

SIMONSTONE PARISH COUNCIL

13/07/2023

A meeting of the Parish Council was held at **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, Pollard & Vaughton

In attendance: April Collinson (Clerk)

Borough Councillor Peplow and no members of the public attended the meeting.

1. Apologies for absence – none

2. Declarations of Councillors' Interest and dispensations

2.1 To receive declarations of interest from Councillors on items on the agenda. – none.

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

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 –

Regarding item 10.b) Code of Conduct, this remains outstanding for one councillor to complete. Item 10.c) Declarations of Interest – councillors are reminded this needs to be completed as soon as possible

VMS Unit from police looking into

5. Public participation – none

6. Borough Councillor's Report – Borough Councillor Malcolm Peplow advised he had met with Martholme Greenway volunteers including John Barker who used to be a Councillor for Simonstone Parish, he was shown sections and issues along the route. A meeting was held on 27th June with Martholme Greenway volunteers and Hyndburn Borough Council resulting in a motion within Hyndburn Borough Council in support of the Greenway. There was nothing to report from the Licensing Committee meeting on 13th June. The Economic Development Committee held on 15 June noted the contents of the draft Economic Development Plan for the Ribble Valley which is going out to a period of public consultation for a period of six weeks. It is expected to go live via a link on Ribble Valley Borough Council's website from the 7 July, Parish Clerks will be provided with a link. He encouraged people to take part, particularly local business owners. He spoke at the Committee, and broadly welcomed the draft Economic Development Plan but asked that villages like Read and Simonstone and rural areas outside the main population centres received equal priority in the Plan. He stressed that local roads and footpaths need to be safe for all to use to encourage the use of local businesses and highlighted the importance of investigating and planning for kerb-side chargers without trailing cables to enable people living in terraced houses to charge their electric cars as the switch over is made. The Conservative Leader of the Council took that point on board and said he would renew his dialogue with Lancashire County Council on this. The Committee established a Working Group in anticipation that the Climate Working Group may be moved under its remit from Policy and Finance Committee. The Economic Development Committee agreed that a Green Councillor should be on the Climate Working Group so this was organised. The Policy and Finance Committee did decide that the Climate Working Group be moved

over to Economic Development Committee. Councillor Peplow will confirm whether it is him or Gaye McCrumb that will be sitting on the Climate Working Group as soon as possible. He advised that he attended the Parish Liaison Committee meeting on 22 June and saw Councillors Peat and Hampson there representing the Parish. He wished to draw attention to one item in particular; the Traffic and Road Safety Group which has been set up and supported by 10 parishes as a campaigning, information sharing and ideas forum for member Parishes. He advised that he hopes that Simonstone Parish Council strongly considers adding its weight to this group and understand that the deadline for expressing an interest in joining noted in the information from the Group is flexible and can be extended for late joiners. He advised that he has seen video footage of the serious collision involving a tractor, car and articulated lorry outside the petrol station on Whalley road that occurred earlier this month – a potentially major incident if the petrol station had been damaged. He advised that he has met the Head of Environmental Health today who said he will check whether air quality monitoring can be resumed on Whalley Road due to the increase in traffic volumes in recent years that Councillor Peplow reported to him. The Planning and Development Committee was held on 29 June. Although Councillor Peplow is not on the Committee, the members of the Committee allowed him to speak for 5 minutes to the Agenda item covering the update on the Draft Local Plan. This Draft is being developed following a statutory public consultation last year and is crucial to the nature and location of development in the Ribble Valley over the next few years. He made the following points:

1. Evidence base should include IPCC Report 2022 but presently doesn't
2. Flood plains must be protected from any future development
3. Any further new build housing should far exceed minimum standards of Building Regulations
4. Community heating schemes should be planned for
5. Active travel like walking and cycling should be promoted
6. Existing and potential active travel routes like Martholme Greenway should be protected
7. We should join the Northern Forest – Ribble Valley has 7% tree cover, the national average is 13%
8. Shift from growth for growth's sake to sustainability and quality of life.

