

HAWES & HIGH ABBOTSDALE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of 27th November 2017 Commencing at Gayle Institute at 7.15pm

Present: Cllrs J Blackie (Chairman) (JB), Mrs S Alderson (SA), Ms A Caygill (AC), A Fawcett (AF), S Hunter (SH), Mrs A Rhodes (AR), A Sunter (AS), I Woolley (IW)

In Attendance: Mrs F Cartwright (Clerk), 3 members of the public

Apologies: Cllrs B Fawcett (BF) and Y Waluda (YW)

1. **The Minutes of the Meeting of 18th September 2017 were accepted as a true record, signed by the Chairman.**
 2. **Matters arising** - no matters arising.
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3. Chairman's Items

Dale Head Garage, Hawes

The Chairman provided an update. The Upper Dales Community Partnership (UDCP) Ltd has taken on a three-year lease for the Dale Head Garage commencing November 2017. During this period a Community Buy Out is being planned (similar to pubs such as The Foresters Arms in Coverdale) - the concept being the local community would own the garage into perpetuity or as long as petrol / diesel fuel for vehicles is required. It has captured national attention in the Daily Mail which described Hawes as "*the most self-reliant town in England*", and The Times including an Editorial, "*Hawes For Thought*" which described Hawes as "*The Northern Powerhouse*". It has also featured on the BBC programme, Country File and Sky News.

It has been welcomed nationally, inspired other communities and gained tremendous support in our local community. The UDCP has accumulated other local services over the last 20 years and has a fantastic track record.

The Upper Dales is a self-reliant independent community caring for themselves when public or private organisations that have done so in the past have walked away, mainly through the lack of funding from the Government in the era of austerity.

Initial indications are that the garage should sell 875,000 - 1 million litres of fuel per annum. The pricing strategy has been to keep it competitive (119.9p per litre for both unleaded and diesel for the first few weeks) and it will be to try and equal to within 1p or so the price of fuel when compared to the Tesco supermarket forecourt at Catterick Garrison.

The garage has been very well supported by the local community and trade is 35% up on last year when it was run by the Bowns. The UDCP is a not for profit organisation so it can keep the price of fuel down but it will need to make a surplus to put towards loss making services like running the Post Office which annually loses money because they are now designed to sit alongside a retail business like a local convenience store where customers for the Post Office spend money in the store and boost its turnover.

The Chairman explained that the garage is reviewing a proposal for a 24/7 Pay Pump using credit / debit cards, which can also accommodate monthly customer accounts and is expected to increase business e.g. Crakehall Garage has added 3,000 - 5,000 litres of fuel sales per month as a result of installing the system. It is hoped that a grant could be secured from Richmondshire DC Economic Growth Fund. There are also plans to install an electric charging point in 2018.

Jan Blackie 27 Nov 2017

He pointed out that the community owed a debt of gratitude to Ian and Sam Bown who had kept the garage forecourt going for 8 years and the 3 local owners who had purchased it back in 2008. At that time, as he was involved in the negotiations, there was a great danger of it being sold to housing developers or business operators with the same result - it would have closed permanently. He intended to send a letter of thanks to the Bowns from the Parish Council, on behalf of the local communities, and this was agreed by Parish Councillors.

The Chairman asked if there were any questions.

Cllr Ian Woolley queried the staffing arrangements. JB confirmed that there are two volunteers and four part-time paid staff covering the sixty hours per week the garage was open.

Cllr Tony Fawcett enquired about tenders for the supply of fuel. JB confirmed that four companies were bidding for the renewal of the fuel supply contract for the next 5 years, which is due in January 2018. JB and Fran Cartwright have meetings scheduled with two representatives on 27th November, and a third representative in the week commencing 4th December. The existing supplier is also bidding.

JB explained that the minimum order quantities were a challenge and operational arrangements had been made for Banksmen training for the DHG forecourt assistants to guide the artics bringing the fuel safely off the forecourt and around the corner up Gayle Lane after they have filled the storage tanks.

Cllr Stuart Hunter asked if the garage continues to benefit from the Government's Rural Fuel Duty Relief. JB explained that the garage had applied for new registration which had been granted, and will continue to submit a monthly retrospective claim of 5p per litre rebate from HMRC for fuel purchased. This is passed on directly to the consumer.

Electoral Boundary Review of Richmondshire District Council Update

The Chairman had previously put to the Parish Council a proposal to keep the Upper Dales together. Richmondshire District Council wanted Hawes & High Abbotside to join with Bainbridge. Instead JB had submitted his proposal to have a ward joining Hawes, High Abbotside with Muker and Melbecks.

His proposals for the Upper Dales, including for this new ward of Hawes, High Abbotside and Upper Swaledale, had gained considerable support and had been accepted by the Boundary Commission in their entirety, adding just a handful of electors in Melmerby.

