

SIMONSTONE PARISH COUNCIL

08/06/2023

A meeting of the Parish Council was held at **Read and Simonstone Village Hall, St Peter's school church hall, School Lane, Simonstone on Thursday 8th June 2023 at 7.00p.m.**

Present: Chairman: Councillor Peat
Councillors: Duckworth, Finn, Hampson, McKelvey, Norse & Pollard

In attendance: April Collinson (Clerk)

5 members of the public attended as well as Borough Councillor Peplow.

1. Apologies for absence – County Councillor Jed Mirfin had sent his apologies

2. Declarations of Councillors' Interest and dispensations

2.1 To receive declarations of interest from Councillors on items on the agenda. – *none.* Village Hall trustees are Councillors Peat, McKelvey, Finn & Vaughton & Martholme Greenway for Clifton Pollard

Conservative connections for road safety Jaqueline Hampson

2.2 To receive requests for dispensations for disclosable pecuniary interests (if any) – *none.*

2.3 To grant any requests for dispensation as appropriate – *none*

By way of full disclosure Councillor Pollard declared non-pecuniary interest in the Martholme Greenway and Councillors Finn, McKelvey, Peat and Vaughton declared a non pecuniary interest in the Village Hall.

3. To approve the minutes of the previous Parish Council meeting held on 18th May 2023 – *minutes were read and agreed with minor amendments*

4. Matters arising from the above minutes not on the agenda –

Councillors discussed sending a copy of the minutes to other Councillors, it was agreed that as the minutes are a public record, all Parish Councillors, relevant Borough Councillors and the relevant County Councillor for the area shall be copied in to emails to receive a copy of the minutes and agendas for Simonstone Parish Council meetings.

Wall damage/insurance – clarity to be sought from insurance whether the wall would be covered. Lengthsman could do privately, the old Lengthsman is better qualified, quotes for this will be sourced.

Comments were made that the Martholme Greenway build dry stone walls and run courses on occasion however it was noted that the wall in question is not a dry stone wall. Quotes will be needed to repair the damage.

Coronation table – An estimate for installing a base for the proposed coronation picnic table was circulated estimating £600-£650 including materials. The base would be 2.8m by 2.8m. Councillors discussed that this would be quite expensive when considering the cost of the picnic table itself as well, Councillors went on to discuss the placement and if it will be used enough.

Enter Councillor Greera Norse.

Discussions led to whether the table could be placed closer to the school gate so that parents can use it when waiting for their children. The gate is heavily used during events. Residents living near the garden would need to be contacted as they will be effected most. Councillors also discussed placing the bench further away from the houses as to not bother residents. For previous projects where street furniture was to be placed objections had been received regarding the placement. Councillors decided that the

closest houses will be contacted to gain their views to discuss at the next meeting.

5. Public participation – The Chairperson from Read Parish Council spoke regarding the coronation celebration event – A young boy had played piano for most of the day and the easi-beats group had performed. Neither had charged for the entertainment services provided but it was suggested that a donation of £25 each could be given to them and the cost split between the two Parish Councils. This was agreed. A separate invoice for the extra £25 will be drawn before payment can be made.

A resident raised concerns about the drains on the roadside, she suggested that a notice asking residents to report blocked drains to Lancashire County Council highways department could be placed in the noticeboards. She was worried about the potential for flooding should the drains remain blocked. Councillors discussed that drains do not seem to be cleaned regularly and that the main road seems to be the main here. The issue needs reporting before Lancashire County Council will come to clean the drains. Highways issues can be reported on the I Love Clean Streets App or on the Lancashire County Council website. It was agreed that a post could be made on Facebook with link to the website.

6. Borough Councillor's Report – Borough Councillor Malcolm Peplow was elected with Councillor Gaye McCrumb. He announced it was an honour to be elected and he will be working to keep villages high up on the agenda, the plan is to work constructively to move matters forward and establish good links between all involved. He shared that the induction process has been slower due to the amount of large changes from the election and many new councillors. Contact information has only been updated on Ribble Valley Borough Council's website today. Regarding the committees assigned to each Councillor, Councillor McCrumb has been assigned accounts and audit & policy finance. Councillor Peplow has been assigned Licensing, Economic Development, Community Services and Parish Council Liaison. Duties are given however may interchange responsibilities within their party. He confirmed that the next Parish Council Liaison Meeting is on 22nd June 2023.

