

Romaldkirk Parish Council

Minutes of Extraordinary Committee Meeting 2 October 2020 18.00pm – held by Zoom

Agenda

Actions

1. Welcome, apologies for absence

Present (all by video link): Chair- Lesley Cutting (LC), Derek Nixon (DN), Jackie Barningham (JB), Gill Carter (GC)

Others: Joanne Nixon (JN – Minutes), village residents x 3

Apologies: None

Declarations of interest: None

2. Minutes from previous meeting (25 May 2020)

Agreed. (by LC, seconded JB)

3. Parish Councillor vacancies

Deferred to end of meeting (see later note)

4. Planning for the future- Govt White paper

Councillor Barningham offered to read and review all papers and summarise. She will send a note to all Councillors for any specific issues that impact upon on Romaldkirk.

JB

5. Village Green issues

The Extraordinary meeting has been convened to deal with the following urgent matter. The Parish Council as “Managing Agents” of the Village Greens requires legal support to advise and help with land registration of the village greens. Protection of the greens, for future enjoyment by residents and visitors, is a key role of the Parish Council. Whilst there have been prior historical attempts to collate greens under one registration this application should finally resolve all matters once and for all.

Owing to the importance of the process and avoidance of any mistakes it is better the submission is done by a legal representative with relevant experience and knowledge of the requirements. This is a complex task with substantial supporting evidence needed for the purposes and best served by a solicitor. The legal costs to do this are potentially in the region of £4,000. However, there sufficient funds and reserves within the Parish account to meet this fee.

The proposal to meet the legal fees for the purposes of protecting Romaldkirk Greens was made by Councillor Nixon and seconded by Councillor Carter. All attending Councillors were also in agreement.

As part of the village greens item attending residents were invited to speak. Residents advised they were fighting the registration (by adverse possession) of unregistered land in front of Rose stile Cottage. Councillors confirmed they were aware of the application and an objection would also be made by the Parish Council citing several inaccuracies within the application. In particular, evidence is being collated regarding a number of discrepancies between the land registration application 2020 and the recent 2019 Public Inquiry held by Durham County Council. Councillor Nixon confirmed he would also be making an individual representation, again owing to personal knowledge of the inaccuracies in the application.

The Parish Council is not aware of anyone else who has been notified of the application other than adjoining properties. In discussion Councillors stressed that none of the actions they take in relation to the greens are of a personal nature but they confirmed they have a duty of care as the Managing Agents to protect and maintain the use of the greens for the village and all residents.

One final item related to the recently restored village bench. At the invitation of residents and agreement by the Council this will be placed in front of Rose stile as a place of rest for walkers using the Teesdale Way (Sennings Lane route). Councillor Nixon also stated this would fulfil a recent informal request by a local fishing group for somewhere to sit.

3. Parish Councillor vacancies (deferred)

Councillor Cutting introduced Mr Goodall to the meeting (joined for this item) who confirmed his interest in becoming a Parish Councillor. Mr Goodall, is by profession a Chartered Surveyor with knowledge of Local Government and a long standing resident of the village. He explained the skills and knowledge he could contribute to the role but overwhelmingly his desire to provide support to the Parish Council. Councillor Nixon nominated Mr Goodall and Councillor Barningham seconded. The relevant forms, including declarations of interest will be issued in due course.

6. Date of next meeting

In light of the current pandemic situation this will be confirmed.

JN

Approved by the Chair of Committee on: 19 November 2020

Signature: L Cutting

Name: Lesley Cutting

Action Points 2020-21

No.	Issue	Owner	Status
Carried forward from 2017-18			
Parish Council Meeting 1 August 2017			
AP 9	Parish Council - New members C/F	All	Open
Parish Council Meeting 23 August 2017			
AP 7	Sennings Lane/High Green – Land registration C/F	GC	Open
Carried forward from 2018-19			
Parish Council Meeting 17 January 2019			
AP 4	Note to be put on village noticeboard regarding any proposed works to paths.	LC	
Carried forward from 2019-20			
Parish Council Meeting 30 May 2019			
AP 5	To purchase replacement hoops for the green bordering Romaldkirk House. Stones placed instead.	DS	Closed
Parish Council Meeting 12 September 2019			
AP 4	Cold calling – Owing to difficulties on enforcement suggested that Liz Finn PCSO be contacted to attend a coffee morning or other event to hand out leaflets / advice	DS	
Parish Council Meeting 19 December 2019			
AP 4	To issue financial update with forecast to year end	JN	Complete
AP 5 i	Stones to be put on the perimeter of the green adjacent to Romaldkirk House to prevent further damage from cars	DS/DN	Complete
AP 5 ii	Estimates for required signage (no parking/village entrance signs) to be obtained	DN	Ongoing
AP 5 iii	Letter to be drafted to residents on High Green regarding removal of turf and parking	DS	Complete
Parish Council Meetings 2020-21 – Action Points			
AP (6)	To confirm action to achieve the AGM. Owing to pandemic issues there is no requirement to hold the AGM for 2019/20	JN	Complete
AP (7)	To issue letter to DCC Planning regarding potential unauthorised development. Issued 14 June 2020	JN	Complete
AP (7)	To seek confirmation from DCC: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guidance/information specific to planning rights in a conservation area • Current and continuing encroachment on the village greens and what Council intervention may be appropriate 	DN	Ongoing – response awaited
Parish Council Meeting 2 October 2020			
AP 3	Mr Goodall to be issued relevant forms to join the PC	JN	
AP 4	JB to review and summarise Govt White Paper	JB	