The only issue was the name of the new ward and The Boundary Commission had suggested Hawes and High Abbotside which would not be fair or accurate, because it leaves out all of the new ward in Upper Swaledale. JB asked if the Parish Council were happy to write in support of The Boundary Commission's proposals for the Upper Dales, asking though for the name of the new ward to be Hawes, High Abbotside and Upper Swaledale

Resolved unanimously - *The Parish Council would write to the Boundary Commission in support.*

NHS Issues

The following were key concerns raised during the debate:

- i) **The closure of mental health wards at the Friarage Hospital** - JB recapped that the NHS have confirmed closure of mental health wards - which the Parish Council had objected to. This brought the prospect of an in-patient from the Parish being accommodated in a hospital in Bishop Auckland, which for most in the Upper Dales, would be the equivalent of being sent to a foreign country.

Not only for the patient, who may recover more quickly in surroundings they were familiar with, but also those who want to come as visitors and would be put off by a destination that would be completely alien to them.

Amblacle
27 Nov 2017

- ii) **The consultation on the future for the Friarage Hospital** - JB fears the 24/7 A&E, midwife-led maternity and Critical Care services will be lost, all services which address immediate, urgent or unplanned health care needs, and traditionally those you would expect to find at your local District Hospital. They will go to the James Cook University Hospital.

JB reiterated that the James Cook is an excellent hospital, but it is already working at full capacity and would be swamped if more services were diverted there. It does not have adequate parking facilities to cope with the patient flows it already experiences.

There would be 10,000+ live births per year if all consultant-led maternity moved to James Cook. It is a 60-mile trip from Hawes to the James Cook and the Air Ambulance will not take expectant mothers.

JB advised the Parish Council to continue to fight for these immediate, urgent and unplanned services to remain at the Friarage. If any services are to be transferred, then they should be re-located at the Darlington Memorial.

In all the hospitals the Chairman has visited over the years, no other had the same problems recruiting consultants as is being reported by the local NHS at the Friarage. He suspects the local NHS is not trying hard enough, as it is keen to cut the services and make savings there.

- iii) **The Shortfall in the number of Yorkshire Ambulance Service Emergency Ambulances** - JB advised that the Parish Council continues to carefully monitor this concern. If all the services at The Friarage are transferred to the James Cook, and the number of emergency ambulances stay the same, then it will take an extra 1.5 hours to return to them to their base ambulance stations, including Bainbridge.

Hawes & High Abbotside Community Fund/Poor's Charity

The Chairman advised the Parish Council of the retirement of the Trustee Administrator of the Charity and the return of the responsibility for the administration of the Charity to the Parish Council, where it had resided prior to 2007. It was agreed that JB and Fran Cartwright would meet with Ian Fowler, the previous Parish Clerk prior to Ian King who after retiring from the Parish Council in 2007 agreed to administer it as a volunteer. There would be an administration hand-over before the next Parish Council, where the way forward would be discussed, most probably calling a meeting of the Trustees.

Resolved unanimously - *The Parish Council was in agreement with the proposed way forward.*

Issues/Concerns @ Richmondshire District Council (RDC)

Public Toilets - The Penny Garth - The Chairman reported that there have been three major complaints, two written and one verbal regarding the toilets within days of the charging to use the toilets going live. These he had forwarded to the District Council. The complaints are primarily regarding the 20p coin mechanism and water on the floors. The verbal complaint was regarding the coin mechanism not working and male users were witnessed urinating in public view in Penny Garth.

Richmondshire District Council's response was that urinating in public was an offence and the police should have been called. The floor and the coin mechanism problems were blamed on local vandals!! The UW Community Office will continue to monitor and record complaints and pass them to the District Council.

The locking mechanism on the outside doors of toilets in the District cost around £78,000 and from the experience of those toilets already converted where there has been a significant amount of free entry with the locking doors being propped open, the capital payback will take at least 5 years to achieve.

Resolved unanimously - *The Parish Council to continue to receive reports on the quality of the street cleaning and public convenience services provided by RDC.*

Com Blodie
27 Nov 2017

Crime Spree in Hawes

A number of crimes such as breaking into garages and sheds in Hawes and Gayle and a general lack of Police response have been reported to the Chairman.

JB will raise it at the NYCC Richmondshire Area Committee meeting being held in Arkengarthdale on 29th November.

Retaining the Gayle K2 Heritage Telephone Box & BT Telephone Line

The phone box by Gayle Bridge stands on an old ash pit and the land many years ago came into private ownership. BT have been paying £100 per annum wayleave to the land owner. When BT removed the telephone box from Little Ings it was on understanding they would leave the phone box by Gayle Bridge.

