

# SILTONS & KEPWICK, LANDMOTH-CUM-CATTO PARISH COUNCIL

## MEETING 2ND FEBRUARY 2021 19:30, VENUE: THE GOLD CUP PUBLIC HOUSE PARISH MEETING

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Minutes Status: **DRAFT Subject to Approval at the next Meeting.**

### **PRESENT**

D.Jones (Chairman), A.Appleby, A.Dennis, J.Ratcliffe D.Burn, S.Haynes (Clerk).

Public: C.Cllr Andy Robinson, C.Cllr. David Hugill, Mr M.Craddock (Public),

**1). Apologies:** None.

### **2). Minutes/Matters Arising**

Minutes of last year's Meeting held on 1st September 2020 were agreed.

Minutes of the Meeting held on 3rd November 2020 were agreed, following matters arising below.

**Action: David Jones to sign and return to Clerk for signing.**

Matters arising from minutes of last meeting 03/11/20

Item 7: Roads at Kepwick. David Burn said that the flooding reported at Kepwick has now occurred again. Jane Ratcliffe to report on this under Item 6 of the Minutes.

Item 11: Little Leake Farm.

Several calls were made to Little Leake Farmhouse to request that their bins were taken in after collection day. The Clerk reported she had paid several visits before finding someone in. Following this the bins were taken in, but have since been permanently left out again. Cllr Burns suggested writing a polite letter. David Jones said the letter should be soft and very polite. Discussion culminated in the decision to again attempt a face to face gentle conversation, with the Clerk suggested provision of collection information to help them understand the collection schedule.

The Clerk suggested that the issue of defibrillators should be on a future agenda for discussion regarding supply of another defibrillator at Over Silton. There are costs associated with this. Restarting Hearts in Northallerton need to be approached for more information. The Clerk suggested a schedule for keeping track of when they need upgrading. Batteries last 4 years and then need replacing and are £400 a time. Monitoring is conducted by a Company from Thirsk who service them, and to date no costs have been incurred relating to this. Cllr Dennis informed the meeting that the pads need changing. The Clerk confirmed that the pads have to be replaced if they are used, and also replaced in any-case every two years. Cllr Ratcliffe reported that she has the spare pad, and that the machine is inspected monthly. The defibrillator machine at the pub will need to be monitored by the new pub tenants in March.

There are considerations for siting a new defibrillator in Over Silton. It will require a power source. Clerk to obtain information and place on agenda for next meeting.

**Action: Clerk to obtain information and place this on next agenda.**

Item 13) Post Office van attendance.

David Burn reported failure of the van to attend again. An email response was received following the Clerks previous enquiry, and a discussion with the driver, who said they operate out of Ripon and they had had problems with the van. Many people, particularly with Covid rely on it so it is very important it comes, as it is only once a week. Contact details have been exchanged with the Clerk to attempt an early alert to avoid people waiting unnecessarily. It was pointed out that due to the weather access for vehicles had been very difficult. The Clerk will give the driver two contact numbers for the future.

### **3.) Coronavirus Pandemic**

The Clerk reported that updates were sent through as they arrived. There are issues and divided opinions regarding people coming into the villages from outside the immediate area to exercise. It is not the role of the Parish Council to police this. The Clerk did suggest that the Council think about appropriate responses should there be a particularly virulent form of Covid or any other such pandemics in the future, as it is wise to have a plan.

Cllr Andy Robinson said that Clerks have legal authority as well as powers to put up signs etc in the event of a worsening scenario.

Cllr Hugill underlined that Hambleton District Council, and North Yorkshire County Council have some procedures in place. Signage on Highways must be done in conjunction with them and the National Park. The police have been turning people back in Osmotherley and Swainby. However there was no coherent approach, as the different parties do not communicate with each other.

Cllr Dennis said if they are turned away from there it merely ricochets out to other areas, as there are no clearly defined parameter for the definition of staying local. Bad weather has helped keep people away, apart from those wanting to sledge.

