

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF
BOLTON-BY-BOWLAND, GIBURN FOREST AND SAWLEY PARISH COUNCIL
HELD AT SAWLEY VILLAGE HALL
MONDAY 07 SEPTEMBER 2015 AT 7.30 PM**

Present: Allan Clements (Chair), Cath Curry, Hayden Fortune, Arnold Foster, Lynda Holt, Liz Moorhouse, Roger Park, Elizabeth Twist, Mary Walsh, Ian Willock, Paul Wilson, Borough Cllr Richard Sherras, Borough Cllr Rosie Elms, Clerk,
One member of the public (James Waddington, Parish Lengthsman)

Apologies: None

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the Parish Council meeting of 06 July 2015 had been previously circulated. The Minutes were accepted as a true record of proceedings at that meeting and duly signed.

MATTERS ARISING

It was confirmed that RVBC's Countryside Officer had inspected the oak tree outside the pub in Bolton-by-Bowland and appropriate action would be taken.

It was agreed that the Clerk would contact RVBC's Legal department regarding ward representation within the parish and the possibility of amendment to the number of councillors representing each ward.

DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Elizabeth Twist declared an interest in Item 8 (ii)

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None

CODE OF CONDUCT

A draft Code of Conduct based on that formulated by the Local Government Association and adopted by RVBC and many parishes in the Borough had been previously circulated. It was confirmed that the draft Code included the seven Nolan principles. Mary Walsh produced a document outlining ten general principles and queried whether these could be included in the Code. It was suggested and agreed that Mrs Walsh produce a draft Code which combined the additional principles into the existing document and bring the revised version to the next Parish Council meeting for discussion.

It was duly proposed, seconded and agreed unanimously that the draft Code as originally tabled be adopted pending production of a revised version.

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN (NP)

Allan Clements provided an update on the Neighbourhood Plan. It was explained that a submission had been made to obtain funding of approx. £4K from Locality to undertake the requisite Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA).

Arnold Foster queried the need to incur further expenditure when the draft NP had not been debated and approved by the Parish Council. Allan Clements advised that it was necessary to undertake a SEA to progress the Plan beyond its current stage and that it would not be feasible to amend the Plan and subsequently undertake the SEA.

Allan Clements advised that Minutes and notes of Steering Group meetings had been circulated to all Parish Councillors as had the 64 page document of comments received following the six week NP consultation period earlier in the year. Allan Clements advised he would obtain the Steering Group Terms of Reference and circulate these.

Arnold Foster queried the evidence base of certain assumptions contained in the NP and as an example Ian Willock explained how assumptions relating to Holden in the NP had arisen and how subsequent comments from Holden residents had led to amendments to the Plan regarding Holden.

Arnold Foster proposed that a separate meeting of the Parish Council be held to debate the NP further and that the funding offer from Locality for the SEA be put on hold until this additional meeting had taken place. The motion was defeated by six votes to four, one abstention.

Roger Park proposed that the Parish Council proceed to instruct Locality to prepare the SEA and this motion was carried by six votes to four, one abstention, with Arnold Foster specifically requesting that his name be recorded as one of those who voted against.

Allan Clements confirmed that the amended version of the NP would be distributed to Parish Councillors at least two weeks in advance of the meeting at which it was to be debated.

PLANNING APPLICATIONS & MATTERS

Land adjacent to Southport House, Sawley

The above application had been considered and no objections were raised so a decision was awaited from RVBC.

Extension, Southport Barn Cottages, Sawley (Elizabeth Twist remained in the meeting)

The above application had been considered and objections primarily relating to the flooding problems of a neighbouring property had been raised. The application was with RVBC for decision.

Extension, The Old Coach House, Bolton-by-Bowland

This application had been refused by RVBC.

Re-surfacing of existing track, Holden Clough House

This application had been approved by RVBC.

Holiday let to affordable housing, Butcher's Laithe, Anna Lane, Tosside

It was noted that this application had only recently arrived for consideration so comments thereon had not yet been made. It was further noted that the agent for the applicant was Claire Parker of Kirkwells who were assisting the Parish Council with the NP.

Procedure regarding planning applications

It was noted that there may be occasions in all three wards, but particularly in Sawley and Gisburn Forest where there were only two Parish Councillors, that one Councillor may be left to consider an application as the other(s) had an interest in the application so could not comment. It was agreed that in such circumstances a Councillor from another ward should also be asked to comment on the application concerned.

PARISH LENGTHSMAN

The lengthsman's latest invoice was submitted and the work undertaken in the period covered by the invoice was outlined. It was explained that the lengthsman had spent more hours in Bolton-by-Bowland ward in the period covered due to the need to trim vegetation along Holden Lane which took a considerable amount of time. James Waddington proposed and it was agreed that, in future, he would spray the Holden Lane vegetation with weedkiller

FINANCIAL REPORT

Financial Statement

The Clerk advised that, due to the illness of the East Lancs Barclays Area Manager from whom statements were received, there was no statement available this month.