BT have now said they will reduce the annual wayleave to £10 per annum. BT would like to remove the box and are able to do so as it is on private land where a wayleave is being paid. The box is considered a part of the heritage of Gayle and should be retained.

28 boxes (including Sedbusk, Appersett, Simonstone, Burtersett) have been rescued in the Upper Dales following a campaign by The Chairman in his role as County Councillor. BT wanted to remove the payphones from them all.

JB advised the Parish Council to pay £40 to the landowner if BT reduce the wayleave from £100 to £10 per annum. The landowner would gratefully accept this, and BT would be happy to leave the telephone box and telephone line in situ.

Cllr Albert Sunter asked who is responsible for the ongoing maintenance and JB confirmed that it is the responsibility of BT but there is a huge backlog of repairs and refurbishment outstanding. A member of the public queried whether the Parish Council could purchase the land as a public body. The consensus was that legal fees are likely to be expensive and prohibitive.

Resolved unanimously - *The Parish Council agreed to pay £40 to the landowner once it was due, this date to be advised by BT Payphones, and to review it annually.*

Review of the salary of the Parish Clerk

Following the successful completion of the three-month probationary period, the Chairman had circulated an e-mail to the Parish Council in advance of the meeting proposing to increase the Parish Clerk salary from £2,000 per annum to £2,800 per annum in line with the Society of Local Council Clerks pay scales. JB asked if the Parish Council were in agreement. Cllr Sheila Alderson proposed, and Cllr Stuart Hunter seconded.

Resolved unanimously - *The Parish Clerk's salary would be increased to £2,800 per annum effective from January 2018 and would be reviewed in June 2019.*

4. Chairman's Advisory Items / Latest News / Progress updates

Co-option of Parish Councillor - The Parish Council now comprises 10 councillors, and it would like to co-opt a further councillor. The Chairman asked the Councillors to enquire in the local communities.

Town Foot Shepherd, Hawes - The wooden shepherd did not survive revellers at the Midsummer Bash, although it has to be said that it was suffering from advanced wood rot. The 7 feet x one quarter inch laser cut steel shepherd and a set of accompanying figures (a sheep dog and a sheep) will be installed on 29th November. Glenn, the 2nd Home Owner who was providing the sculptures did not want to receive payment but requested he might be allowed to put up a plaque advertising his business in return.

Cambridge
27 Nov 2017

Mrs Ruth Annison, a member of the public, said there had been concerns raised about the appropriateness of the pipe particularly given the location of the sculpture opposite the Play Park and Doctors Surgery.

The Chairman said he had heard no concerns whatsoever, and reminded the meeting that the design had been discussed and signed off at the September Parish Council meeting, and it would be erected with the pipe in place. Other members of the Parish Council and members of the audience agreed with this approach.

Resolved - *Parish Councillors unanimously wanted to express their gratitude for the sculptures and a thank you card would be sent to Glenn once the Shepherd / Sheep / Sheep Dog has been erected. It was agreed he should be allowed to place a plaque advertising the services of his company on the sculptures, or nearby.*

Late Emerging and Tabled issues - none

5. Report of the volunteer Play Park supervisors

Robin, Ian and Eric continue to do a sterling job in maintaining the Play Parks. Robin had sent his apologies as he was not able to attend the meeting. The Parish Clerk read out Robin's Play Park e-mail dated 25th November.

Robin had met a representative of the firm who had undertaken the safety surfacing on the toddler's play area. The firm had provided a quotation for around £10,000, which will need to be split into various phases if the Parish Council is to be able to afford it, for the replacement of the safety surfaces under various pieces of equipment at the Town Foot play park.

It was agreed that the Parish Council would look into the Constitution of the Poors Charity to establish whether the remit would permit use of funds for improvements at the Play Parks the Parish Council owns.

6. NYCC Highways - Haylands Bridge Floods

The Parish Council discussed complaints received regarding the flood water that regularly flows from private land on to the highway at the approach from Hawes to Haylands Bridge.

The amount of water that ends up on the highway results in the road having to be closed as it very quickly accumulates to a depth that most vehicles are not able to drive through safely, and the road then remains closed for a considerable period of time. High Abbotside, especially Hardraw, is cut off from Hawes, and travellers going to or coming from Upper Swaledale, via The Buttertubs Pass, have to take the long diversion via Appersett or Breconbar / Bainbridge.

It was noted that when this has happened the road at the far side of Haylands Bridge has not been flooded, indeed on one occasion the river was two feet below the river bank wall opposite the cricket ground, yet the water pouring onto the road through the private landowner's gate was nearly two feet deep and impassable.

Several parties have been contacted such as North Yorkshire County Council Highways, Environment Agency, Northern Power grid, Yorkshire Water, Yorkshire Dales Rivers Trust.

The Chairman agreed to contact the landowner to discuss and invite to the next Parish Council meeting with a view to work together to resolve the problem for the benefit of the local travelling public and our local Upper Dales communities.

