



**Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on
Monday 8th March 2021 at 7.30pm. The meeting was held via Zoom video link under
emergency Corona virus legislation.**

Present; Cllrs A Taylor (Chairman), N Woodcock, E. Houghton, K. Hayes, R Lea, T. Hewitt, C.Hewitt
Clerk R. Weaver in attendance

The meeting convened 30 minutes late due to a software problem with the video link used for the meeting

1. Apologies for Absence

Cllr Tom Brown (illness)

2. Declarations of Interest and Dispensations

Cllrs, Taylor and Houghton – Item 6 regarding the Village Hall. This is an information only item with no pecuniary interests

3. Minutes of the last meeting

It was resolved to sign the Minutes of the meeting of 8th February 2021 as an accurate record.

4. Adjournment for Public Participation

Several members of the public were present having logged into the video link.

- A question was asked as to why the Council had awarded a grant to the local church to contribute to the upkeep of the burial ground without having received a grant application form requesting a grant. It was explained that the Council had taken a decision in a previous meeting to support the upkeep of the burial ground by making an annual contribution independently of the grant scheme, in the same way that neighbouring parishes do, and therefore an application form was not necessary.
- A second question was raised as to why the minutes of a previous meeting referred to Councillor Taylor in his capacity as a Councillor when he was speaking about the Village Hall. It was explained that it is the convention to do so in Council minutes when he is in attendance as a Councillor at a Council meeting, and in any event, there was no confusion created by doing so.
- A question was raised as to why a Councillor had told 'lies' to the press about the numbers of people using the newly improved cycle track. There appeared to be some misunderstanding in that the number of users quoted to the press for their article was an approximation of the total, not as was suggested by the questioner, the number to be found using the track at any one given time. It was evident that the number of users reported to the press was intended to describe the general level of usage and interest in the facility.
- A question was asked as to why Councillor Taylor had previously thanked the Parish Council for its support of the re-development of the Village Hall, when he should have been thanking the villagers. Councillor Taylor clarified that he was grateful to the Council for its support and equally grateful to the local people of Much Hoole.
- A comment was made that a number of derogatory comments had recently appeared on the local community website relating not only about the Parish Council, but also about individual residents of the Village.
- A number of members of the public were logged into the meeting, but the limitations of technology made it unclear as to whether they were wishing to speak as some were muted and not on camera. The meeting re-convened after the Chairman had made every effort to ensure all who wished to speak had been able to do so.

5. Cycle track update

It was noted that the track is regularly inspected and is being well used after its recent upgrade. A number of riders using the track are quite prominent in their sport and following the lifting of restrictions it was hoped they would be able to organise some demonstration rides.

It was asked that the minutes reflect the thanks of fellow Councillors for the efforts of Councillor Chris Hewitt who has not only donated materials but also given a considerable amount of his own time to bring the track up to its current standard

6. Village Hall update

The Parish Council received a report on progress on the re-building project that it has been supporting for some time.

S.R.B.C. cabinet met on 10th February and confirmed the funding grant and loan. The financial situation is sound and all invoices and commitments covered. Full disclosure of all costs will be provided at the end on the project when all the information comes in. The painting is completed and the floor finishes and carpets are expected to be put down in the next couple of weeks. Bar fitting can take place next month as the Architect and main contractor have appointed a bar fitter who is manufacturing the unit this month. There is still much left to do on fixtures and fittings also furniture, kitchen equipment, landscaping and demolition. May 31st is still the projected opening date, however the Elections due to take place on May 6th will be held in the new hall. Some activities may be in a position to take place before that date where no bar or catering is required such as Slimmers World. There are already some bookings for community and family events this summer. The Architect has produced an amended phase two plan which is budgeted at £87,000 (excl. vat.) in order to accelerate the snooker facility but this will be dependant of the snooker fraternity forming a "snooker club" to help get grant funding.

It was **resolved** that Item b) should be deferred to be dealt with at the end of the meeting when members of the public were not present in accordance with Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (admission to meetings) Act 1960

7. Finance

It was resolved to authorise the following payments;

- a. Clerk salary in sum of £226.10 (Net for February 2021)
- b. HMRC(PAYE) in sum of £56.40 (For February 2021)
- c. Pay Clerk's expenses in sum of £10.80 (For February 2021)
- d. Pay LALC annual subscription in sum of £383.83.
- e. It was **NOTED** that £240 had been paid to Ian Elliott for topsoil as per previous resolution to develop the wildflower planting area on the cycle track.

8. Community Projects update

The sign designs are now complete and awaiting a location plan for LCC to consider for the necessary licenses. Once permissions are obtained the signs can be manufactured and installed.

9. Audit and procedure

- a) the appointment of the internal auditor was agreed as Ian Edwards
- b) The fee for internal audit of £100 was agreed
- c) The terms of reference for internal audit were agreed with an additional line added, asking the auditor to give an audit opinion on the payments transferred to the Village hall which have been delegated to the Clerk to action)

10. Planning

There were no planning applications

11. Local Meetings

There were no local meeting reports

13. Items for next agenda

It was noted that the next Parish Council meeting will be preceded at 7.15pm by the Annual Parish meeting. The format of the meeting will be determined by local Government guidelines at the time.

- A comment was raised regarding two recent road collisions on the A59 and it was suggested that the Clerk contact LCC Highways to express concern about the speed and traffic using this section of road in proximity to school crossing points and the picnic area at the roundabout.

14. Date of next meeting.

The next meeting (format will be in accordance with Government restrictions) will be held on Monday 12th April 2021 at 7.30pm.

7a Following comments posted on local social media concerning the Parish Council and individual Councillors, the Council considered the following motion:

To resolve to write to those individuals asking them to post on the Next Door website, an apology to Councillor Taylor for the personal comments, and also to make it clear they accept that the business of the Council is being conducted openly and transparently.

The motion was carried.

Because individuals' actions and comments were being discussed, it was not appropriate for this item to be dealt with in public who were therefore excluded under section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (admission to meetings) Act 1960