<i>Invoices for approval</i>		£
Sawley Village Hall	Room hire	30.00
Mrs Cathy Holmes	Clerk	240.00
P O Ltd	PAYE	60.00
James Waddington	Lengthsman	906.50
		1,236.50

Bank Signatories

The Clerk confirmed that a letter had been received from Barclays advising that changes to the mandate had been actioned. It was noted that there were currently four signatories as John Thornber and Nicky Capstick had needed to be retained as signatories pending the addition of new signatories to the mandate.

Year End Matters

The Clerk advised that the external auditors had confirmed that they intended to issue a qualified opinion on the 2014/15 Annual Return due to the fact that a formal budget had not been adopted by the Council for 2014/15 so no monitoring of income and expenditure against budget had been able to be conducted during the year. Additionally, the Council's risk assessment had not been formally approved until after year end. It was confirmed that both of these matters were essentially legacy issues and had now been rectified.

Appointment of internal auditor

Allan Clements advised that the Working Group established to consider the appointment of an internal auditor had a proposal for consideration by the Council. Ian Willock explained that several individuals had been considered for the position but the proposal was that Martyn Bishop, a chartered accountant from Bolton-by-Bowland was the Group's recommendation.

Arnold Foster queried the appointment of the Working Group and its composition and it was explained that the Working Group had been established at an earlier meeting, possibly the meeting in May 2015 when Mr Foster had not been present. Mr Foster commented that the Parish Council as a whole needed to be involved in major appointments and decisions rather than Committees or groups but it was stressed that the Group were now putting forward a nomination for approval by the whole Council so no appointment or decision had been made.

Upon a vote Martyn Bishop was approved for appointment as the Parish Council's internal auditor by nine votes to one, one abstention.

PARISH COUNCIL WEBSITE

Ian Willock advised that he had met with Neil Guthrie who had indicated he would be prepared to continue with his work on the website. Ian Willock proposed that he would work with Neil Guthrie to develop and improve the website and that the situation should be reviewed in 12 months' time. It was noted that Neil Guthrie had worked without charge on the website's development. After further discussion on other options including a counter-proposal that the Parish Council should appoint a website professional and spend up to £450 as allocated in the budget for this matter, Ian Willock's proposal was put to the vote and carried by nine votes to one, one abstention.

CORRESPONDENCE

Correspondence between Mary Walsh and Allan Clements dated July and August 2015 had been previously circulated to all Parish Councillors. It was noted that some of Mrs Walsh's letters had also been copied to certain Borough Councillors and staff of RVBC.

Roger Park asked for an explanation of the phrase in a letter of 20 July 2015 from Mrs Walsh namely "Some might even point to a conflict of interest and NP conditions breached..." and the Chair asked Mrs Walsh if she had substantive evidence to support her comment regarding a conflict of interest. Mrs Walsh advised that she had used hypothetical language and did not have evidence of a conflict of interest. The Clerk was specifically requested to minute this comment. Mrs Walsh proceeded to advise of comments allegedly made to her by Mr John Walmsley, a former member of the Parish Council, regarding the croft area near the Church in Bolton-by-Bowland. The Chair cautioned that some of the comments made by Mrs Walsh in the public domain, if inaccurate and unsubstantiated, could potentially lead to legal action.

Roger Park tabled a letter written by Colin Darlington in which Mr Darlington categorically refuted remarks attributed to him by Mrs Walsh in one of her letters to Allan Clements.

Allan Clements asked that any future correspondence from Mrs Walsh should be addressed to the Clerk for the attention of the whole Parish Council rather than just addressed to the Chair and the Clerk could then circulate any letters for discussion at a future meeting.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- a) *Vegetation along lane from Settle Road to Tosside*

The Clerk advised that there had been several complaints to Paul Wilson regarding the state of vegetation and overhanging trees along the lane from the Settle Road to Tosside. The matter had been reported via the required procedure to Lancashire Highways so appropriate action was awaited.

b) Frequency of Parish Council meetings

Mary Walsh queried the frequency of Parish Council meetings which used to be bi-monthly but were now on a more regular basis. The Chair advised that it had been agreed at a previous meeting in 2014 that the Parish Council would meet monthly apart from in August and January due to summer and Christmas/New Year holidays respectively.

DATE AND LOCATION OF NEXT MEETING

Monday 05 October 2015 at 7.30 pm Bolton-by-Bowland Village Hall

The meeting concluded at 9.50 pm.