

# ESCRICK PARISH COUNCIL

## MINUTES OF ESCRICK ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD AT ESCRICK VILLAGE CLUB ON MONDAY 14TH MAY 2017 AT 7.30PM.

Chairman : Cllr R Rowson

Clerk/RFO : Mrs H Guest, 40 Linden Way, Thorpe Willoughby, YO8 9ND  
[clerk@escrick.org](mailto:clerk@escrick.org)

**APM1801: Present:** Cllrs Rowson, Cunningham, M Casling, Luscombe, the Clerk and two members of the public.

**Apologies** were received from Cllrs Moran, Forster, Coulson and Rees.

**APM1802: Welcome:** Chairman welcomed Councillors and electors present at meeting.

**APM1803: It was resolved** to accept minutes of last Annual Parish Meeting. Chairman signed as a true record.

**APM1804: The Chairman gave a report of Parish Council activities since last APM**

**APM1805: Electors' comments about the report** – None.

**APM1806: Reports from other organisations.**

**a. Village Green Association**

Cllr Luscombe reported that the the 10k race during 2017 went well; work on the pond is going ahead; monies were raised as a result of other events held; maintenance is ongoing.

**b. Playing Fields Association**

Cllr Rowson reported that the EPFA allowed the 10k to be run in support of the VGA in 2017; there will be no 10k during 2018; other income included dragon boat sponsorship, but there was a net loss of £16,000; repairs have cost over £1,000 over the year; there are no plans to expand the provision of equipment as the focus is to be on future replacement.

**APM1807: Electors** present at meeting raised the following:

1. A query was raised regarding the EPFA financial outgoings
2. A resident asked why there would be no 10k this year: Cllr Rowson explained that even though there were volunteers for many of the associated tasks, there is no current race director. Other running clubs have been approached, as well as professional run organisers and this ongoing with a view to the race being held in 2019.

**APM1808: 7.53pm: Closure of APM.**

Signed: ..... Chairman

Date: May 2019

## **Chairman's Report 2017/2018**

### **Overview**

2017-18 has been a busy year for the Parish Council – the Council has represented residents a range of significant issues, implemented several tangible initiatives, and seen more than average amount of Governance overheads.

Significant issues of local interest have included the proposed quarry development west of the A19, the proposed redevelopment of Stillingfleet Mine site, along with familiar highways issues.

### **Initiatives implemented during the year**

Three additional streetlights were purchased and installed – one on Main St, one on Carr Lane, and one for the bus stop outside the business park. This is part of a planned three-year programme to address the key dark spots in the Parish. We also arranged to have cables to one of the Skipwith Road lights re-routed, to allow for a resident's extension to be built.

A dog waste bin was purchased and installed at the end of the public footpath on Skipwith Road (we are grateful to the Estate for taking on the task of emptying it) and a litter bin has been installed in the lay-by on the A19.

The area around the Jubilee fountain was repainted using funding from a locality fund, and a pair of residents are looking at options to restore the fountain to at least occasional working order.

We trialled an 'autumn clean' event to focus on sweeping up fallen leaves – but given the limited public interest in this and the related 'spring clean' event, it was decided not to pursue these further, and to make a £500 budget provision to address minor maintenance/street cleaning in future.

A programme of proactive tree pruning has been undertaken – including trees on The Glade, Carr Lane and at the playing fields. We have also liaised with NYCC highways who have also removed a small number of diseased trees from the village.

Following concerns about cold-callers, the Parish Council obtained and distributed 'No Cold Calling' stickers for concerned residents.

The grit bins purchased last year were well used during the cold weather, with each being refilled once during the winter. A further refill will be required before next winter.

### **Community Representation**

Responding to planning applications and consultations remains a significant activity, with many of the consultations / local plans running into hundreds of pages. The PC has responded to almost all planning applications and relevant consultations – and we should specifically note the work of Cllr Coulson and the planning working group in this area.

The Council has continued to lobby NYCC throughout the year on a range of highways issues. This included a site visit with NYCC highways to discuss options for the A19 / Skipwith Road junction. The County Councillor is now optimistic that a traffic light-controlled junction can be installed here in due course.

The Council has made representations regarding the North Yorkshire Minerals & Joint Waste plan, and has worked closely with interested residents in raising objections to the proposed Stillingfleet 'waste transfer facility'.

The Council has taken steps to ensure that it is ready to respond to the proposed application for a clay quarry west of the A19 – this has included visiting a similar working quarry in Hemingbrough and visiting the waste in-fill operations near Escrick Business Park.

