

# Minutes of the Darrington Parish Council Meeting Reading Room

Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> December 2019

**Present:**

Cllr Britton (Chair), Cllr Smith (Vice Chair), Cllr Tagger, Cllr Stones, Cllr Jackson,  
Clerk – Ian Thompson.

**Apologies:**

Cllr L Thompson and Cllr P Stainer

**In Attendance:**

No members of the public were present.

**2019-12-01**

**Declaration Of Interests:**

None offered.

**2019-12-02**

**Public Matters:**

Nothing raised.

**2019-12-03**

**Minutes Of The Previous Meeting:**

Cllr Stone proposed and Cllr Britton seconded that the minutes of the previous meeting be accepted as a true record. This was unanimously agreed.

**Matters Arising:**

- i) Regarding cutting the grass area between the Darrington Hotel and the Kyte a lady who performs grass cutting for a neighbouring parish has expressed interest in doing such work for Darrington next year. Cllr Britton has already spoken to her and they will continue their discussions in the Spring.
- ii) Cllr Stones reported no change in infrastructure levy situation but will continue to check.

**ACTION VS**

- iii) With regard to the illegal parking on the exit slip from the northbound A1, Cllr Jones of Wakefield MDC has taken it up with the Wakefield Highways department who will liaise with Highways England for a resolution. Cllr Jones was not present at this meeting so Cllr Smith's question regarding "spare" boulders from the Carleton green installation remained unanswered.
- iv) The clerk has investigated the "Smiley Sid" situation. Smiley Sid is the pavement mounted speed measuring equipment historically offered on loan to parish councils for use by residents on a temporary basis. Having spoken with a representative of the police he learned that the offer of a loan was withdrawn many months ago and only one unit remains which is being used by the police

themselves. The clerk wrote to Cllr Morley, head of Wakefield Highways Department asking, once again, for speed measuring strips to be placed in the village for a few days to monitor speeds. Cllr Morley passed it on to the department who replied and stated that as Estcourt Road and Valley Road have relatively good accident records they themselves could not justify placing speed equipment in the village. With regards to the parish council proceeding to do so they would have to seek Wakefield's approval for sitings, absolving Wakefield from liability issues and maintenance costs. They themselves do not have the speed measuring strips, they hire them from Leeds City Council and advised it would cost less if the parish council rented them directly from Leeds. It was also pointed out that a "friend of a resident" had lent equipment a few months ago but placed them adjacent to the traffic lights thus not yielding any useful speed related data. The chairman reported that there had been yet another accident at the traffic lights and photographic evidence of accidents should be sent to Wakefield. The clerk was asked to send the Wakefield reply to Cllr Loughran who has herself pushed long and hard for traffic calming measures. The clerk will obtain costs from Leeds and also try to identify the other third party and again ask for a price. Attempts will be made to form a collection of accident related damage to the village and reporting "yet another accident" to Cllr Morley.

**ACTION IT**

- v) The Christmas tree was provided by "The Brotherhood" at no cost to the village. They refused a contribution. The councillors wanted to publicly record their thanks to "The Brotherhood" for their generous gift.
- vi) Lights in the tree in the Tithe barn area are providing an excellent display powered from Mr Flaherty's power supply in his adjacent property. In previous years Mr. Flaherty has refused a contribution for the cost of the electricity, but the councillors, realising the costs of this power are not insignificant, will offer £20 to Mr Flaherty and press him to accept it. Given that the RFO was not present at this meeting a cheque will be raised at January's meeting. An investigation into how to power lights on the tree in the old orchard and Velley Road will be pursued in the summer of 2020.

**ACTION PS to raise Cheque**

- vii) Cllr Jones has pursued the installation of "Give Way" signs at the narrowing of the road in Marlpit Lane. Wakefield have judged the current arrangements are appropriate and refused the parish council's request.
- viii) Cllr Tagger reported that the parish council has withdrawn the official complaint to Wakefield MDC regarding the lack of action in enforcing their refusal to give planning permission for many of the structures in Bank Wood Road. This withdrawal is due to responses from Wakefield confirming they were indeed taking action and promising that the enforcement officer would keep the parish council updated with progress. Cllr Tagger will also contact them from time to time to monitor progress.