Councillor Peplow advised he raised points that Ribble Valley Borough Council should consider the urgent appointment of a Biodiversity Officer to assist in preparing Local Plan and parallel body of work on Local Nature Recovery Strategy that needs to be submitted to DEFRA in 2025. To avoid group-think that affected planning for the Covid Pandemic, he asked Planning Committee to consider including a Green Councillor on the Local Plan Working Group where he would welcome the opportunity to work with all parties and independents and make a contribution. He attended the Citizens Summit for Climate and Nature organized by Ribble Valley Climate Action Network (RVCAN) and held at Trinity Methodist Church and Community Hub in Clitheroe on 1st July. The event was a great success with all 150 tickets being taken and some familiar faces from Read and Simonstone also attending. Readstone Environment Group had a very informative stand along with other environmental organisations. Councillor Peplow advised that it is he and Gaye's hope that RVBC will agree to inviting RVCAN into its future Climate Working Groups so that long term engagement with communities can begin. The consultation on the renewal of Public Spaces Protection Order runs until 31 July. Everyone is encouraged to take part including dog owners as it covers dog fouling matters, keeping dogs off play parks and sports pitches etc. He had received an email from a Simonstone resident this week saying that she has reported a white furry discharge with a sulphurous odour

coming from an outfall pipe set back from the bank of the River Calder to the Environment Agency, This is accessed down the stone steps off Altham Bridge. There is a lagoon of milky water adjacent to the public footpath. I notified Environmental Health who requested United Utilities to investigate, which they did. United Utilities advised Environmental Health that this appears to be coming from a disused mine working so Environmental Health have contacted the Coal Authority to investigate. It is advised that any walkers and their dogs should avoid contact with this discharge until the nature of it has been confirmed. Councillor Drop-in Sessions have been arranged from 10-11am on the fourth Saturday of each month starting on 22nd July in the Village Hall Hub Room of Read and Simonstone Village Hall. The second session will be on 26th August at the same venue however it is intended to alternate with the Simonstone Old C of E School Hall if it is available – This is to be confirmed before the September Drop-in Session.

7. Clerk's Report

a) Local Crime Statistics

The crime Statistics for June have been provided by the PCSO for Read & Simonstone.

Burglary x 1 - To a property undergoing renovation in Read.

Assault x 3 - Victims were an emergency worker, a taxi driver and a member of the public by a known offender.

Theft x 1 - Make off without payment from fuel station

Other crimes x 1 - Fly tipping

b) Wall Damage

The insurance company have been contacted to query if this will be covered, the clerk will circulate an update once one is received.

The previous Lengthsman, Phil Hardman, had quoted approximately £700 to fix the damaged wall.

c) School warning lights

At the last meeting concerns were raised that the yellow flashing warning lights along Whalley Road were not being activated to warn road users of school children. After contacting the school they were not aware of these warning lights but are supportive of getting them activated. Enquiries have been made with Lancashire County Council who have scheduled maintenance. It was discussed that there is no crossing warden and how this is dangerous. When the lights are active this brings in a speed limit of 20mph to allow for safer crossing. Other posts do obscure the sign somewhat.

8. reports from external meetings

Parish Council Liaison Meeting – the issue with bins was raised by Councillor Peat and the Borough council was asked to re-label the bins. Health and wellbeing money has been devolved to Local Place Innovation, however there is no Place in Ribble Valley. Rural levelling up, £40,000 coming up between parishes. Lack of transport, community interest group for transport eg. Little Green Bus & Road safety. Grant for renovating properties 30k income may not apply. Home upgrades/heating upgrades only for those not connected to mains gas.

9. Facebook & Website Report

Facebook Admin access not yet granted for Jaqueline Hampson, John asked if he has authorisation to add others,

Barrie/ website admin access now set up.

10. Decision Items

a) Appointment of Clerk – Progress

Currently no applications have been received. Read Parish Council has interviewed 4 people for the position and have offered the role to Graham Meloy, another candidate stood out as very competent so it may possible to ask Read Parish Council to advise them of the neighbouring position.

b) Provision of Coronation picnic table – residents responses

A questionnaire was supplied to residents local to the site of the proposed picnic table, responses were as follows;
one with no objections,
one with objections,
one household with opposing views internally.

The main concerns were antisocial behaviour and litter. Councillors discussed that the grant has been received but could be used toward something else. Councillors also discussed that the bench could be put in and removed at a later date if issues did arise, councillors also considered that a bin could be installed nearby to combat any litter.

Proposed to go ahead installing the bench.

