

Hawes and High Abbotside Parish Council

Minutes of the Meeting of 3rd March 2014 held at the Dales Countryside Museum, Hawes, at 6.00pm

Present: Cllrs J Blackie (Chairman), Cllrs Mrs S Alderson, Ms D Allen, A Fawcett, Ms CM Grainger, W Head, Mrs S Mason, A Sunter

In Attendance: I King (Clerk), and 10 members of the public

Apologies: Ms A Caygill, S Hunter, KM Nugent

1. **Introduction.** The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting, and explained that it would be in two parts, with the regular Council business being discussed first before, at 7.30pm, there would be a discussion of the Post Office service in Hawes, followed by the chance to hear from Mr John Moore (Chief Executive of Superfast Broadband North Yorkshire (SBNY) and Mr David Bowe (Corporate Director of Business and Environmental Services for North Yorkshire County Council (NYCC)).
2. **The Minutes of the Meeting of 3rd February 2014 were accepted as a true record, and signed by the Chairman. There were no Matters Arising.**

3. Chairman's Items

- a) **Tour de France.** Cllr Mrs Mason gave a brief update on the planning of the local Tour de France Committee. On the Saturday there will be food and other stalls and children's entertainment on the Market Place between the Board Inn and Bear Interiors. A band will play in the Penny Garth Car Park on the Friday night and more will be there on the Saturday night. It has been decided that the town will be decorated by locally made bunting using the pink and white linked to the Tour's hill climb winner's colours. Local sewing parties will be arranged.

There are also investigations into the possibility of a new chalk sculpture (possibly of a bicycle) on the hills above Simonstone.

The Clerk added that he had been contacted by the BBC to say that the Tandem Tour de Yorkshire (which will follow the Tour de France route) being cycled by Harry Graton and Amy Garcia from the West Yorkshire Look North programme in aid of Sport Relief will be passing through Hawes and High Abbotside on Saturday 15th March at around 2.00pm.

- b) **Play Park.** Cllr Blackie reported that most of the equipment has been delivered to Mr Iveson and that work should start in a few days. Hopefully the new toddler area will be open for use by the beginning of April.
- c) **Cemetery.** Cllr Blackie said that it was time that the Parish Council's cemetery was commissioned. Council established a Working Group of Cllrs Mrs Allen, Mrs Mason and Head to progress the matter. Priorities are to establish a Policy of Burial Rights and to organise a multi-denominational consecration. Hopefully the new Cemetery will be available by the end of May.

- d) **24/7 Consultant-led Maternity and Children's Services at the Friarage Hospital.** Cllr Blackie reported that the NHS Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) had made its decision on reducing these services in a 90 minute closed meeting of GP Practices. He argued that this was not a democratic process as 10 out of the 22 Practices were not present.

The alternative proposal put forward by Richmondshire District Council (RDC) was "treated with disdain", and was not even circulated to the GP Practices by CCG Management. Dr Pleydell (CCG Chief Officer) was dismissive of the public opposition to their proposals, ignoring the 4000+ people who had marched through Northallerton, the opposition of every local Council and of the local MP (the Rt Hon William Hague).

Consequently RDC has decided to consider launching a Judicial Review of the way the decision was reached, briefing a senior Barrister. It is very mindful of the public purse, but feels strongly that the existing level of service at The Friarage is essential for patient safety, especially for mothers to be and their babies, and needs to be maintained.

A member of the public asked about the Maternity services at Kendal. Cllr Blackie replied that it is a Midwife-led Service, and suggested that people are happier with Consultant-led units so that midwifery led units tend to lose footfall over time. In the last 5 years 25 midwife-led units across England have closed or are designated to close. He suggested that the planned midwife-led service at the Friarage has been set up to fail, and that after 3 years there will be another consultation, this time on closing it for good.

Another question was on the capacity of the Maternity Services at Darlington Memorial Hospital. Cllr Blackie said that it wants more births as it currently has some 2500 per annum and really needs around 3500 to be sustainable. Consequently it is currently upgrading its services and he thinks that in the event of the downgrading of services at The Friarage it will become the Maternity Unit of choice for Richmondshire mothers, with a consequent loss of income to the South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust.

Mrs Ruth Annison commented that the Friarage Hospital seems quiet these days and wondered if the proposals include the loss of Gynaecology services to the James Cook University Hospital as well, which would have an impact on older women from the Dales. Cllr Blackie confirmed that this is the case, which puts more pressure on that hospital and increases transport costs for patients.