Cllr Ratcliffe said Kepwick had been a bit quieter, however, the car park being shut meant they simply parked on the side of the lanes. Most people seem to have been local to the area and not from far away. The bank in Kepwick, up to the moors has signage to warn people of the dangerous road conditions which should put people off.

The Chairman considered that for the Parish Council, appropriate signage was our role to try to control these things. This was agreed. Cllr Dennis said if people are adamant about going for a walk no signage would stop them. Cllr Appleby said those he had seen, were being sensible and this was agreed by Cllr Jones from what he had seen on Sutton Bank.

### **4.) Planning Applications/Updates**

#### **Update Application Notice 19/00236/DCN School Farm Nether Silton.**

The Clerk asked Mr Mike Craddock (member of public) and owner of the property to update the Council. Mr Craddock advised it was a discharge of conditions relating to the Planning Permission granted for conversion of Farm buildings to additional accommodation.

This current notice relates to six or seven conditions that have to be adhered to proceed relating to materials used on the building, landscaping patio, car park etc, materials need to be approved which is standard procedure with a Grade II listed building.

## 5.) Finance

The clerk reported that this is unchanged. No new expenditure or income to report.

Account Balance remains at **£1,712.62p.**

The Bank Mandate remains to be updated but Corona Virus has made completion difficult, and this will be done when circumstances allow, but in no way causes an issue at present.

**Action: Alan Dennis to attend Bank with ID.**

## 6.) Roads

i). Cllr Ratcliffe - Kepwick

Reported the holes on Leake Lane and the repeated flooding in Kepwick near the Bentley's Farm, as well as the treacherous conditions on the bank in Kepwick, which was sheet ice. Highways met with Cllr Ratcliffe and her husband to show them the blocked ditches and the degraded verges, which causes the water to run down the road. He advised he would put up danger signs to warn people not to use the road.

Highways had also had a meeting with Mr Guthe to try to resolve the mud being transferred onto the lane, which appears to be causing the blockage to drains. This is ongoing and now in the hands of Highways to resolve, who intend to write to both him and Mr Woodhead, to try to work with them.

Cllr Ratcliffe recommended the Highways reporting site for all to report which is very good. Photos help locate the issues more effectively, and anyone can report them.

ii). Cllr Alan Dennis

Reported that outside the Mill at Kepwick the road had disappeared into the river. The Leake Lane potholes are dreadful, although Highways were aware of this. The weather being exceptionally cold freezing and wet. He also reported that a drain was supposed to have been put in, but due to Covid this had not yet occurred. There are numerous potholes on lanes around Over Siltan.

Cllr Hugill reported that holes have to be a certain depth to warrant remedial action but that conditions have to be appropriate in order to carry out the repairs.

**Action: All report issues to Highways as appropriate.**

## 7.) Devolution

Cllr Robinson reported that we were waiting for the Government on this. Hambleton did not support any of the options put forward, preferring to stay as they were, so it will either be one big Unitary Authority or two separate authorities, or unchanged.

Cllr Hugill added that we should hear something soon. The proposals submitted if they fit the criteria, will go to consultation before the Parliamentary recess for the summer. There are three areas in the country undergoing a similar process, Somerset, Cumbria and North Yorkshire/York.

Cllr Dennis asked about when that will actually have an impact on North Yorkshire, and Parish Councils. Cllr Hugill said that the impact on Parish Councils would be negligible as this really related more to bigger Parish Councils. It might provide opportunities to get together with

other Parish Councils to get money for different community projects. Realistically it could be two years if the County is split into two, or more quickly if it is to be one Authority. We have to wait and see, but the cost saving impact was the driving force. There may also be a redrawing of boundaries but there is as yet, no information on this

Cllr Robinson additionally reported that seven other Councils had submitted their preferred option, either for a Large Unitary Authority, or a split Authority, so it was very unlikely Hambleton would be allowed to continue as a separate entity. Once the decision has been made it will take place as the four year term ends for the District Council. At that point both District and County Councils will be abolished, and a new Unity Authority or Two Unitary Authorities will be put in place.