He advised that local priorities should reflect local people and can change accordingly and currently these include road safety, especially on busier roads, but also country lanes. large scale developments further out cause traffic locally. This is an issue for those not using motorised vehicle. His priority is to try to work with Parish Councils and Lancashire County Council to get improvements to road safety. He is aware that incidents are being recorded and will help support the work of the parish council. He advised that although the majority of highways improvements funding is controlled by Lancashire County Council, there have been some improvements made locally in Clitheroe funded from Capital funding. There is potential to get funding like this to make early improvements such as tactile pavements and improvements to the slope of drop kerbs which may currently be inappropriate.

When campaigning for a pedestrian crossing, he advised the responses were very discouraging from Lancashire County Council although a petition signed by over 210 people was delivered to Lancashire County Council. The type of crossing was not discussed at the time. A refuge crossing is much cheaper than full pelican crossing. There have been 13 other crossing schemes happening in the year. Money is available for the other schemes in Great Harwood, Whalley and Padiham. He feels this is not good enough and there is a strong case to be made from the Parish Council and Borough Councillors to wear them down and get Simonstone moved up the list. Wider highways improvements would be needed for the crossing such as creating footpaths in places where there are currently none but more funding will be needed for this.

Another issue is the Martholme Greenway this is important for the future active travel route and the route needs to be protected.

He is aware of the retrospective planning application going through for the local caravan park and is planning to speak against it. His hope is to safeguard the route as a potential cycleway. The local plan is under development and he is speaking with the planning department about protecting this route from future development. The Greenway can only go though if the concerns of landowners are satisfied, he plans to work together with land owners so that everybody is happy.

Councillor Peplow confirmed he does not live in Read or Simonstone but will be visiting to walk around regularly and help report any defects to highways. These can also be reported on the website and app. He advised that if we all work to help report any issues we will be able to keep the village in good shape. His plan is to set up monthly meetings where residents can bring up any issues.

7. Clerk's Report

a) Local Crime Statistics

PC Caroline Pemberton works with the local PCSO Katie Ferguson.

She advised that they are moving from hybrid to a full neighbourhood team, meaning there will be more "bobbies on the beat", there are 2 PCSOs as well as PC Lee Grant. They will be covering the area from Ramsgreave to Simonstone and beyond. She commented that they have been shocked by the amount of traffic on main road and that there are speed trailer/warning signs owned by the Police as well as Lancashire County Council.

Comments were made that the School warning sign was not being switched on and that this is usually done by the crossing guard although there is none locally. The school will be asked about the warning sign. After watching children trying to cross the main road to get to/from school this confirms how dangerous the road is. The road safety group are working to produce a report of issues between both parishes. There are 13,000 vehicles passing through the two villages.

Regarding crime statistics there have been no major problems, no thefts or burglary's however there was one suspicious vehicle reported locally. Simonstone is a low crime area. There have been some issues with illegal bikes passing through with no helmets etc.

b) Role of Clerk – It has come to light that the clerk has been underpaid since the 2022 pay award by approximately £1 per hour. Calculations and arrangements are being made to resolve this and the clerk has asked for any back pay to be split over a few months. The clerk is looking to move into full time employment from September, previously the Parish Council has received help from the Borough Council in recruiting a new clerk, this may not be available this time. An advert will be created using the previously used job description. The Chairman, Vice chairman and one other will work on this. The Role of clerk for Read Parish Council will also be becoming available as the current clerk works both roles. These will be advertised as two separate jobs. Previously there have been some struggles when trying to get a new clerk. The role is 4.5 hours per week, there are no geographical restrictions however they would need to come to Simonstone regularly.

c) Wall Damage – see above. Contact the previous lengthsman will be contacted for a quote.

8. reports from external meetings

22nd June is the Parish Council Liaison Meeting. Rural Levelling up fund, Health and wellbeing agenda and Support for Parish Council clerk recruitment will be discussed at the meeting.

9. Facebook & Website Report

Login for the website for editing permissions to be obtained for Jacqueline Hampson.

John Barker was previously the admin for the Facebook page. Administration rights have been passed to Maureen Vaughton, Jaqueline Hampson is yet to be added and this will be arranged.

