

ALKBOROUGH AND WALCOT PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of meeting held at 19:00 on 2 January 2020

Present

Parish Councillors: J White (Chairman), S Spencer, N Brown, J Ellis,
J Gaunt, N Harland
Ward Councillors: Cllr. R Ogg, Cllr. H Rowson
Parish Clerk: J Mackey
Members of the Public: One

1. Apologies for absence

Councillors: S Fell-Bowers, D Roberts
Ward Cllrs: E Marper

2. Declarations of Interest

None.

3. To resolve the adoption of the minutes of the council meetings held on 4 September 2019 and 18 September 2019

The minutes of both meetings were accepted as a true record, and signed by the Chairman.

4. Clerk's updates

a) College Close

The Clerk had contacted Matthew Hubbert of the Ongo Investment Team regarding the poor condition of the surface of the access road to the garages behind College Close and was advised that most of the houses on College Close are privately owned. Ongo regard it as inequitable to spend circa £65,000 on resurfacing the access road when all but three of the properties are not owned by Ongo. Ongo understood that within the deeds of the privately-owned houses there is a clause that creates a shared responsibility for the maintenance of the access road; Ongo would be writing to the homeowners to seek their views on sharing costs.

The access road is also used by pedestrians and the potholes presented a trip hazard, particularly during times of darkness. It was understood that the garages are actually owned by Ongo and receive a rent for their use by the residents. The Clerk would write to Ongo for an update and to request that spot filling of the potholes be undertaken as a temporary remedial measure.

b) VE Day 75 – 75th Anniversary of VE Day

A meeting would be arranged in the next few weeks to discuss the VE Day 75 celebrations. Other local organisations would be invited to attend.

c) Leylandii Trees and fence at Julian's Bower

The Clerk had written to the resident responsible for the felling of trees and the removal of a fence adjacent to Julian's Bower; a reply had not yet been received.

d) Damaged footpath on West Halton Lane

Damage to the footpath at the entrance to a field on West Halton Lane was discussed. The footpath also needs widening. The Clerk would write to NLC to outline the problems.

5. Annual review of Health and Safety Policy

There had been no changes to the recommended Health and Safety policy for local councils; it was agreed to continue with the existing policy.

6. Annual review of Equal Opportunities Policy

There had been no changes to the recommended Equal Opportunities policy for local councils; it was agreed to continue with the existing policy.

7. To review Parish Paths Partnership 2019 (Public Footpaths and Grass Verges) and discuss continuation for 2020

Grove Groundworks the contractor undertaking the cutting of public footpaths and grass verges for 2019 had indicated that they were able to continue the cutting of the public footpaths and bridleways for 2020 at the same cost but would not be seeking to continue cutting the grass verges. Ward Councillor Ogg advised that NLC's policy for this work was under review and would be advised to local councils in the near future.

8. To set the Precept for 2020-21 (including receiving and agreeing interim Accounts and Budget information)

The Clerk supplied the following documents:-

- Interim Accounts 1 April 2019 -31 December 2019 (Parish Council account and Cemetery Fund account)
- Forecast Accounts 1 January 2020 – 31 March 2020 (Parish Council account and Cemetery Fund account)
- Budget 1 April 2020 – 31 March 2021 (Parish Council account)

The Clerk presented the Interim and Forecast Accounts and these were agreed.

The national pay scales for the Clerk's pay had not yet been published; the budget figure incorporated an estimated £0.25 increase on the April 2019 rate.

The budget was approved and a precept requirement of £5,436 representing a 4% increase, was approved.

9. Residents' Association

A representative from the Association was not present to present a report.

10. Play Area

Clr. Brown reported that survey forms had been distributed to all houses around the villages; replies had been received and data analysed. The Primary School had been approached about acquiring additional land within the school playing field to enlarge the Play Area to accommodate a wider age range of children. This had been received favourably during a meeting held on the 26th November 2019 at the school with the Head Teacher, representatives from the NLC Property Management Team and Access Manager-Capital, Business & Education Visits .

The current Play Area is the subject of a 25 year lease taken out in 2001, at an annual lease rental of £1. NLC had sought legal advice regarding lease arrangements and the recommendation had been to surrender the existing lease and take out a new 25 year lease for the enlarged area. Further discussion is to take place regarding use of the remaining school playing field outside school hours and outside school term time.

Enquiries had been sent out to several supply companies prior to the meetings with School Head, NLC and Parish Council; these are to be followed up now that increasing the area size has been agreed in principle with all interested parties. Until proposals and quotations for the equipment, fencing, etc are

received from suppliers the drawing up of the new lease agreement is on hold so that no costs are incurred at this moment in time.

Discussion took place about the nature of fencing for the enlarged Play Area, the types of play equipment available, maintenance of such equipment and the surfaces required for ensuring the safety of users.

Additional sources of funding, in addition to the NLC grant of £50,000, were being investigated.

The Parish Council stated that all costs associated with the park refurbishment and potential extension be funded from the NLC grant monies and any others successfully secured from third parties.

Cllr. Brown proposed that the Play Area is extended under a new lease, appropriate equipment be investigated, a joint partnership for usage of the school playing field be progressed and that a separate bank account be opened to administer the financial needs of the project.

Result of Vote: For 5 Against 1.

11. To receive and agree amounts for payment

- a) Methodist Chapel Rent £84.50
Rent for the period April 2019 – December 2019. Approved.
- b) Cemetery Water Rates £28.09
Water Rates for the period December 2018 – September 2019. Approved.

12. To receive reports from Councillors

Councillor John White

- JW advised that the fallen tree in the cemetery had now been removed.
- JW reported that in November there had been moles active in the cemetery; this had been dealt with by Grove Groundworks at no charge to the Council
- JW referred to the gravestone damage that occurred a few months earlier. The gravestones are situated in the area of the cemetery that is the responsibility of the church. Clerk to write to the church advising them of the damage. Cllr. Spencer would advise the Clerk of the contact details of the families concerned.
- JW referred to the Poppy wreath purchased each year from the British Legion. It was felt that the arrangements for purchase and payment should be made direct with the British Legion. Clerk to arrange for 2020.

Councillor Simon Spencer

- SS advised that he had received two reports of a man acting aggressively on the footpath towards Burton upon Stather.

Councillor Nigel Brown

- NB referred to the pothole opposite the Cricket Club on West Halton Lane and felt that this should be dealt with urgently because it is known to have caused damage to at least one car. Ward Councillor Ogg advised that West Halton Lane is on an NLC priority list for remedial work to be carried at various points along its length.
- NB said that some cherry trees close to his property were in need of pruning because they were overhanging his property and obscuring light.

Councillor June Ellis

- JE said that the cemetery gates were in need of repair. JW would arrange for this to be done.
- JE referred to the hedge running from the crossroads to the first drive of Walcot Hall was in need of cutting back. Clerk would write to College Farm to ask for this to be done.

- JE referred to loose gravel that is on the surface of the roads leading into Alkborough. Ward Cllr. Ogg said that all roads repaired in 2014-15 were due for an inspection but in the meantime the local roads would be swept where necessary.

Councillor Neil Harland

- The hedges overhanging the road beside Walcot Hall causing obstructions to roadusers were still in need of a pruning. Clerk would write to and ask for these to be done.

13. **Date of next meeting**

The next meeting is due to be held at 19:00 on Wednesday 4 March.

14. The meeting closed at 20:30