4. **Highways Issues**

- a) Cllr Ms Grainger reported a new issue, of a pothole at the Junction of Gayle Lane and the A684, by the school.
- b) Cllr Head reported that the road surface by the first (Hawes side) bridge at Appersett is in bad condition, with tracks gouged in the surface. The coping stones on the second bridge (Garsdale side) are loose and dangerous.
- c) The road outside the Stonehouse Hotel has a hole which collects water.
- d) Surface at Shutt Lane, Sedbusk, was mentioned again.

- e) The road at Harker Hill, Gayle, is breaking down into the gully, and needs "haunching".
- f) There is a very poor surface at Browna Paddocks.
- g) The big hole in the road at Haylands Bridge, opposite the Cricket Field, is still dangerous.
- h) The raised footpath by Haylands Bridge is also still dangerous.
- i) The No Entry Signs by the HSBC Bank at the top of the Cobbles in Hawes have been "clattered" again and are twisted.
- j) Concern is growing over the state of the river wall at Gayle, with fears that it may lead to flooding of the properties around Clints House and down to Gayle Mill.

5. YDNPA Planning Applications

- a. **R/56/407E Church House, The Hill, Hawes.** Full planning and Listed Building Consent for extension of the School Masters House and renovation of the National School Hall. The Chairman noted that the Council had been strongly opposed to a previous application for this property, which had wanted to convert it into a five-bedroom holiday let. This new application was for housing for a local family and continuing to use the Hall for courses and Christian events. **Very strongly supported.**
- b. **R/56/462 South View, Town Foot, Hawes.** Full planning permission for stable and change of use of land to equines in addition to farm use (Retrospective). The applicant, Mr Alan Banks, was present at, and addressed, the meeting. He said that this was a retrospective application as he had initially been advised that Planning Consent was not required. He had installed a wooden stable, mounted on skids. It is "tucked away" and no neighbours had objected. The change of use was required, but horses have regularly been kept on that field for over 10 years. Both Cllr Head and Nugent had visited the site, and had neither received nor raised any objections. **Supported.**

6. YDNPA Planning Issues

A call has gone out for the identification of sites for employment and extra care Housing Schemes. It was felt that the Auction Mart is a brown field site which could accommodate further development, as is the Upper Wensleydale Business Park. The Auction Mart has already been designated by the YDNPA as an employment site, and the latter has already been suggested for an extra care Housing Scheme.

7. Correspondence

- a) **Policing.** The Chairman outlined an email correspondence requesting a police escort for a recent funeral at the Methodist Church. The response had been negative, and he wondered what exactly Parishioners in Hawes & High Abbotside receive back in return for the precept they pay to North Yorkshire Police. The police no longer deal with lost property, stray dogs, parking on yellow lines, parking causing an obstruction, crowd control, traffic control, placing No Waiting cones out to avoid traffic congestion, and so on. **Agreed to request the Police and Crime Commissioner and the Chief Superintendent in charge of Richmondshire Policing to attend a future Meeting of the Parish Council.**

Cllr Head reported that a local resident had been "fobbed off" by local police when trying to follow up a report of two suspicious men running across a field. Cllr Head

had been in touch with Sgt Stuart Grainger, who was disappointed by his colleague's attitude and will investigate

b) **Lunds Institute.** The Accounts for the year ending 31st March 2013 were tabled.

8. **Financial Matters: Agreed to pay the following accounts:**

- a) **Gayle Village Institute** - Room Hire Nov & Dec 2014 and Feb 2014 - **£45.00**
- b) **Richmondshire District Council** - Play Park Maintenance Costs 2013-14 - **£326.44**
- c) **Marmax Products Ltd** – Fencing etc for Play Park - **£1315.38**

9. **Any Other Business**

- a) Mrs Annison expressed her gratitude to the Chairman for his sterling efforts in the campaign over the Friarage Hospital. This was endorsed by other members of the public and the Councillors present.
- b) **Street lighting.** The Chairman sought the meeting's views on the consultation to reduce street lighting overnight. The County Council has resolved to turn off all its lights, unless there are cogent security or safety reasons, from 12 midnight to 5.00 am each day. RDC has agreed to consult with local communities to seek their views for the street lights that it provides. **After discussion the Council strongly resolved to keep its lights on as at present.**

First part of the Meeting closed at 7.30pm.

Date of next Meeting: Monday, 19th May 2014 at 7.15pm in Gayle Institute.