Resolved unanimously - *The Parish Council delegated authority to the Chairman to act on behalf of the Council in dealing with this matter.*

Am Brodie
27 Nov 2017

7. YDNPA Planning Applications

R/56/492 - Land off the B6255 Hawes - Full planning permission for the installation of a 15m lattice mast on a concrete base with 3 no. antennas, 2 no 0.6m transmission dishes and 1 no. ground based 1.2m satellite dish, associated equipment cabinets and timber post and rail fence to enclose the compound on land off B6255 Hawes

The Parish Council reviewed the planning application and map. It was agreed that it will provide better mobile phone and broadband to the residents of Widdale, and would provide emergency contact for calling help in the event of the frequent serious motor cycle accidents that had occurred there in recent years.

Resolved - *The Parish Council strongly supported the application.*

October Planning Committee Report

R/56/438A Tim's Barn, Bence, Gayle - Retrospective application for full planning permission for conversion of agricultural building to camping barn

There had been considerable comment and concern in circulation within the local community when the former agricultural barn at Bence, near Gayle, having won planning approval for conversion to a stone tent in 2011, was found to be being advertised on the Internet as a luxury holiday cottage. This led to suggestions locally that the credibility and integrity of the YDNPA planning process was being undermined by this turn of events.

The Parish Council considered that the plans still showed an interior laid out as a luxury holiday cottage, but it was now being described as a camping barn. This was at odds with the narrative on the Design and Access Statement which suggested it would be used by large and small parties, such as school groups or Duke of Edinburgh Award participants, seeking more basic accommodation.

Whilst the Parish Council was prepared to support the application in principle, this was only on the basis that some of the interior features of the Holiday Cottage are stripped out and it is returned to a lower level of accommodation you might expect in a camping barn. This includes removing features that would facilitate permanent residential occupation of the barn and absolutely no parking provision by the barn.

Retrospective Planning Permission was approved subject to the conditions which the Parish Council had wanted.

November Planning Committee Report

R/56/490 - Pike Hill Barn, Ashes - Applicant did not appreciate the importance of the bat survey. JB stepped in for a decision deferral until after an emerging bat survey has been completed in May 2018.

R/56/491 - Mike Barn, Larnacar Lane near Thorneymire, Appersett - Decision deferral again after JB stepped in until after an emerging bat survey has been completed in May 2018. There was some design amendments required as well. Cllr Albert Sunter queried how electric will be supplied. JB confirmed it would be underground.

R/48/160 - Spring Wood Barn, Cotterdale - JB updated the Parish Council following the site visit which he attended on Friday 24th November. He had been involved in negotiations between the Agent for the owner of the Barn and the adjoining householder who objected to the development as it had been put forward in the original application. At JB's request the plans were amended which makes the development much more acceptable to the adjoining householder.

R/56/322B Turpitts Barn - The Chairman put in the response he had suggested might be forwarded to the YDNPA, after circulating it to Parish Councillors by e-mail, asking for their reaction, and taking no response as it was acceptable. No Councillor had objected to what it said.

Resolved unanimously - *The Parish Council objected to the proposal by the Owner (Myles Metcalfe) to charge a market rent rather than an affordable rent for the property. The local occupancy condition would remain.*

ComBlaire 27 Nov 2017

8. Parish Council - Financial Matters

The Parish Clerk had circulated information on the bank account receipts and payments made. It was noted the Bank Balance was £4,906.09 as at 19th November 2017. There were no outstanding invoices.

Resolved - *The Parish Council unanimously approved of all the payments that had been made.*

9. Any Other Business

"The Book of Bridges" - Ruth Annison (Appeal Organiser) distributed Garsdale - Hawes "The Book of Bridges" leaflets to the Parish Council. She explained that there was a local appeal for the professional restoration and conservation of this historical book which has connections with regard to the former railway line between Garsdale Station - Hawes.

The book contains original 1870's engineering drawings. It is more than two feet high and a yard wide and is very fragile and in urgent need of skilled cleaning, repair and conservation to safeguard for the future. The book will reside in the Dales Countryside Museum, Hawes.

Ruth Annison asked the Parish Council for a donation towards the quoted £3,100 restoration and conservation cost. The chairman proposed a donation of £100.

Resolved - *The Parish Council agreed the £100 donation. The Parish Council would like to see the book in due course.*

Parish Council website - A member of the public enquired as to when the <www.hawesandhighabbotsidepc.co.uk> Parish Council website would be updated. The Chairman confirmed that a handover was planned in the diary for the Parish Clerk and the website would be updated thereafter.

Date of next Meeting - Monday 19th February commencing at 7.15pm at Gayle Institute.

Meeting Closed at 9.10pm

Cambridge
27 Nov 2017