It is for the Minister to decide.

### **8.) Nether Silton Parish Green Moles**

David Burn reported that this has now been attended to.

### **9.) Concerns raised by Parishioners**

i). David Burn reported he had dealt with a couple of Parishioners concerns that were now in hand.

Additionally he had received an email grateful for the prompt action in reporting suspicion of three dogs having been stolen from the area. However, the writer was concerned about the Facebook Post relating to missing dogs, which in his opinion contained 'conflated narrative' and 'sensationalism'. He considers it raised a procedural point about the Council using a Facebook page in this way, and what guidelines are in place, as to who places items on this platform, when and in what tone.

The Clerk reported that dog theft is a massive country wide problem as present. There has been a lot of reports in local and National press about this. Covid allows more people to be at home, and this has sent the demand for dogs sky high. Opportunities to make lots of money by indiscriminate breeding, has led to theft increasing dramatically nationwide.

We live in a beautiful place, and sometimes we can be lulled into a feeling that issues that affect other areas, will not affect us here. Prior to this post, several parishioners had reported strangers stopping dog walkers, and asking about any puppies being for sale, as well as asking about their dogs, and where they live.

Further, the Clerk considered that it was important to advise Parishioners of the current hazard, as the heartache this causes is considerable for all involved. Swift action and ongoing vigilance can prevent thieves being successful, and this was the intended purpose.

The set up of a Facebook page for the all three Parishes is an effective modern means of communication, making the Parish Council more relevant to the 21st Century, and making the works of the Parish Council more relevant to the Community.

In the present pandemic, it is a tool to react to situations quickly. This can be so vital in these current circumstances of Covid. It is a new way to draw our communities together to keep people informed and provide a new service. The Clerk reported that communications are the legal responsibility of the Clerk, the Facebook page is administered by her, and only she is allowed to post items for the Parish.

The Clerk had received three separate reports of the potential thefts, from parishioners unlikely to inflate the report unnecessarily. Additionally the owner of the two young

dachund's asked for help, and this direct information was used to verify the the situation at that moment.

Far from 'sensationalism', the Clerk pointed out that swift action on the part of the Community, and being on guard and alert, is often the key to the return of much loved pets to their families. One dog was thankfully, eventually found in the woods and returned to the owner having been lost not stolen.

The Clerk requested guidance from Parish Council to set parameters in which to operate on this platform.

Cllr Burn asked about whether the post can be removed or amended as he does not have a working knowledge of Facebook, or a smart phone. The Clerk confirmed that it was the Clerk alone administering the page, and as such amendments can be made as necessary to report that one dog is found but, that the two dachunds are still presumed stolen.

The Parish Council Meetings are placed on Facebook, along with Covid Guidance updates, and Public information sent from North Yorkshire County Council and Hambleton, as appropriate. The Clerk suggested it was a useful tool for short announcements of things e.g. power cuts, rather than long documents.

Cllr Robinson asked what the page is called as if it does not refer to the Parish Council there was no issue of any posts bringing the Parish Council into disrepute. The Clerk checked and confirmed that it is called Silton's & Kewick Parish Council Community Page. The Clerk who is the administrator of that page could remove or update anything that was found to be inaccurate. Cllr Robinson said that the name could be amended to remove the words Parish Council.

**Action: Clerk to amend Facebook name to remove Parish Council reference and continue to ensure accuracy of information on Facebook page.**

ii). Trees Ash die back and Ivy

Chairman David Jones reported a Parishioners concern regarding Ash trees, and the die back disease. Cllr Ratcliffe suggested this was something that Facebook could be used for to aid identification of those trees that are suffering, and require removal.

Cllr Ratcliffe raised concerns about trees in general as there are many trees within the parishes that have been overcome with ivy, and perhaps we should have a survey of the trees around to see where the problems lie.

Chair David Jones said that Landowners should take responsibility for the well being of the trees on their land, although some may be on no-mans-land.

