

North Rigton Parish Council

Meeting held on 2 September 2015 at 7.30 at the Village School

Present: Mary Hopkins (Chairman) Barbara Massey (Vice-Chairman), Andrew Batcup, Amanda Martyn, Jo Scott, John Fort (County Councillor), Mike Richards (Clerk).

Also present (for item 2) two land-owners Messrs K Bradley, S Thornton and Miss C Bradley.

- 1. Apologies for absence** – Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Tim Bennett and Christine Ryder.
- 2. Agenda order variation.** The Chairman asked, and the council agreed, that the issue to be raised by the above individuals would be the first item

Mr Bradley stated that he had posted notices on the village garden fence as he had a problem with cars parking on Rigton Hill, at the Village Garden, blocking access to fields and Beeston's Lane and making access to Rigton Hill a problem for farm vehicles and trailers. He also raised the problem of people blocking the pavements when parking. Councillor Massey asked if he knew whether the drivers were from outside the village and he responded that this was likely as the individuals were parking their cars to use the playground and to visit nearby houses. Mr Thornton mentioned also the general problem of workmen's vehicles parking on Rigton Hill.

It was agreed therefore that:

- a) Mr Bradley could affix appropriate "No Parking" signs at the end of Beeston's Lane.
- b) The PC would look into the other matters

Mr Bradley then raised his second point and asked about the Parish Council's stance on affordable homes in the Parish. The Chairman replied that the Parish Council is, in principle, in favour of affordable homes but the most recent experience of this (ie the "affordable" house on Brackenwell Lane) did not reveal any real evidence of demand as the property had remained vacant for some two years. Mr Thornton then asked why his outline planning application for five houses, including three "affordable", had not been supported by the Parish Council. (Note the application had been for two affordable houses & 3 / 4 bedroom houses for the open market) The Chairman responded by saying that the consensus of opinion on the Council was expressing concern at the size of the development, but she stressed that the application had been refused by Harrogate Planning Department mainly on the basis of "inappropriate development in the Green Belt" and causing "harm to the residential amenities of neighbours". She also stressed that past experience had clearly shown that the views of the Parish Council were not a deciding factor in any planning application.

Councillor Fort suggested that the best possible way forward in respect of affordable houses was for an approach to be made by Mr Bradley to the "Housing Enabler" at

Harrogate Borough Council, which could potentially lead to planning approval via the designation of an “Exceptional Site”.

The discussion was brought to a close and the Chairman thanked the visitors for attending. The three attendees left the meeting at 8.10pm.

After further discussion by the council it was agreed that formal action such as yellow lining needed to be avoided, but clearly some action was needed. It was agreed therefore that:

- a) Mr Bradley could affix appropriate “No Parking” signs at the end of Beeston’s Lane.
- b) The Parish Council will also fix a notice outside the Village Garden advising people to park responsibly and not too near to entrances.
- c) Polite notices from the Council would be placed on cars which park inappropriately or block the pavements in the village whenever possible.
- d) A notice will be inserted in the Parish News requesting people to park responsibly on Rigton Hill.

3. Approval and signing of minutes, matters arising.

The minutes of the last meeting held on 1 July were agreed as a true record and were signed by the Vice-Chairman (as Chair of that meeting).

Reports on matters arising.

- a) Alterations and improvements to the Village Garden. The Chairman circulated an updated list of actions proposed and taken.
 - Replacement of damaged fencing – options are to replace existing wooden fence with metal railings and gate or to install another wooden fence using the undamaged half rounds, setting uprights into concrete. Quotations to be sought from Ludus Leisure (original equipment supplier) and a specialist company who provide ROSPA approved fencing (to be installed locally). This work will require the playground to be closed for a period of time – work to start after October half term.
 - Repairs to damaged play equipment – original play equipment supplier contacted. Advice given for treatment of wood and some remedial work. Can be undertaken by our existing maintenance contractor. Playground will need to be closed as above (this proposed action should help and feed into the ROSPA review)
 - Other actions – clearance of the mound and removal of the hawthorn hedge, building of a retaining wall, and grassing the area plus some new planting. Estimates already received for mound clearing - £1900 and £1,300 and £1000 for the stone wall. We now have four months to get full quotations and agree costs. Also to consider additional hedging along the garden fencing (hedge will provide the boundary should there be further deterioration of the fencing), and a stone wall along the roadside.

- Once the area is cleared, consideration can be given to building some form of store for tables, chairs etc. It is also opportune to consider providing independent water and electricity supply to the site, as a means of securing arrangements for the future use of the garden for events. Lottery grants may be available for this work.