**ACTION AT to monitor**

- ix) Cllr Stones has visited the resident who had expressed concern regarding toilet and refreshment facilities for PCSOs visiting the village. It has become clear that the issue was that one single PCSO was not aware of the arrangement Cllr Stones

had already made. Indeed, PCSOs have already used the Reading Rooms and expressed satisfaction with the arrangement. The resident thanked the council, particularly Cllr Stones, for their action.

- x) Cllr Smith has not yet discussed additional seasonal planting with First Impressions but has a meeting with them arranged in the near future.

**ACTION FS to discuss additional seasonal planting options.**

- xi) No update from Cllr. Jones regarding our complaining about this year's arrangements for delivery of salt for the sandboxes.
- xii) Regarding the status of Milners Lane we await a response from Wakefield MDC to report on whether or not this is a "public footpath". Cllr Jones has asked the question and we await the response.
- xiii) Regarding the application on Wentworth Park Rise for a new building, to which the parish council have objected. The current status is that there are twenty objections and two supporting comments on the planning website. In addition the "conservation" officer has stated that great weight should be given to the conservation of the heritage asset. "Conservation" are not supportive of the scheme. Additionally, the archaeology advisor service state that the proposed development may uncover and destroy important archaeological remains. Should permission be granted they require an appropriate level of archaeological observation and recording should be done during the excavation within the site, including site investigation works. They require a suitably worded condition should any grant of planning permission be awarded by WMDC. There was some question as to whether the deeds to the adjacent property might include conditions regarding this space. One of the objectors referred to the deeds stating that the open space was not to be built on. The clerk reported that he believes it is possible to obtain the deeds of any property for a fee of circa £40. It is believed the planning authority will check the deeds and come across any covenants. Cllr Tagger, who expressed concern at the vegetation that has already been planted and already partially obscuring the view of the church suggested there may be entry in the deeds prohibiting such an action. He felt that it would be beneficial to obtain the deeds and the councillors agreed. Cllr Tagger proposed, Cllr Stones seconded and the councillors unanimously agreed to give the clerk authority to download the deeds for the perusal of the parish council should he not be able to track down and obtain a copy from the resident who claims to have done so.

**ACTION IT to obtain deeds.**

- xiv) No request has been received for a Section 137 grant from the school to cover the cost of refreshments at the recent carol service.. Cllr Tagger understood that a formal request had been made and will follow the matter up with the school.

**ACTION AT to remind school representative to apply for grant**

- xv) The email address [chair@darrington.org.uk](mailto:chair@darrington.org.uk) must still be in existence as the clerk sent a test email to it and did not receive an error message stating the target email address does not exist. The clerk knows Mr Wilkins did ask for it to be removed but clearly this has not happened. The clerk will ask Mr. Wilkins to get in touch again with the email address supplier to remove it.

**ACTION IT**

## 2019-12-04 Correspondence:

- i) Following a request in the recent newsletter for suggestions for projects for the remaining budget a resident has written suggesting a pathway fitting into the village field between the top gates or around the perimeter. She states that “many parents take their children to school across the field and during the winter months it is a slippery mud bath”. The field is not under the control of the parish council. The chairman has received positive support from the chairman of the field committee who will discuss it at their next meeting at the end of January / early February. The councillors confirmed they would be prepared to make a financial contribution to this project. The clerk was asked to reply to the resident, thanking her for her suggestion, and informing her of the existence of the field committee, confirming the decision rests with them but also confirming the parish council’s willingness to contribute to a solution.

### ACTION IT

- ii) An email from Mrs Morrel thanking the parish council for the Christmas tree in the “Reading Rooms” and Cllr Stones and her sister for decorating it. She also paid tribute to Cllr. Tagger for his compering the recent school carol event. She felt the event was very well received by all attendees, although she expressed disappointment that so few councillors did attend!
- iii) An email from the clerk to East Hardwick parish council stating that they wanted to monitor the speed of traffic passing through the village and asking for advice on how to achieve this as he understood that Darrington have run such a project. The clerk replied stating that this was not the case and promised a follow up email once a decision of speed monitoring strips was made. This was before Wakefield’s luke-warm support for our project.

