

BLAXTON PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 17 JANUARY 2024 AT 19:00 IN BLAXTON VILLAGE HALL

PRESENT: Councillors R Johnson, P Raybould, J Hill and J Steventon

APOLOGIES: Clerk Pamela Reeves (Meeting Minutes taken by Cllr J Hill)

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC: None

1) **APOLOGIES** – None

2) **TO CONSIDER THE EXTENT, IF ANY, TO WHICH THE PUBLIC WERE TO BE EXCLUDED FROM THE MEETING** – None

3) **DECLARATION OF PREJUDICIAL INTERESTS, OTHER INTERESTS, THE RECEIPT OF GIFTS AND HOSPITALITY AND REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATION** – None

4) **MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 6 DECEMBER 2023**

RESOLVED (1)

That the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 6 December 2023 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

5) **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION** – None

6) **COUNCILLOR VACANCY**

Following the resignation of Cllr J Scutt, the Chair explained the Parish Councillor vacancy process. The Notice of Casual Vacancy had been published with a deadline of 15 January 2024. If no request for an election is received, then the vacancy can be advertised and applications for co-option be accepted. Expressions of interest should be directed to the Clerk – **Noted**

7) **CONSIDERATION OF INTERNAL AUDITOR FOR 2023/24**

RESOLVED (2)

That Mr A Stanley be appointed as Internal Auditor for 2023/24

8) **WARD MEMBERS REPORT** – None

9) **CDC AND SOUTH AREA COMMUNITIES TEAM ISSUES** – None

10) **POLICING ISSUES** – None

11) **CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEES**

a) CDC Parish Councils Joint Consultative Committee (PCJCC) – Meeting 09/11/23 Minutes circulated 15/12/23 – **Noted**

b) South Yorkshire Branch of the YLCA – Next Meeting 21/02/24 – **Noted**

c) Public Rights of Way Forum (PROW) – Meeting 19/10/23 Minutes circulated 08/01/24 – Next Meeting 11/04/24 – **Noted**

12) FINANCIAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

- a) Unity Current Account Service Charge £18.00 paid by Direct Debit on 31 December 2023 – **Noted**
- b) Payments considered for approval on 17 January 2024:-

Cllr Raybould requested to abstain from this item due to one of the payments being made to his wife on behalf of Finningley Women's Institute.

RESOLVED (3)

That the following payments be approved:-

<u>Voucher No</u>	<u>Payee/Invoice</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Net</u>	<u>VAT</u>	<u>Total</u>
85 – DD 29/12/23	1&1 Ionos Ltd 203039447227	1&1 Website Hosting costs 08/12/23 – 08/01/24	23.00	4.60	27.60
86 – DD 31/12/23	Unity Trust Bank Statement No.028	Current Account Service Charge	18.00	0.00	18.00
87	P Reeves	Salary January 2024	563.55	0.00	563.55
87	P Reeves	Office, Telephone, Broadband Allowance January 2024	25.00	0.00	25.00
88	P Dennis	Salary January 2024	103.77	0.00	103.77
89	HMRC	HMRC M10	25.80	0.00	25.80
90 – DD 23/01/24	1&1 Ionos Ltd 203039933648	1&1 Website Hosting costs 08/01/24 – 08/02/24	23.00	4.60	27.60
91	CDC 29533177	Coronation Tree – work carried out to supply and plant and water (for 3 years)	400.00	80.00	480.00
92	CDC 2953644A	Litter Bin Emptying Q3 2023/24 (02/10/23 – 24/12/23)	63.27	12.65	75.92
93	J Raybould (Finningley WI)	Reimbursement for Metal Wire Wreath Frames (Remembrance poppy displays)	34.66	0.00	34.66
					1,381.90

Note: **DD** above indicates payment to be taken by Direct Debit on the date shown

- c) Bank Reconciliation at 31 December 2023 – **Noted**
- d) Net Position to 16 January 2024 – **Noted**
- e) Appointment of Clerk

Following the receipt of the Clerk Pamela's resignation on 11 January 2024, it was with regret that the Council accepted this and agreed to advertise the vacancy immediately. It was also noted that the Joint Clerk, Philip had advised of his intention to retire. Both had agreed to continue until after 31 March 2024 to complete the AGAR.

A staffing report had been circulated by Philip with recommendations of increased working hours for the Clerk and substantive evidence suggesting this should increase from 9 hours to 11 hours per week.

RESOLVED (4)

That the current Clerk's hours be increased from 9 to 11 hours from 1 January 2024 until the end of employment.

RESOLVED (5)

That the Clerk vacancy be advertised as soon as possible for 11 hours per week and the current Clerks provide guidance on the procedure for advertising and appointing a new Clerk.

- f) Draft Budget 2024/25 – circulated 14/01/24

The draft budget for 2024/25 was reviewed and discussed by the Council.

RESOLVED (6)

That the draft budget for 2024/25 be approved, making the projected budget expenditure £27,290 for the year.

- g) Precept 2024/25

RESOLVED (7)

That the Precept for 2024/25 be set at £24,452 which represents a zero % increase on the previous year.

- h) Signatories on Bank Account

Following the resignation of Cllr Scutt, a new signatory is required on the Bank Account for the authorisation of payments.

RESOLVED (8)

That Cllrs Raybould and Steventon both be added as signatories to the Bank Account, with the Clerk requested to progress the administration requirements.

RESOLVED (9)

That Joint Clerk Philip be requested to authorise the January 2024 payments to avoid delays in payments being made.