RESOLVED: Councillors agreed to purchase and install the picnic table. The table itself costs £765

c) Provision of noticeboard

The matter was previously approved to spend the money however the matter has not moved forward. Details of the quote will be gathered and circulated. Councillors Rob and Jacqueline to circulate this.

d) Christmas Arrangements

a. Christmas Tree

Councillors plan to meet with the Head of Simonstone Primary School to discuss holding a joint Christmas event incorporating the lighting up of the Parish Christmas tree.

b. Seniors Christmas Party

Previously a seniors Christmas party was held in the school hall however many did not turn up and a lot of food was wasted. Councillors discussed that this could have been a timing issue and may have been a specific issue such as a wave of illness. Recent meals have been held at the Higher Trapp Hotel and have been very successful with residents paying a proportion toward the cost. Previously the events held in the school hall cost about £1000 whereas the Higher Trapp event would cost about £20 per head with residents covering 50% of this giving a cost to the Council of around £400.

It was proposed that the Seniors Christmas meal be provisionally booked in for Thursday 7th December at the Higher Trapp Hotel at £20 per head for a 2 course meal, quiz, bingo and raffle. The event at the Higher Trapp has always been fully booked in the past. Previously residents have been asked to pay 50% of the cost as a ticket price. Concerns about the limit of 40 places and that this may not be enough. Previously the event has been mentioned in the newsletter, but at times there was a struggle to fill the 40 places. In the events held in the hall councillors have served parishioners in a symbolic gesture of serving the community and it was suggested that this element is lost by outsourcing the event. It was suggested that the Parish Council could also hire school hall for an open event with hot drinks etc. where councillors can attend to serve the community. It was suggested that this could be incorporated into tree event.

RESOLVED: Councillors agreed to book the Higher Trapp for the Christmas Party event at £20 per head for 40 people per parish for residents aged 70 and over to be held on 7th December.

A community tea/coffee event will be discussed at a future meeting

e) Celebration Sunday

Councillors discussed the previous celebration Sundays which showcased local groups to help revitalise the village after Covid, entertainment and drinks were provided and the event was held in conjunction with Read Parish Council. Previously other groups have also had events on the same date causing a clash which lowered attendance. It was suggested the event is discussed with each group to facilitate working together. Prior to the "Celebration Sunday" a "civic Sunday" was held which was a more exclusive event and felt outdated. It was hoped the celebration Sunday would bring the community together. Councillors

discussed that there are often other events taking place during the summer months and this can cause the event to clash. Alternative dates were discussed. Councillor Finn agreed to speak with other groups in the villages to find out their views and availability.

f) Ribble Valley Traffic and Road Safety Working Group

The Traffic and Road Safety working Group was mentioned at the Parish Council Liaison Meeting (PCLM), Read Parish Council are to join this larger group. Councillor Hampson advised that at a previous PCLM a formation of such a group was discussed however it was agreed to meet up after election and nothing further had been heard from this. Now that the group has been formed the Parish council can consider its position. Councillors discussed that different groups/villages have different needs such as main roads, speeding, schools, and pedestrian crossings. Councillors discussed that the group may end up focussing on areas that may be irrelevant to Simonstone or this may end up as a talking group with little action coming out of it but also that the group may assist in getting the point across if many places have the same issues. Alternatively the Borough Council/Lancashire County Council may decide that there is not enough funding available to resolve an issue in 10 or more villages however if only approached by one or two villages there could be enough funding available. Councillor Peplow added that he is supportive of Read & Simonstone Parish Councils efforts to get improvements and he has requested tactile pavements to improve some areas, he advised that work has been scheduled.

RESOLVED: Councillors agreed to join the group as well as to continue to work on our own objectives. Councillors Hampson, Norse and Duckworth will discuss and confirm a representative

g) Bins

Queries have been made about getting new bins near bus shelters as well as in the parish garden. It was noted that Whins lane has no bins. Previously the Borough Council had refused to place a bin here as they state it would not be safe for a bin lorry however bins are emptied for residents who live on there. It was noted that the nearest dog bin is in Read. Bins are often overflowing, there is a low recycling rate as well as dog fouling issues. Previously the Parish Council has purchased bins and paid for these to be emptied.

RESOLVED : Councillor Peplow has been asking for the bins service to be fully reviewed and rationalised.

h) Bus shelter safety

Issues previously raised have been reported via "I Love clean streets", Lancashire County council have been in touch with Ribble Valley who have in turn been liaising with the Farmer who has the field that backs onto the bus shelter and are working to resolve the issues.

Regarding cleaning the bus shelters a quote for all 4 shelters was obtained for an initial clean at a cost of £120, as well as a quote for ongoing cleaning twice a year at £65 per clean.

