

**Minutes of the meeting of Ridington Parish Council
held on Wednesday 17 May 2017 in Ridlington Village Hall**

Present:

Councillors: M Gilkes, D Harvey, D Johnson (Chairman), D Roome, P Townsend & C Waterhouse

Locum Clerk: A Benfield

Others: 9 Members of the Public

1.0 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence given

2.0 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations made

3.0 ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Nominations for the position of Chairman were requested and it was proposed and seconded that Cllr David Johnson be elected with no further nomination made. It was therefore -

Resolved 3.1 That Cllr David Johnson be elected as Chairman for the following Civic Year.

Nominations for the position of Vice Chairman were requested and it was proposed and seconded that Cllr David Harvey be elected with no further nomination made. It was therefore -

Resolved 3.2 That Cllr David Harvey be elected as Vice Chairman for the following Civic Year

The Chairman informed those in attendance that no nominations had been received for the post of Clerk and RFO following the resignation of the previous incumbent and that until such time as someone was recruited and employed on a permanent basis the role of Clerk would be carried out by a Locum Clerk.

Resolved 3.3 That thanks are given to the previous Clerk, Chris Lee, for his support and assistance in getting the accounts completed for the previous financial years.

3.4 That the appointment of a Locum Clerk at a rate of £20 per hour plus mileage is ratified

4.0 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 15 February 2017 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman

5.0 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Chairman
's Initials

A resident of the village asked what influence the Parish Council had on the Rutland County Council's grass cutting contract as they considered the current quality of service was poor with the daffodils that were planted in the verges having been cut too early and therefore less likely to flower fully next spring. The Chairman commented that there had been difficulties with the contract last year and that the Parish Council had been given the opportunity to take on responsibility for all grass cutting in the village but had felt that the cost to the residents would have been too high at the time. The contract that was in place for this year appears to be better and those who were employed by the contractor were local people and it was hoped this would assist with a better level of service. The Chairman undertook to inform Rutland County Council of the issue of the cutting of the daffodils and request this was considered when next year's schedule was put together.

Discussion took place on the state of the roads. Comment was made that the Highways Officer had been in contact with a resident very recently and as a result Highways had already repaired several potholes in Main Street with the dropped drain repair scheduled to be completed in the next 2 months. It was also noted that the gully jetting will be carried out next time the relevant machine is in the county.

6.0 TO RECEIVE REPORTS ON MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES NOT LISTED SEPARATELY IN THIS AGENDA

Undergrowth on White's Corner – Cllr Townsend commented that it had been cut and would continue to be for the rest of the year. Highways have stated that they were only responsible to cut it back to the fence and as far as the 30mph road signs.

Resolved 6.1 That the verbal report from Cllr Townsend is received and noted

Wicket Gate and signage on the footpath adjacent to the Old Noel Arms – Cllr Townsend commented that the post had been removed to allow the wicket gate to open but that there was no sign to indicate it was a public right of way. The local residents had indicated to him that they were content for a sign to be erected. The Rutland Rights of Way Officer, having walked all the footpaths in the county has recently written to residents who have footpaths running through their property that they can apply to have gates, styles and way markers replaced should they wish to.

Resolved 6.2 That the verbal report from Cllr Townsend is received and noted.

The Clerk's Position – The Chairman informed the meeting that although the post had been advertised in the village no-one had come forward to volunteer to fill the post on a voluntary unpaid basis. Having taken advice from the Association of Local Councils it was felt that the Council needed to advertise for a paid position as there is likely to be several services delegated to the Parish in the future. He commented that the true cost of appointing someone was unknown but that it was going to have a significant impact on the precept in the future. At the moment, the formal process has not started but that it was intended that a recruitment pack would be compiled over the next 2 months with the assistance of the Locum Clerk and that a report will be provided at the next meeting for further consideration.

A discussion on the need to appoint a qualified clerk took place with a view expressed that there is likely to be people, with the necessary skills but lack of expertise, who may be interested in applying for a paid position and undertaking training who could not necessarily afford to do the work on a voluntary basis. It was further suggested that the option to share a Clerk with neighbouring parishes should be investigated.