10. Decision Items

a) **Selection of Vice Chairman & Planning permission committee**

The Local Government Act 1972 15(6) states "The parish council may appoint [one of the elected members] of the council to be vice-chairman of the council." Proposals and Seconding for Councillors Finn and Norse were received. It was confirmed that anyone eligible to be a councillor is eligible to be vice chair. Councillor Hampson advised that she did not seek to mislead the council and that it is better to raise queries rather than getting it wrong. It was noted that if a casting vote is needed then if this is cast by a resident then they will be subject to outcome of the vote. Casting votes are very rare. Councillor Pollard proposed Councillor Finn and was seconded by Councillor McKelvey.

Councillor Hampson proposed Councillor Norse and Councillor Duckworth Seconded this. Councillor Norse elected to withdraw as she did not feel she had the available time commit as Vice chair.

RESOLVED: Councillors, Finn, McKelvey, Norse, Pollard & Vaughton noted for Councillor Finn to become Vice Chair. Councillor Duckworth & Hampson were against this.

Parish Plan committee was agreed to be Councillors Hampson, Duckworth, McKelvey & Finn.

Road safety & traffic management committee was agreed to be Councillors Hampson, Pollard & Norse. Joint with Read Parish Council

b) **Code of Conduct**

Councillors are expected to read and confirm they will abide by the Code of conduct. The Code of conduct was circulated to councillors by email, to date responses have been received from six councillors accepting this. The remaining councillors will review this.

c) **Declarations of interest**

Councillors are required to report their pecuniary and non-pecuniary interest to the monitoring officer at Ribble valley Borough Council

RESOLVED: Councillors agreed that the forms will be recirculated. All Councillors are to complete this again.

d) **Litter Bins & Bus Shelters**

Councillor Duckworth advised that he has reviewed the bins in the village and has noticed two locations of concern, both at bus shelters. Bin 445 by the parish garden is emptied twice in the last month as it was over-flowing. He stated that the bin at the bus shelter is health hazard and is over-flowing. His suggestion was that it needs relocating further from bus shelter, councillors discussed that the bin was put there for a reason so that those using the bus shelter can easily dispose of any litter. It was discussed that larger bins are needed. Locally it took 3 years to get a new bin. It was suggested that the domed style general waste bin may be better suited, This is also an issue on Whins lane near the tennis courts.

It was noted that many of the numbers have worn off the bins. Both bus shelters are filthy and need a wash. The bus shelter near the parish garden has graffiti. On the opposite side of the road the shelter has nails and barbed wire sticking out of it. Bus shelters are Borough Council responsibility so this will be reported to them. A bin on Whins Lane bin would cause danger to bin men when emptying. Far side needs immediate attention to remove nails & make safe.

Bins service is very fragmented, some are emptied by the dog warden, some by street cleaners and some bin men. Councillor Peplow advised he is going to raise the issue and try to get the service improved.

RESOLVED: Councillor Peplow intends to meet with the director of bins to discuss the structure and issues. The issues with the bus shelters will be reported.

e) Road Safety group reconstitute with Read Parish Council

The Road safety committee was reconstituted following the election.

RESOLVED: This now consists of Councillors Hampson, Pollard & Norse who will work with the group from Read Parish Council

f) Parish Plan work group – reconstitute working group

The Parish Plan working group was reconstituted following the election.

RESOLVED: This now consists of Councillors Hampson, Duckworth, McKelvey & Finn.

g) Noticeboard

Councillors discussed the noticeboard by the Stork Hotel and the quotes which had been gathered to that point.

RESOLVED: Councillors reviewed and agreed to accept the cheapest quote.

h) Donation Request from REG

Letter received asking for donation of £150 for litter pickers for children and a home energy kit to lend out to local villagers. They will also doing a litter pick along the river bank. A grant/donation request form has been provided to them to officially submit the request.

RESOLVED: Councillors decided to await the submission of the form before decision on the matter.

i) Christmas Arrangements

Christmas tree switch on event - The tree switch on event was minimally attended last year, this was not held as a joint event with the school, councillors agreed that we need to discuss with the school what is to be planned and if this is to be a joint event. Councillor Hampson advised that there seemed to be some miscommunication with the bursar and wires got crossed. The Parent Teacher Association had made some arrangements in the past. The previous Lengthsman had been the one who stored the Christmas tree lights and these will need to be retrieved.