RESOLVED: Councillors agreed to accept the quote and get the bus stops cleaned regularly, the quote for cleaning is from a local person, Dave Scott.

i) Parish plan

It was agreed that a meeting will be arranged to discuss and improve the Parish Plan Questionnaire.

j) REG donation request

A request for a donation of £150 for a home energy kit had been received from Readstone Environment Group. The kit which can be loaned out within the villages would include a device to monitor how much energy individual appliances use to allow people to be more aware of how much energy devices use. Councillors discussed that the group may qualify for a Local Member Group grant but felt that the group would benefit most from receiving the grant from the Parish Council as well as being advised of other potential funding sources.

RESOLVED: A grant of £150 will be made to Readstone Environment Group

k) HARP

At the last PCLM a group had come forward asking for other Parish Councils to sign their letter asking for support as outlined in the report from the economic planning department.

Councillors discussed that the Haweswater Aqueduct Resilience Programme (HARP) does not affect Simonstone however may affect Read. There are concerns of increased traffic, which will mainly affect Chatburn and Waddington areas. Concerns were raised about whether Simonstone Parish Council should get involved. Councillors discussed that the water supply does need to be maintained and improved to meet with the growing demands of the population. Councillors support the principal of updating the plan however feel this should be approached with a more long term view.

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;

3/2023/0141 - 6 Tintern Close, Simonstone, BB12 7SS

The application is for a two storey side and rear extension, dormer and rooflights added to side elevation, single storey extension to side and rear, balcony to rear and external works to create raised terrace areas and erection of detached garden house.

Councillors commented that this is a quite large extension

Concerns were raised surrounding the wind turbine as no details of this have been provided, no images of the turbine or its height and visual impact have been given. Another concern was the level of noise from the blades and generator of the wind turbine, which are again not noted. The positioning of the wind turbine may impede the view of neighbouring properties. It was noted that the residents of this house are new residents and there have been some issues regarding the amount of spaces needed for parking, yet only limited space for this is noted in the plans, it was suggested that more space should be allocated to parking space. Councillors noted that a boarder hedge at the rear of the property had been uprooted between the property and the allotments.

Councillors commented that the proposal felt out of keeping with the local street scene and the property will tower over other properties.

Councillors voted to object based on visual amenity, noise, effect on local street scene, parking issues and to support traditional farm hedge to encourage biodiversity

13. Finance & Accounts:

a) Payments out

Date	Chq no.	Description	Net	VAT	Total
16.06.2023	101517	Clerk's wage	£228.74	£0.00	£228.74
20.06.2023	101506	Lengthsman scheme	£335.76	£0.00	£335.76
23.06.2023	101515	Zurich Insurance	£262.45	£0.00	£262.45

b) Unpresented cheques

Cheque no.	Description	Net	VAT	Total
101509	Use-IT – office package (Jan)	£11.28	£2.26	£13.54
101513	Use-IT – office package (Feb, Mar, Apr)	£33.84	£6.78	£40.62
101514	Use IT – maintenance & support	£4.16	£0.84	£5.00

	(Mar, Apr)			
101518	RSVH – Coronation event	£212.79	£0.00	£212.79

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

c) Income

Date	Description	Total
05.06.2023	Interest	£20.10

d) Payments to be made

Description	Net	VAT	Total
Clerks Backpay (for part of 22/23 and June)	£91.70	£0.00	£91.70
HMRC Tax - June	£18.80	£0.00	£18.80
Clerk's wage plus back pay (for part 22/23 and July)	£320.44	£0.00	£320.44
HMRC Tax - July	£18.80	£0.00	£18.80
RSVH – further Coronation invoice	£12.50	£0.00	£12.50
Information Commissioners Office fee	£40.00	£0.00	£40.00
Les Pickering – Internal Audit	£75.00	£0.00	£75.00
Clerk's wage plus back pay (for part 22/23 and August)	£320.44	£0.00	£320.44
HMRC Tax - August	£18.80	£0.00	£18.80

e) Bank reconciliation

Balances 31.05.23			
Community Account	£15,767.82		
Business Saver Account	£9,640.59		£25,408.41
Add: Receipts			£20.10
Less: Payments			£826.95
Less: Unpresented cheques			£271.95
Balance			£24,329.61

f) Confirmation of Audited accounts to send for external Audit

Councillors had all received copies and reviewed the accounts for the year 2022/2023. Councillors agreed the figures and signed this off, it was noted that the old laptop was still listed on the asset register and it was noted that this can be decommissioned and written off for the next financial year

14. Items for the next agenda

- Bins
- Noticeboard
- Parish plan
- Road safety
- Newsletter

The meeting ended at 8.45pm