- i) YLCA Training Programme – circulated 18/12/23 & 22/12/23 – **Noted**

- j) Defibrillator Guardian

It was reported that following Cllr Scutt's resignation, he had offered to continue as Defibrillator Guardian.

RESOLVED (10)

That the Council accept Mr John Scutt's offer of continuing with the role of Defibrillator Guardian with thanks.

- k) Climate Change & Sustainability

- i) Suggested Village Hall Carbon Footprint Project

It was reported that the certification from the Carbon Literacy Project Training was still outstanding and that the Chair had followed this up with the Training Organiser and was awaiting a response. Once this is received, dialogue can begin with the Village Hall Committee (VHC).

RESOLVED (11)

That an update be provided once a response has been received from the Carbon Literacy Project Training Organiser so that dialogue with the VHC can progress.

ii) Village related carbon footprint improvement possibilities

Cllr Hill suggested starting to explore projects so that considerations are ready for the new budget in April 2024 and possible locations for these projects were also discussed. It was also suggested that Walkers Nurseries could be approached for advice on the most suitable plants to survive on the grass verges between the road and pathways around the Village.

RESOLVED (12)

That Cllr Hill be requested to approach The Blue Bell to discuss the possibility of hosting a bike repair stand.

13) PLANNING APPLICATIONS

- a) Planning Application 23/02488/FUL – Erection of detached store to the side of the property – 35 Mosham Road, Blaxton DN9 3AZ – circulated 22/12/23 – under Clerk’s delegated powers the following comment was registered on 08/01/24 “The Parish Council have no objections and wish to register a neutral response” – **Noted**
- b) Consideration of any Planning Applications received between the issue of the Agenda and the Meeting – **None**

14) BLAXTON PLAYING FIELD

Improvements to Blaxton Playing Field – Section 106 Funding (18/02593/FULM)

Cllr Hill provided an update on the current progress following the results of the survey. Following approval of the specifications, several companies had been approached for quotation and site visits had taken place. It was reported that some quotations were still outstanding and that Clerk Philip was keeping a working document of all interactions and discussions.

RESOLVED (13)

That the quotations be shared with Donna Flicker, CDC Stronger Communities Officer, once they had all been received.

15) JOINT PLAYING FIELD

a) YLCA Advice

The Chair gave a brief summary of the background to this item;

- First contact with YLCA followed the Playing Field Association (PFA) meeting of 6 September 2023 at which the PFA was claimed to be dissolved. 5 persons present at the meeting voted in favour, 1 abstained. 4 of the persons voting were Members of Finningley Parish Council (FPC), no Blaxton Parish Council (BPC) Members were present. FPC assumed control of the facility including its bank account, which, at Treasurer handover 12 July 2023 stood at £21,879.92.

- At the BPC meeting on 20 September 2023, Members received a report from the Clerk questioning the validity of the “dissolution”. It was resolved (Resolution 18) for the Chair to contact the Chair of FPC “with a view to identifying opportunities to return to a more harmonious relationship between the JPF stakeholders”. This was rejected by the FPC Chair on 26 September.
- Advice on how to proceed was then sought from YLCA by the Clerk. It was also resolved at the BPC meeting on 25 October to send a list of requests to FPC (Resolution 11) which included a request of an update on the current finances. This Resolution was also sent to YLCA. No response was received from FPC and there is no evidence to suggest that this appeared on an Agenda or was discussed.
- YLCA reported that following contact from an FPC Member, it was claimed that the PFA had not been dissolved. They provided advice based on that assertion. Later, the same Member confirmed to YLCA that the PFA had actually been dissolved. YLCA then updated their advice to BPC and included FPC in their response. The tone of that advice was recommending conciliation between the Councils.
- At the BPC meeting on 6 December 2023, it was resolved that “the Chair make contact with YLCA to discuss the current position”. This was actioned. The YLCA came back with an offer to Chair a meeting with the Chairs of both Parish Councils to discuss “a way forward”. In the same email they suggested possible options for discussion. BPC Chair accepted the offer on 19 December 2023. The email was acknowledged by FPC Chair but no further update has been received.
- An update was requested from the Chief Officer of YLCA on 12 January 2024. A response is still outstanding.
Note: The Joint Clerks were copied in all correspondence with YLCA.

RESOLVED (14)

That the Chair be requested to circulate the correspondence from YLCA to Members for information, thoughts and comments.

- b) Finningley and Blaxton Joint Playing Field Improvement Projects Funded by Section 106 Grant (12/01327/EXTM) – Monitoring report for period ending 31/07/23 circulated 30/11/23 – **Noted**

It was also reported that two emails from Finningley Parish Council (FPC) had been received on 12 January 2024. The first was to request Blaxton Parish Council (BPC) to ask the Contractor to empty the contents of the container on the Joint Playing Field within 28 days. It was noted that any equipment the Contractor may have on the Joint Playing Field is necessary to complete the ongoing Section 106 Field Improvement Project and which was agreed within the Contract.

The second email was to advise that the Contractor should be asked to remove the mowing equipment on the field within 48 hours as this was deemed by FPC as a potential Health & Safety issue. It was advised that the Chair had assisted the Contractor with the removal of the mowing equipment from the Joint Playing Field into the compound and FPC Clerk advised of this on 15 January 2024.

16) BLAXTON VILLAGE HALL

Village Hall Committee – Next Meeting 24/01/24 – **Noted**

17) DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of Blaxton Parish Council will be held on Wednesday 21 February 2024
in Blaxton Village Hall at 19:00

Meeting closed at 20:32

Chair: _____

Date: _____