Seniors Christmas meal arrangements – The event is usually held between both Read and Simonstone parishes, last year the cost of the event was split 50/50 between the Parish Councils and residents. Advertising levels were queried. Previously 40 people from each parish attend and the event is ticketed as such.

RESOLVED:

Councillors Finn & Norse will arrange a meeting with the head teacher at the school to discuss tree switch on arrangements.

Councillor Vaughton to work with a representative from Read Parish Council to make Christmas meal arrangements.

11. Correspondence

Temporary Traffic Regulation Order - School Lane, Simonstone 24/07/23 - 28/07/23

Plan in incomplete and confusing. HGVs .

Temporary Traffic Regulation Order - Blackburn Road, Simonstone 16/09/23 - 27/09/23 (overnight closure)

Temporary Traffic Regulation Order - Whins Lane, Simonstone, on the 31/07/23, until 02/08/23, to enable New Water Connection works to take place.

12. Planning Applications/Decisions/Enforcements – There was one planning application received since the time of the last minutes;

3/2023/0353 Equestrian Centre, Higher Trapp House, Trapp Lane, Simonstone, BB12 7QW

The application is for redevelopment of existing equestrian centre to form horse stables and livery, indoor arena and external riding area, including the demolition of the existing dilapidated building (pursuant to variation of condition 5 on permission 3/2015/0283) to allow for commercial enterprise use.

There may be a change in operation and business license which was refused previously. This has been advertised as a stud online. Events may be happening here involving many horse boxes visiting. It was suggested the council ask to amend section 3.3;

3.3 The proposal seeks to amend the condition to read:

The stables, indoor arena, and outdoor arena hereby permitted shall not be used for the holding of competitions or events.

13. Finance & Accounts:

a) Payments out

| date | Chq no. | Description | Net | VAT | Total |
|------------|---------|-------------------------------|---------|--------|---------|
| 05.05.2032 | 101507 | Npower Xmas lights (21/22) | £5.31 | £0.27 | £5.58 |
| 05.05.2023 | 101508 | Npower Xmas lights (22/23) | £3.86 | £0.19 | £4.05 |
| 17.05.2023 | 101504 | Website domain & hosting fees | £133.05 | £0.00 | £133.05 |
| 24.05.2023 | 101510 | Clerk's Wage (May) | £228.74 | £0.00 | £228.74 |
| 31.05.2023 | 101511 | RVBC Litter Bins | £420.29 | £84.06 | £504.35 |

b) Unpresented cheques

| Cheque no. | Description | Net | VAT | Total |
|------------|---------------------------------|---------|-------|---------|
| 101506 | Lengthsman scheme | £335.76 | £0.00 | £335.76 |
| 101509 | Use-IT Microsoft office package | £11.28 | £2.26 | £13.54 |

Cheque 101495, donation to Citizens Advice Bureau, has been withdrawn as the business is no longer active.

c) Income

no income for this period

d) Payments to be made

| Description | Net | VAT | Total |
|---|---------|-------|---------|
| Use IT – office package (Feb, Mar, Apr) | £33.84 | £6.78 | £40.62 |
| Use IT – maintenance & support (Mar, Apr) | £4.16 | £0.84 | £5.00 |
| Zurich - Insurance renewal | £262.45 | £0.00 | £262.45 |
| Clerks Wage (June – not including back pay) | £228.74 | £0.00 | £228.74 |
| RSVH Coronation event | £212.79 | £0.00 | £212.79 |

e) Bank reconciliation

| | | | |
|--------------------------|------------|--|------------|
| Balances 31.05.23 | | | |
| Community Account | £15,767.82 | | |
| Business Saver Account | £9,640.59 | | £25,408.41 |
| Add: Receipts | | | £0.00 |

| | | | |
|---------------------------|--|--|------------|
| Less: Payments | | | £875.77 |
| Less: Unpresented cheques | | | £349.30 |
| Balance | | | £24,183.34 |

Budget Spend Analysis – reserves have been allocated for audit purposes.

Noted that the clerks wage needs to be uplifted £234 for last year and £234 for this year plus a further uplift this this year which is to be confirmed.

14. Items for the next agenda

- Clerk
- Bins
- Bus shelter safety
- Parish plan
- REG donation request
- Harp

The Next Meeting will take place on 13th July 2023.

The meeting ended at 8.45pm