Resolved 6.3 That the verbal report by the Chairman is received and noted

6.4 That the Chairman and Locum Clerk compile a recruitment pack for presentation at the next meeting

6.5 That consideration is given to advertising the vacancy on the parish website and in the village magazine

6.6 That Cllr Gilkes investigate the feasibility of sharing a Clerk with other local Parish Councils.

That Jake Atkinson is invited to attend the next meeting and update Members on the devolution agenda and the potential impact on the village.

Website Update – The Chairman and Cllr Waterhouse updated the meeting on the current situation regarding the website. They confirmed that the Council was fully compliant with the Transparency Act. They further commented that although the Council element of the website was complete works is ongoing to bring the other sections of the site up to the same level but that meetings have been held with the church, playing field committed and village hall committee to start to populate their sections of the site. It was acknowledged that by necessity these areas would be different but that it was hoped that some commonality could be achieved. A commitment had been made by each group to get their information to the webmaster by the end of May.

Clarification was provided on how the website was managed and it was noted that an annual fee was to be paid to the webmaster by the Parish Council with a volunteer from the village having been found to keep the website updated as necessary. It was noted that there was a half days' work required by the webmaster at a cost of £120 to input all the information from the groups. It was agreed that this should be an item on the agenda of the September meeting for further discussion and agreement

- Resolved**
- 6.3 That the verbal report by the Chairman and Cllr Waterhouse is received and noted
 - 6.4 That an item is included on the next Council agenda to consider the payment of £120 to the webmaster for inputting the remaining data onto the website.
 - 6.5 That consideration is given to advertising the vacancy on the parish website and in the village magazine

Planning advice letter, Unauthorised repairs and development in Conservation and Article 4 Village. - Councillor Harvey informed the meeting that the pdf is ready to go on the website and the word version of the document is also ready. He confirmed that it does include an introductory section in the letter for the village residents so that everyone is aware of what they should and should not do.

- Resolved** 6.6 That the verbal report by Cllr Harvey is received and noted

Cllr Vacancy – The Chairman confirmed that there is a vacancy for a Cllr to be co-opted onto the parish council. There is currently one applicant in the village who wishes to be co-opted but are currently awaiting advice from Rutland District Council

- Resolved** 6.6 That the verbal report by the Chairman is received and noted

Transparency Act Update – The Chairman commented that there was nothing further to report that what had been covered in connection to the website above.

Government fund for Transparency Act – The Chairman informed those present that the council had received all the funding it had requested to ensure it was fully transparent and conforming to legislation. He noted that although the precept had been increased the previous year to meet the cost of the website and laptop/printer/scanner purchase this had now been covered by the government grant.

- Resolved** 6.7 That the verbal report by the Chairman is received and noted

7.0 CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED SINCE THE LAST COUNCIL MEETING.

No correspondence had been received.

8.0 PLANNING

It was noted that 2 application had been received in the last 3months and all were for tree work, with the Council having no objections to any of them

Chairman 's Initials

9.0 FINANCE

ANNUAL ACCOUNTS -

The Chairman presented the meeting with a summary of the Council's financial standing as at 31 March 21017 including the year end bank balance of £2897 and informed it that the Internal Audit would be completed by Rutland Council on Monday 22 May 2017.

- Resolved**
- 9.1 That this Council formally notes its consideration and confirmation that it has maintained an adequate system of internal control throughout each financial year in accordance with Assertions 2 and 6 of the Governance Statement contained in Section 4 of the Annual Return
 - 9.2 that the Annual governance statement for 2016/17 be approved and signed (to follow)
 - 9.3 that the Accounting statements for 2016/17 be approved and signed (to follow)
 - 9.4 that following consideration of all the above documents, approval be given for the Annual Return to be signed by Chairman, Parish Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer

VAT REFUND -

The Chairman informed that he had completed a VAT return on behalf of the Council and a refund of £159 had been received.

SIGNATORIES ON BANK ACCOUNT

Following a brief discussion, it was:

- Resolved**
- 9.5 that Cllrs Harvey, Johnson and Roome are nominated to be bank signatories on behalf of the Parish Council with the mandate that 2 from 3 are required to sign cheques.

10.0 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business that required discussion

11.0 DATES OF MEETINGS FOR 2017/18 MUNICIPLE YEAR

- Resolved**
- That the following dates be confirmed and published – Wednesday 20 September 2017, Wednesday 22 November 2017, Wednesday 28 February 2018 and Wednesday 23 May 2018

SIGNED:

Chairman - Ridlington Parish Council