant Access Account.

### **Resolved:**

- (1) That the Annual Internal Audit Report 2022/23 is noted and accepted.
- (2) That Section 1 of the AGAR – the Annual Governance Statement 2022/23 is approved.
- (3) That Section 2 of the AGAR – Accounting Statements 2022/23, is approved.
- (4) That the Council claims exemption from the limited assurance audit and submits the required Exemption Certificate.
- (5) That the period for the exercise of public rights to inspect the accounts is set as Monday 19th June to Friday 28th July 2023 inclusive.
- (6) That the previously agreed formal review of the Council's reserves and the Reserves Protocol is undertaken at the earliest opportunity.
- (7) That the Council transfers £8,000 from the Current to the Instant Access Account

### **23/019 Risk Register Review 2023/24**

The Clerk reported into the results of a review of the Council's Risk Register. Existing risks had been updated with any additional mitigations adopted since the last review, and two new 'Strategic and Operational' risks had been added to the draft Register.

Councillors discussed risks associated with the drainage ditch on the Snuff Mill Lane public bridleway and agreed that the entry be retained in the register, with revised wording.

Councillors agreed that the lack of a Lengthsman service remained a significant risk, to be scored as 'Medium' and the wording of the risk updated.

Several other minor amendments were agreed.

**Resolved:** That, subject to the agreed amendments, the draft Risk Register for 2023/24 is approved.

### **23/020 Review of Council Policies and Procedures**

The Clerk reported into the results of an annual review of the Council's Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, Information Governance Policies and Complaints Procedure. The Clerk advised that the documents remained up to date and fit for purpose and no changes were recommended.

**Resolved:** That the existing policies and documents be approved without amendment.

### **23/021 Planning Applications**

- 1) No new planning applications had been received.
- 2) The Clerk presented a report providing an update on previous applications and those that had been recently decided.

### **23/022 Lancaster South Area Action Plan (LSAAP)**

Councillor Ward advised that no further correspondence had been received from the City Council since the last Council meeting, but that a renewed series of Parish Council liaison events was anticipated.

Councillors discussed the now operational 'average speed' cameras installed on the A588 and questioned what information was to be gathered and retained. Councillors agreed that the question should be asked of the Lancashire Road Safety Partnership (LRSP) or Lancashire County Council, as appropriate.

**Resolved:** That a request for information on the deployment of new cameras along the A588 and the management of the information gathered, be submitted to the LRSP or County Council.

## **23/023 Stodday Picnic Site**

Councillor Walton reported that the site was now complete following the installation of the benches, seat and litter bin. A working party of 15-16 volunteers from both Aldcliffe and Stodday had helped with tidying and weeding the site and surrounding area as part of King Charles III's Coronation Weekend 'Big Help Out' on Monday, 8<sup>th</sup> May. Councillors agreed that an article and photos should be posted on the Parish website.

The Clerk reported that volunteer arrangements had been established and agreed with Lancaster City Council for emptying the new litter bin and disposing of bin bags.

The Clerk provided a final accounting statement for the project, which had resulted in the Parish Council contributing £166 towards the overall cost.

The Clerk also advised that a project completion report was required by the Lancaster University Wind Turbine Community Benefit Fund and reminded Councillors that a formal 'opening ceremony' had always been intended. Councillors agreed that an official opening should be arranged, with all funding bodies and contributing parties invited.

**Resolved:** That an official opening of the picnic site should be arranged, with all funding bodies and contributing parties invited.

## **23/024 Public Discussion and Updates**

### **City and County Councillors' Reports**

No further reports were received.

### **Clerk's Report:**

Nothing further to report.

### **Members' Updates**

#### **1) Highways (Chairman)**

Councillor Ward reported that a tanker destined for the Stodday WwTW had become stuck at the junction in Stodday after having wrongly approached via Waterside Lane. Councillors discussed whether signage at the intended access via Lunecliffe Road was creating confusion and needed to be reconsidered. Following discussion, no immediate action was agreed.

#### **2) Amenity, including the Lengthsman (Chairman)**

The Chairman advised that he had arranged to meet a representative from a local grounds maintenance company to discuss the Parish's needs.

#### **3) Broadband Provision (Councillor Walton)**

Nothing further to report.

#### **4) Ancillary (Chairman)**

Nothing further to report.

**5) Other Matters**

Nothing further to report.

**Public Discussion:**

No further matters were raised.

**23/025 Payments**

<b>Payee &amp; Detail</b>	<b>£</b>
St Paul's Parish Hall – Room Hire 10 <sup>th</sup> May 2023 (note 1)	25.20
Marcin Wasik – Fixing benches and litter bin, Stodday Picnic Site (note 1)	413.60
Councillor Walton – materials for picnic site furniture	49.30
LALC – Annual Subscription 2023/24	47.04
Dawn Allen – Internal Audit fee 2022/23	68.00
Derek Whiteway – Parish Clerk salary and expenses, April 2023	190.06
HMRC – PAYE deductions, April 2023	46.40
Bank transfer from Current Account to Instant Saver Account (see Minute 23/018(7))	8,000.00

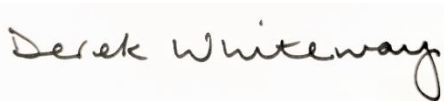
Note 1. These invoices had been paid previously under delegated authority and were presented for information only.

**Resolved:** That the above accounts be approved for payment.

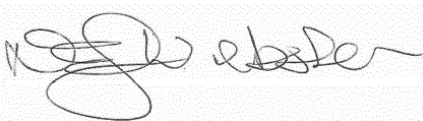
**23/026 Date and venue for next meeting**

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, 7<sup>th</sup> June 2023 at St Paul's Parish Hall, Scotforth, commencing at 7.00pm.

The meeting closed at 9:00pm



Clerk of the Council



Chair

Date: 7<sup>th</sup> June 2023