The Clerk reported talking to some landowners about the avenue of trees on Leake Lane, Nether Silton, and some work was done to cut and kill the ivy. However, concern is often more focused on planting more trees, but simultaneously, we should be looking after the mature ones we have. There are many trees in a similar situation all over the county. They are beautiful mature trees, which will be killed. They are host to hundreds of species of beneficial insects, as well as important habitats for birds and other wildlife.

Cllr Hugill advised that reporting of concerns regarding Ash trees should be to Highways if it is on the verge, those on landowners property are their responsibility. In the event of failure to act by landowners, the fallen or afflicted trees will be cleared by Hambleton, and the landowners invoiced accordingly.

Both Cllr Robinson & Cllr Hugill agreed with the concern over all trees, and the importance of taking action to clear ivy to stop trees being choked and ultimately killed. Cllr Robinson said that landowners should be ashamed to allow this to happen, and they should take responsibility to never allow a mature tree to get to this stage, as it is like a cancer killing the tree, just for the want of proper care.

Cllr Robinson underlined that the ash die back is a spreading disease, and ash trees affected must be reported and removed or it will spread to others. Cllr Dennis said there were some due to be removed in Over Silton.

### **10.) Parish Precept**

Cllr Burn pointed out that the Precept needed to be set by December each year, and as such it would need to be on the previous meetings agenda so a full discussion could be had.

The Clerk reported that the notification of precepts is normally received in October or early November, but that since meetings were held bi-monthly, matters that need to be discussed can miss the scheduled Parish meeting, and decisions may well be required before the next meeting. However, this review was an annual event so should be scheduled for discussion prior to notification around September.

The lack of any contingency fund in the Parish Accounts was highlighted by the clerk, and the recommendation made to gently make incremental increases to try to establish such a contingency fund. The Clerk pointed out that given costs for one item can easily swallow the current Precept, and that Parish Councils were now being expected to fund items that previously were supplied to them e.g. road signs, they needed to try to allow for this.

The Clerk confirmed that the Precept has now been set at £1,925 for the forthcoming financial year April 2021/22.

**Action: Clerk to ensure Precept on Agenda for discussion in September/autumn meeting.**

### **11.) Correspondence**

The Clerk reported that notifications from District and County Councils are forwarded to Councillors as soon as possible as received.

A letter was received to the Clerk from Mr Guthe, only recently received, discussion on this will be at a later occasion once Councillors have had a chance to review it.

No further correspondence relating to matters not covered elsewhere on the agenda.

### **12.) AOB**

i). Cllr Robinson update.

Thirsk leisure center is now closed for a £3.7 million refurbishment and improvement including a new roof, and expansion providing a new a large gymnasium, with 24 hour a day access. Project planned delivery is 21 weeks, with delivery planned for Autumn 2021.

Hambleton District Council web site has been updated to comply with changes in accessible Legislation.

The District Council has secured £500,000 funding from the European Regional Development Fund, towards the development of the Northallerton sports village. Works should commence in summer 2021.

The conclusion of the two year scheme to install 2,500 LED lights across the district, is almost complete, with savings achieved of £60,000 per annum on electricity costs.

A four week programme of examination of the Hambleton Council new local plan took place between the 20th October 2020 and the 18th November 2021, and was one of the first to facilitate virtual attendance. This project is now on course for adoption during 2021.

New housing in the district was on target 651 new build completions were achieved, with a target of 31% affordable housing.

Work has commenced on the new Crematorium which will be named Hambleton Maypole Park Crematorium. Weather permitting, completion is planned for August/September 2021. It will be managed by a Company Limited Partnership.

A £6 million pound grant has been achieved for Northallerton from the 'Future High Street Fund', set up to renew and reshape high streets to drive economic growth, and support areas in recovery from the pandemic.

Next week Hambleton District Cabinet is considering a Community Charge freeze for this year which has the support of Cllr Robinson.

