

RAVENSTONE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held ONLINE on Thursday 14th January 2021 at 7.30pm

Present: Cllrs R Humphreys (acting Chair), H. Anderson, F. Godber, L. Postawa, Ward Cllrs, D. Hosking, K McLean,
Clerk: J. Vischer,

Minute taker: C. Macgregor and Resident: R. MacGowan

1. **Apologies:** Apologies submitted on behalf of S. Bailey. These were accepted.
2. **Declaration of Members Interests:** None
3. **Approval of Minutes and any Matters Arising:** The December 2020 minutes approved. Cllr L. Postawa proposed. Cllr H. Anderson seconded and the minutes were unanimously approved.
4. **Village Appearance:**
 - 4.1. **Inspection Action Plan 2019:**
 - 4.1.1. **Old Schoolhouse verge: well cover.** Awaiting contractor.
It was noted there was nothing new other than what was listed in the minutes of the November and December 2020 meetings to action. The council will formulate a new annual plan in Spring 2021.
 - 4.2. **Verge by almshouses (wildflower): on hold**
 - 4.3. **Dog bin repairs and stickers replacement:** Most of the dog bin stickers have been replaced. North End bins outstanding. The dog bin repairs have been attended to and the invoice received, which will be paid.
 - 4.4. **Defibrillator:** The defibrillator pads have been replaced. R. MacGowan was thanked for taking care of this task. Invoice awaited.
 - 4.5. **Flooding (23rd December 2020):**
 - ❖ Discussions have been had with Ben Everitt, MP for Milton Keynes, regarding the flooding. Everitt also came to look at the sites. Ward Cllr P. Geary had been attempting to further the matter of the flooding with the Milton Keynes Council ("MKC"), including the Flood Warden, without much success. One more attempt would be made by him to engage MKC on the issue.
 - ❖ A request would be made to the community to provide any photos or video footage of the flooding which occurred on 23 December 2020.
 - ❖ Ward Cllr K McLean indicated he would make a final attempt to contact MKC on behalf of the Parish council in order for MKC to take action in respect of flooding mitigation measures.
 - ❖ Ward Cllr K McLean communicated that MKC had taken a decision to instruct WSP consultants in order prepare two reports, one covering the town and one covering rural towns and environs, which it anticipated would be available end March, whereafter MKC would review the reports and determine what action was necessary to address flooding.
 - ❖ It was decided that council, through Ward Cllrs P Geary, D Hosking and K McLean, would make input to the Head of Environment and Waste (N Hannon) who also headed the LLFA unit within MKC responsible for flooding, regarding the flooding in the area and suggested mitigation measures and to provide the footage obtained from the Ravenstone community for the purposes of the WSP report. Short term mitigation measures included the unblocking of drains which MKC have thus far indicated do not need to be done as they are allegedly in order.
 - ❖ Council discussed the need to acquire and store a quantity of its own sandbags for emergency measures in the event of future flooding which could be stored at the town hall, church yard or allotment area for community members to access in the event of flooding. This was because it was not the responsibility of MKC to provide sandbags. They had only provided sandbags on this last occasion as they had some 1500 bags available.
 - ❖ R. MacGowan offered to draft a questionnaire for dispatch by the council to the community to elicit input as to cause of the flooding and suggested mitigation measures, and a letter to the MKC for submission by the council as to what input the council could provide in order to address the flooding issue. Cllr H Anderson and R MacGowan will liaise to communicate with residents and MKC.
 - ❖ R. MacGowan also offered to source a ton of soil for sandbags. Volunteers will be called for in order to fill the sandbags.
 - ❖ Cllr R Humphreys undertook to investigate how much sandbags of different types cost and revert to council.

- ❖ The MKC's response post September reports submitted to MKC regarding the state of the drains was discussed. It is not clear whether any inspection by MKC actually took place, but MKC indicated the drains did not need unblocking despite the fact that council noted many were conspicuously blocked. Ward Cllr K Mclean suggested a letter be written thanking MKC for the prompt response then and requesting they do so again in the future.
- ❖ It was discussed as part of the suggested mitigation measures, any problem foliage such as Himalayan Balsam growing should be cleared so as to facilitate better drainage and the stream beyond the culvert on the Stoke road be cleared for the same purpose to avoid pooling in the culvert.

