

LANGCLIFFE PARISH COUNCIL

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Minutes of the Langcliffe PC Annual Parish meeting held in the Langcliffe Institute on Monday 25th April 2022 at 7.30pm. Page1

Councillors present – G. Cross (Chairman), I. Johnson, B. Croft, J. Bagnall, D. Staveley (District & County Councillor), A. Blackburn (Clerk), public present – Seven.

Apologies received from – B. Fiorato & H. Jarvis.

1. Chairman's Statement.

The Chairman opened the meeting thanking residents and Councillors for their attendance and read the following report:

'Since the last AGM there has been a bit happening in the Parish apart from having to navigate around the Covid-19 epidemic, I can say without doubt that I have been the first Chairman to carry out our meetings by Zoom, which once we all got acquainted with the system worked quite well and enabled Council to carry on with Parish business, but in my opinion could never replace face to face meetings.

As a Council we have always tried to be pro-active and not just re-active – but with limited financial resources it has not always been possible to do everything we may have wished. We have also not shied away from making difficult decisions which we realise are not always popular with everyone.

One of the first problems we had to deal with was Craven District Council's refusal to collect the dustbins from Howsons Lane properties, we helped negotiate a compromise by installing a bin store in the car park. The garden was also removed from the car park making extra parking for another 6 vehicles which otherwise would have been parked around the village, this has also increased the revenue from the honesty box considerably.

We are pursuing our policy to replace all the old street lamps with 20w low energy fittings and up to now has reduced the power we use by half, this is in line with the Yorkshire Dales National Park Dark Skies policy.

As most of you will be aware we have had an ongoing problem with Fairhurst-stone polluting both the river and the roads which has now been resolved as they have ceased trading.

Over the last two years we have finished off maintenance work to the fountain and the lay-by, and we have got new signage for parts of the village.

The late Councillor Richard Welch secured funding for safety rails fitted at Locks Bridge for which we are grateful for his assistance, we also had a very kind donation of a new seat from Mr & Mrs Procter to replace the broken one on Stainforth Road. As a village we are very lucky to have willing volunteers who save the PC a considerable amount of money I would like to thank everyone of them for their dedication to the village.

On a personal note I would like to thank Councillor David Staveley for all his support and attendance at our meetings and also our Clerk Andrew Blackburn who goes above and beyond what is required of him and is a great help to both myself and the village.

Last but not least I would like to thank all the PC members for their support and hard work over the last 4 years'.

2. Resident Questions.

The Chairman invited questions from residents.

1. A resident highlighted a problem with the fountain area, water was backing up and flooding the area. The Chairman stated that Council would look into the problem.

Action – Clerk to place on the May agenda.

2. A resident enquired as to what procedure was in place for residents who do not have internet access for reading Council minutes and agendas, also requested that larger lettering is used on agenda notices.

2. Resident Questions. (continued)

The Clerk would place a copy of the minutes in the church and increase the font sizing for future agenda notifications.

It was also highlighted that the notice board was deteriorating and this had resulted in water getting onto notices making them hard to read.

Action – Clerk to place the item on the May agenda.

3. A resident highlighted the street light near the railway bridge as a major expense during the year affecting the precept rise of 16%. The Chairman stated that the precept had been kept low over the years and unfortunately this had resulted in the present situation of having a larger rise now to counter unexpected costs including greatly increased prices in regard to electricity.

The Clerk explained to the meeting that an invoice had been received at the beginning of 2021 for the street lamp which had been installed in 2018, Council believed that the lamp would be similar to the Bowerley lamp in terms of financial planning as that lamp was installed free of charge. NYCC had changed policy in relation to street lamps and had charged Langcliffe PC for the railway bridge lamp (£3817 + VAT).

The Clerk informed the meeting that the lamp invoice was paid by Langcliffe PC which dramatically reduced the Council savings account. The financial situation was compounded by the electricity provider who prior to Council setting the precept had increased the cost of electricity by 23% with a further 25% expected during the year, these increases were evaluated by Council and the precept was raised to £8500. Unfortunately Langcliffe PC have had an increase in electricity price of 98% over the last 12 months.

The Clerk explained that Council had completed a new lighting inventory which includes low 20w lamps which has reduced the bottom line electricity usage for Langcliffe and the Clerk has forwarded the new certificate to npower, a lower electricity invoice is expected from May 2022. The 16% precept rise is reflected in an increase of £8.60/ year for a band D Council charge. The Chairman reiterated the importance of lighting particularly on the main road for safety reasons as school children walk up from Settle to Langcliffe, also safety for residents of Elwood and Willow Wood. A resident suggested fund raising may be used to facilitate low wattage lamp installation.

4. Grass cutting was highlighted by a resident and the poor standard of work. The Chairman explained that the grass contractor provided a service that could not be matched in terms of finance and the present grass cutting policy would be maintained.

5. A resident enquired as to the present road works at Langcliffe with signs being erected, no notice received, and a general disparity with actual work being done. Cllr Staveley suggested that the gas improvement work had hit problems and would take longer than expected to complete, an update from Highways was expected.

6. The 20mph speed limit through Langcliffe village was discussed, Cllr Bagnall informed the meeting that Council had made representation to Highways but was met with a negative response with Highways quoting legislation and accident statistics. Cllr Staveley informed the meeting that Highways would look at local issues again regarding traffic calming measures and the NYCC Councillor locality budget may be utilised for this purpose.

7. The Chairman in reply to a resident informed the meeting that the planning application regarding the storage facility adjacent to Roberts Paper Mill had been withdrawn and was not going ahead.