The PC worked closely with the local police and the primary school to successfully address concerns regarding illegal parking associated with school drop-off/pick-up on Carr Lane.

On day-to-day issues, the Parish Council has received a number of complaints about pavements and roads – covering issues such as deteriorating tarmac, overhanging bushes/nettles, blocked drains/puddles, moss and weeds, and general unkempt nature of the village. A site visit was held with the NYCC highways maintenance manager to agree NYCC actions, but unfortunately Selby District Council were unable to engage meaningfully with the Parish Council on those issues that the District Council are responsible for, such as street cleaning.

A resident made the Parish Council aware of the 'fix my street' website which allowed residents to log defects, but didn't actually notify the correct Council of the issues logged – leading residents to believe that the Council couldn't be bothered to fix them. We have liaised with the website operator so that all issues in the Escrick area are copied to the Parish Council.

The Council plays an important role disseminating information in the village, and has provided an update in the Parish Magazine almost every month, along with maintaining a lot of information on the Parish website (escrick.org).

On a less positive note, there seems to be growing hostility towards the Parish Council from some groups of residents, who seem to regard and betray the Parish Council as some distant authoritarian body that doesn't care about local issues. The reality is that all Parish Councillors are also local residents, trying to work voluntarily with and on behalf of the local community, using the limited powers available to Parish Councils.

## Councillors

Clrs Lamont and Councell both stood down during the year, and unfortunately it has proved difficult to find replacement Councillors, finishing the year with two vacancies.

We welcomed Cllr Richard Musgrave as the new County Councillor in May 2017, and have established a good working relationship on a range of issues.

## Finances

The precept for 2017/8 was increased to £19,000 to (i) fund two additional street lights; (ii) address an audit requirement to replenish reserves; (iii) address a backlog of maintenance of Parish Council trees. The precept has been held at the same level for 2018/19 – in addition to reoccurring expenditure on insurance, grass cutting, electricity and overheads, this also covers budget to (i) purchase two more streetlights, (ii) invest in speed mitigation measures, (iii) address maintenance/cleaning issues, and (iv) begin repayments of the street lighting loan. (The Parish Council concluded the arrangements with the Public Works Loan board for the ~ £25k loan for last years' street light replacement. This will be repaid over the next 10 years).

The Parish Council has applied for, and been awarded approximately £7000 of grant funding to develop a Neighbourhood Development Plan, which will provided a structured approach to capturing issues that need to be considered as part of any future development in the Parish. Credit is due to Cllr Rees in particular for taking the lead on this issue.

The Parish Council has applied to draw down approx. £500 of Section 106 'recreational open space' funding, to replace a deteriorated picnic bench at the playing fields.

Funding from the 2017 10k race is expected to cover the costs of the pond repairs.

## Governance

- New 'standing orders' were adopted in line with national templates.
- The Parish Council has made good progress on the implementation of GDPR related changes.

- The Parish Council has been selected for an 'Intermediate Review' at external audit. (5% of Councils are randomly selected for this each year).

## **Commercial**

- The Parish Council's contract for grass cutting was tendered during the winter, and three bids received. The Parish Council chose the best value bid, with the intention of this covering the next three years.
- Insurance was renewed based on competitive sourcing by our insurance broker.
- The PC agreed in principle to migrate to NYCC's streetlighting electricity contract, as this appears to offer better value than the PC can obtain directly from electricity companies.
- Three tenders were received for consultancy services to support the Neighbourhood Development Plan (costs covered by grant funding).

## **Amenities**

The Parish Council is grateful for the continued hard work of the Escrick Playing Fields Association and the Village Green Association for their work supporting these two valuable amenities (more details will be covered by their respective reports). In particular I would like to note the commencement of work by the VGA on the restoration of the village green pond, which needs completely relining. We're also grateful for the pair of residents that kindly adopted the task of planting flowers in front of the village name signs.

## **The Year Ahead**

A key area of work will be the Neighbourhood Development Plan, which should provide a strategic framework for any future development within the Parish – for example identifying any investment in infrastructure and amenities required to support any development.

The programme of additional streetlighting continues, with two additional lights ordered for Carr Lane. The Council also intends to make a decision on traffic calming measures, for example potentially purchasing its own vehicle activated speeding sign.

The Council will continue to represent residents to other authorities on issues such as highways and planning, and no doubt other issues as yet unforeseen will arise in due course.