5. **Recreation Field:**

- 5.1. **Basketball noise:** Cllr H Anderson advised that MKC employees had tightened the screws on the backboard to eliminate any noise impact and should this measure not work, to contact him again. When the new play equipment is installed the backboard will be replaced with an alternate material which would also hopefully reduce any noise impact. Cllr F Godber indicated that some young people in the village did not feel comfortable using the recreation area and went to Stoke instead. This was a great pity and it was hoped in the future they would be more comfortable once the new equipment was installed as the recreation area was there for the community and children to use freely.
- 5.2. **New play equipment:** Cllr H Anderson advised that MKC had now communicated that planning permission was not required after all. A unanimous decision was thus taken after discussing the two objections raised in that forum in any event, to proceed with the installation of the new play equipment. The contractor would be instructed, and a 50% deposit paid in order to commence the work.

6. **Allotments:** A deposit on one allotment was refunded.

7. **Finance:**

- 7.1. **Payments for approval & balances:** J Vischer presented the payments to be made in January 2021.

They are:

M Slingo – allotment deposit return: £50.00

Clerk's salary - £259.65

Clerk's expenses - £23.93

Marcus Young (annual for bins) – £1 322.18

Total: £1 655.75

Cllr L Postawa proposed approving all payments which was seconded by Cllr F Godber. The schedule of payments was unanimously approved. Cllr L Postawa would also be added as a signatory.

- 7.2. **Ward grant:** Cllr K Mclean informed the council as to the ward grant available for distribution. The total sum available for ward grants (by the three ward Cllrs being 1000 pounds each) across 17 communities was 3000 pounds. Written submissions for requests for grants were to be provided to Cllr K Mclean by 12 February 2021, whereafter requests would be considered and a decision made as to grants by the ward councillors. Cllr F Godber offered to prepare the detailed written submission on behalf of the council which would be for herb beds to be prepared at the back of the recreation area.
- 7.3. **Budget and Precept approval:** The budget was approved subject to a line item for flood mitigation being introduced. The 2% increase in precept for 2021-22 totals the sum of £9 478.00. The proposed budget items and amounts was proposed by Cllr H Anderson and seconded by Cllr L Postawa. The budget and the 2% increase were unanimously approved.

8. **Clerk's Replacement:** The contract for the new clerk would be signed and returned. The hand over was also underway.

9. **Neighbourhood Plan Implementation Group:** Nothing further to discuss on this item. Reinstatement of the fishponds was put on hold until after the WSP report in order to assess whether this was still a viable option.

10. **Planning Applications:**

10.1 **Previous applications:**

19/03348/LBC & 19/03347/FUL Yew Tree Farm Stoke Goldington Road, Retrospective applications for internal and external alterations (resubmission of 19/00699/LBC & 19/00698/FUL). *Permi*, ed. [to retain on the agenda for the next three months in order to track its implementation]. Ward Cllr D Hosking to keep

pushing MKC for feedback as none has been forthcoming to date.

10.2 Applications since the last meeting:

20/03248/FUL [RPC's own] Land at Recreation Ground Common Street, Installation of a timber framed swing and two timber framed play towers with a connecting bridge and accessories on the village recreation ground. **This item can now be removed.**

10.3 20/03337/TCA Burnside Common Street, Notification of intention to fell two very tall (est. 30 feet) conifer trees on the front len corner of our property. It was recorded there was no consent needed for this. It was for information only.

10.4 Horseshoe Farm: Application sent to Cllr H Anderson and Cllr S Bailey. It appears to be pre-planning application for advice in regard to the construction of an agricultural structure for storage. There was no obligation to comment on it, and the process would simply be monitored for now.

11 Correspondence – other than email: J Vischer would redirect the local council clerk's quarterly to C Macgregor.

12 Councillors/Residents New Items: Cllr H Anderson would give Cllr R Humphreys the signage for the playground to be laminated and displayed at the Recreation Ground.

12.1 Coronavirus Implications: Cllr H Anderson expressed concern that community members who were not on the support groups or social media may be in need of help and not be able to access it. Cllr L Postawa suggested communications be sent through the WhatsApp support groups for members on the group to take stock of their neighbours for the purposes of identifying any individuals who may need support but are not on the groups or social media.

13 Date of Next Meeting: Thursday 11th February 2021 at 7.30pm online