Councillors agreed with all the above proposals and the Chairman undertook to obtain quotes and estimates as required, and communicate these to councillors via email. She then sought councillors' approval to go ahead with the work based on the agreed quotation/estimate. Councillors agreed with this proposal.

b) Grass verge cutting. The Chairman reported that the various options she had pursued, had been unsuccessful. She therefore proposed that Burnetts (at a cost of £16.50 per hour) be contracted to carry out this work, for this year, other options being considered for the future. Councillors agreed with this proposal.

c) Traffic counts. Following the failed traffic count in early Summer, NYCC Highways had offered to carry out additional counts but at a cost to the Parish Council of £150. The Chairman posed the question as to whether it was now a worthwhile option and councillors agreed not to pursue for the time being. On a separate issue, Councillor Fort presented a handout on "Speedwatch", an initiative from North Yorkshire Police whereby residents could carry out their own speed tests on through traffic. This will be considered at the next meeting.

d) Code of Conduct. The Clerk produced a form of undertaking for each councillor to sign, confirming their adherence to the Code.

e) Transparency Code. Arrangements are now in place to comply with all the requirements of the Code and the Parish Council will therefore be fully compliant. The Chairman noted that her review of other councils' websites had confirmed that North Rigton's was the most comprehensive and advanced.

4. Administration

Parish consultation meeting. The annual consultation meeting with Harrogate Borough Council is to be held on 19 October at Hampsthwaite Memorial Hall. The Chairman normally attends on behalf of the Council, but unfortunately cannot attend this year. Is anybody else able to attend? Councillor Massey agreed that she will attend if possible.

5. Finance

5.1 Approval of expenditure

- Gazebo for BBQ - £90
- Gazebo for BBQ - £89.99 (both payable to M.E Hopkins)

Payment agreed and approved.

5.2 Receipts - £5 donation received for display of a business notice recorded in petty cash.

6. Parish Plan

It was agreed that the current plan was now complete as all achievable actions had been carried out and consideration now needs to be given to the next steps. Councillor Batcup had been liaising with Pannal Community and advising on their proposed plan. He gave examples of the questionnaire that Pannal had produced and noted that it was more specific and in greater detail than North Rigton's and suggested that, in two areas, North Rigton could possibly follow:

- 1) Community Room – Pannal's Village Hall is well used for a variety of regular activities and Councillor Batcup raised the question of the Parish Council now actively pursuing this option, with or without PCC input, and approaching NYCC about the possibility of building a Community Room on the Church Hill site. Councillors expressed interest in this possibility but the Chairman then gave an update on the PCC's current position. Despite previous indications that the PCC had no interest in this initiative it now seems that PCC officials have changed stance and it is understood that plans have been produced for an extension to the Church, to accommodate a Community Room. It is possible that the PCC will wish to work jointly with the Parish Council to take this further. The Chairman will monitor and report on the position.
- 2) Housing and Development. Pannal's questionnaire had been very specific in seeking residents' views over housing development. Given the potential importance of this topic (as evidenced in the approach from parishioners at 2) above and councillors own concerns) it is suggested that Pannal's approach would be a useful blueprint for any future revision of the Parish Plan. Councillors agreed.

Councillors also agreed that an update or revision of the Plan would be beneficial in the near future.

7. Planning

7.1 The clerk circulated the planning control list, showing Parish Council responses to planning applications and outcomes. There were no matters arising.

7.2 Local Plan consultation. The Chairman circulated the proposed response, drafted by herself and Councillor Massey, for approval. The main points raised were:

- Lack of up to date traffic modelling information;
- Increased traffic flow (linked to large scale housing development in Weeton/Huby) on already busy A658;

- Public transport inadequacies – lack of railway station parking, infrequent bus service;
- Lack of consideration of impact of increased traffic flows in non-urban areas;
- Need for consideration of education requirements at both primary and secondary level. Also potential negative impact on existing village schools and environment;
- Ensure that any significant housing development is provided for the benefit of Harrogate and its residents, rather than being an attractive option for those working in the main conurbations to the South. Development to the East should therefore be the main consideration, given the benefit of good road and rail links;
- Option 3 (focus growth around key public transport corridors, principally to the East) and Option 5 (A new settlement close to the A1(M)) were considered to provide the best solution.

Councillors discussed all the above points in detail and it was then agreed that the clerk submit the response to Harrogate Borough Council and that it would also be added to the web site for residents to see.

8. Highways, Footpaths, Verges.

8.1 The water leakages on Hall Green Lane, outside the school and Swindon Close, have re-appeared, following the resurfacing work. Clerk to notify NYCC Highways.

8.2 The clerk brought councillors' attention to a complaint he had received from a resident at the bottom of Shaw Lane, about the speed of traffic, approaching the bridge. Councillors expressed concern at this, but also at the siting of large stones in the verges adjacent to the bridge and house. The clerk will bring both issues to the attention of NYCC Highways, raising the possibility of traffic calming measures being introduced.

9. Any other business

9.1 Councillor Fort circulated a handout describing possible options for devolution of local government. The clerk will copy the document and email to all for future consideration.

9.2 Dog control. A dog had been seen repeatedly fouling in the churchyard and there had been other instances of dogs roaming loose in the village and in gardens. Unfortunately the Parish Council has no formal powers to intervene in this area but a notice will be inserted in the Parish News, asking dog owners to be more responsible in controlling their pets. If the problem continues, Harrogate BC's Dog Warden will be contacted and asked to take action.

9.3 Parish Council elections. The Chairman reminded councillors that elections are due to be held next May and councillors seeking re-election need to be prepared.

10.Dates of future meetings

Wednesday 4 November 2015

Wednesday 6 January 2016

Wednesday 2 March 2016

All meetings to be at the village school, commencing at 7.30pm.