

Minutes to be ratified at next Parish Council Meeting

Minutes of the meeting of Rokeby, Brignall and Egglestone Abbey Parish Council held at 19.00 on 4th March, 2024 in the Blue room of the Morrith Hotel, Greta Bridge.

1. Present: Cllrs. S. Harrison (Chair), R. Errington, F. Errington, A. Watson, S. Hare, C. Thornton, G. Sanderson, M. Alderson, P. Moss, P. Gilbertson

In attendance: D. Peat (Clerk), Mrs, K. Gent.

2. Apologies for absence: Cllr. N. Hashagen, County Cllr. G. Richardson
3. Minutes of last meeting

The minutes of the last meeting held on 4th December 2023 were signed as correct by the Chairman after proposing by Cllr. Thornton and seconding by Cllr. F. Errington.

4. Matters arising.
 - Cllr Richardson has reported back by email since the last PC meeting that a speed survey would be undertaken on the road outside Barnard Castle School and once the data had been appropriately analysed a formal report would be sent to the Parish Council. Councillors suggested that the survey was underway at the time of the meeting having noticed speed capture strips in place on the road past the school.
 - Since the helpful intervention of Cllr. Richardson a no through road has been erected in Greta Bridge to prevent vehicles turning towards the bridleway under the A66.
 - Cllr. Richardson has also reported that the issues with the bus stop in Great Bridge have been passed on to Sam Charters in DCC who was progressing matters.
 - The state of Brignall Road is still very poor despite some attempts at repair by DCC which has yet again been reported by the Clerk to 'Do it online'

The extremely poor state of Brignall Road was discussed further and the Clerk agreed send all Councillors details of the DCC 'Do it online' process so they could all put in a complaint.

The link Do it online is [here](#). Individuals will need to set up an account to use it.

She also agreed to contact Darlington Cycle Club to ask them to protest about the state of the road

5. Finance Update

The annual finances to date were presented to the councillors by the Clerk. Noted was the fact that two cheques had not been cashed over the past year; one to Rob Lowes for burgers for the coronation event in summer 2023 and one to Butler and Gee for one HMRC payment for the Clerk's PAYE remittance. The Clerk agreed to follow both of these up.

The Clerk informed the Councillors that she was still chasing up the bank mandate changes but was in conversation with a very helpful business advisor from Barclays. The advisor had also sent her paying in cards for use at the Post Office for when the Barclays bank in Banard Castle closes.

A suggestion was made by the adviser that the PC might usefully have a 'Sum Up' machine. The Councillors decided that given events are held at most annually and the machine has an annual charge and charge per use it was not something they wanted to pursue.

A discussion was had around a potential move to purely online banking but given very slow internet it was agreed to postpone this until fast broadband was in place across the whole parish.

The Clerk suggested that one efficiency was for her PAYE remittance to HMRC to be charged annually rather than monthly. This would hopefully reduce the overall cost for accounting administration as well as the practical burden on the Clerk and Chair. This suggestion was proposed by the Chair and seconded by Cllr. Watson and then agreed unanimously so the Clerk agreed to action with Butler and Gee for the next financial year.

6. Rural Housing

The Clerk explained that she had received an email from Susan Tron at DCC. asking to speak to someone from the PC regarding housing need in the parish; specifically in relation to the potential of a rural affordable housing development. Cllr. Thornton then proceeded to explain more about Rural Affordable Housing from his experience delivering a scheme in the parish where he previously lived in North Oxfordshire.

Cllr. Thornton explained that Rural Affordable Housing is generally built on land that would not otherwise get planning permission and is either to buy or to let at affordable cost for those who either live or work in the Parish or have a close connection to it (for example the children or parents of those that live in the parish). The houses actually belong to a housing association and parishioners can buy all or part of a property and when / if they decide to move they stay as a community asset i.e. in the ownership of the housing association. The principle is to provide housing for those that want to stay in the parish but who can't afford to do so or have already had to leave. Negotiation with landowners is carried out by a representative of the local council and as a gesture of goodwill there is usually the opportunity for the landowner to have a property / properties built on the piece of land for themselves.

As an initial exploratory step Cllr. Thornton agreed to contract Ms. Tron to arrange a meeting with himself and Cllr. F. Errington to find out more. If it looks like something the PC would like to pursue then the Cllrs. will proceed with a 'letter drop' across the parish and information on the PC website and organise an open meeting to gauge interest from across the parish.

7. AOB

The Councillors formally asked Mrs Gent if she was still interested to become a Councillor for Rokeby. Mrs Gent explained that she had not been able to attend the meeting in December but had signed the appropriate paperwork in the interim. As no one else came forward to declare an interest in the position Cllr. Thornton nominated Mrs Gent and Cllr. Sanderson seconded her. The remaining councillors were unanimous in co-opting her on to the PC.

The Traffic lights at Egglestone Bridge were reported by the Councillors to be out of phase and consequently causing a danger to motorists. The Clerk agreed to report appropriately.

The sign on the A66 at Greta Bridge was once again reported to be directing traffic west on the A66 directly into the village. The Clerk agreed to report this once again to Highways.

Cllr. Moss suggested that 19.30 would be a more appropriate time for the start of future meetings. It was agreed to move to a 19.30 start for the October meeting as in May the regular PC meeting is preceded by the annual Parish Meeting.

The meeting closed at 20.00

8. Date of the next meeting

Monday 13th March at 19.00 in the Garden Room of the Morritt Arms, Greta Bridge