#### ii). Cllr Hugill Update

He confirmed a contract with a Company called 'Quickline' will provide 15,000 properties in North Yorkshire with improved internet services. They have taken over the old 'Clanet' business. Cllr Hugill is trying to push for those suffering from poor internet to be upgraded. The Company has reported concerns over how poor internet is to some premises. The plan is to put up masts and hopefully internet provision will improve, along with improved customer service.

Additionally there is UK governmental involvement in a satellite signal system to boost provision.

Cllr Ratcliffe reported that in Kewick she pays for a premier service but certainly does not receive that. Any improvement on the 'piggy back' service currently received in Kewick, would be an improvement.

Cllr Hugill also advised that the County Council are proposing an inevitable rise of Council Tax relating to Adult Social Care, in the face of spiralling costs. It may well be 3-3.5 per cent increase as there is an £83 million deficit, so there seemed to be little option and reserves were currently being used to manage this, which cannot continue indefinitely. Our County Council is one of the better Council's in managing costs, but it was a great concern nationally.

The North York Moors National Park, has now appointed a new Chief Executive Mr Thomas Hind a former NFU man settling in well.

In most organisations everyone is working from home, and decisions take much longer to achieve but with any luck we will be heading towards a more normal provision of services.

The Clerk reported that the National Grid Northern Power Company had paid her a visit to advise that funding had been secured to replace overhead power lines and pylons in our area, with underground cabling, which will dramatically improve our views. The intended start date, Covid permitted, is end of 2021, but is a sizeable endeavour which will take many months to complete.

The Clerk reported difficulties in receiving adequate response from the National Park in order to obtain provision of way mark signs for footpaths.

Clear signage is more important than ever as more people now want to use the paths for social distancing reasons, and it is an important part of our national history. She advised that as a temporary measure Cllr Burn has brilliantly improvised signage until a normal National Park service is possible. Cllr Hugill advised that in normal times volunteers would have seen to this, and that the rangers had been very stretched with attending to illegal parties and barbecues on the Moors etc. The Clerk agreed that it was far from urgent in current circumstances, just something to attend to in the future.

Cllr Hugill also suggested that the Parishes considered joining the County Council Pathkeepers Agreement Group which means Parishes can work with the County Council receiving updates on activities, and keeps people working together on pathway access.

**Action: Cllr Hugill to supply information on County Council Pathkeepers and place Item on next agenda.**

iii). Cllr Dennis

Cllr Dennis bought up provision of road salt and snow ploughing in Over Silton, and the problems experienced this winter with lack thereof. The banks are very steep and impassable in those conditions, and no road salt had been put out. He reported there had been seven accidents, and there is a full community to service, not just isolated properties, with entrance needed for carers, and deliveries essential for our community in present times.

Cllr Hugill said there are now Community gritting Partnership opportunities, which may be an option for Over Silton, and worth looking into. However, when the road gritting routes are reviewed in August the Parish Council needs to ensure inclusion for Kepwick and the Siltons.

Chairman David Jones did point out that we we cannot in reality expect the same service as the more populated areas, and it was for a few days a year.

Cllr Robinson pointed out that when he lived in Nether Silton years ago, local farmers were paid by the County Council to snow plough the village roads, and perhaps this is what we should go back to. Cllr Hugill pointed out that there will be a farmer with that contract, but that the County Council will only look at conditions and temperatures lower down, so that they are not called out. Further, there is only one number out of hours for Selby swing bridge. There are also issues relating to liabilities if you undertake snow ploughing. This is an issue to attend to in the future.

**Action: Clerk to place gritting on agenda for Action in the summer.**

#### **14.) Date of next Parish Meeting**

Tuesday 4th May 2021 at 19:30, Venue: **TBC Covid Regulations permitting.**



**Either:**The Gold Cup Public House, Nether Silton **or** On-line Zoom Meeting TBA.

**Minutes Status: Draft Subject to Amendment.**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Chairman David Jones**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Clerk Sarah Haynes**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Date**