### ACTION IT

- iv) The clerk reported that a resident had written to him concerning the need to have a failed bulb replaced in one of the street lights in Valley Road. This isn’t a parish council matter but this is one process that Wakefield handle efficiently and as it is very easy to report such an issue the clerk did so on her behalf. Later Wakefield’s contractors had inspected the lamp and advised that the issue wasn’t the bulb but the actual supply to the lamp. They have reported it to the electrical suppliers who have a target turn round time of 25 working days. The resident has been informed.
- v) An email from Jon Ingham, development manager of the community foundation for Wakefield District, who is trying to raise funds for emergency fuel grants to the needy. They are asking for volunteers to obtain sponsorship and spend a night underground at the “deep coal mine” at the mining museum near Wakefield. For every £25 worth of sponsorship money received Wakefield will match it with another £25. A presumed incentive is that Harry Gratton from BBC’s “Look North” will be one of the volunteers. Cllr. Smith expressed an interest and the clerk will forward details.

### ACTION IT & FS

- vi) An email from “Selectra”, a price comparison company asking the parish council to put details of how one can obtain help with winter fuel costs – such as warm

home discount, winter fuel payment etc onto their website. After some discussion the councillors felt that this was more suitable for the Darrington community and parish council Facebook pages and Cllr Smith agreed to consider adding an entry to that page if she considers it appropriate after reviewing the original email which the clerk will send to her.

**ACTION IT & FS**

- vii) A quotation from First Impressions for 54 summer hanging baskets and summer flower beds and planters. The quotation is £3,119.40 and has been forwarded to the RFO. The RFO was not present at this meeting. There was some discussion as to whether they should be asked to plant the small roundabout near Ripon Farm Services. The councillors have been warned in the past that it is too dangerous to do anything on the roundabout and indeed might be prosecuted should they encroach on the territory.
- viii) An email from a resident complaining about what he described as illegal fly posted election posters on lampposts in the village. He said he had complained to Wakefield MDC and asked them to remove these posters and fine the BREXIT party who had put them up. After some telephone calls the clerk confirmed that Wakefield MDC do allow political posters on lamp posts before an election but that they must be removed within fourteen days of the election itself. The resident was most complimentary on our having followed up on his query and even though it was not what he wanted to be told thanked us for “our” efforts as opposed to Wakefield MDC who had yet to acknowledge his query.

**2019-12-05 Finance:**

In the absence of Cllr. Stainer the chairman reported on the figures the RFO had given to him. He reported that at the start of November the council had funds of £22,575.20 No income was received during the month. There was one payment.

Date	Item	Payment Method	Payee	Reason	Amount	VAT
14/11/19	19-1920	Cheque 793	Deadline Digital	80 DVDs of Air Crash Event	£129.30	£21.55

This left a balance of £22,495.90 at the end of the month.

There are two payments in December for approval:

Date	Item	Payment Method	Payee	Reason	Amount	VAT
19/12/19	20-1920	Cheque 794	Carter & Jackson	Printing of newsletters	£ 99.75	£0
19/12/19	21-1920	Cheque 795	P M Stainer	Printer ink	£ 22.63	£0
				TOTAL	£122.38	£0

Cllr Jackson proposed payment and was seconded by Cllr Stones and unanimously approved.

Cllr Stainer has revised the budget figures for gardening maintenance as there were no payments made this month. He once again stressed that project figures were no more than a rough estimate – the council has yet to identify specific projects, so they cannot be

costed! Given these unknowns his estimate for a broad brush financial year end figure is estimated to be £22,980,98.

This meeting discussed budgets for next year as the precept request is imminent. The RFO prepared three estimates assuming increases of 0%, 3% and 5%. After some discussion Cllr Jackson proposed a 5% increase, but the motion was not supported. Cllr. Tagger proposed a 3% rise and this was carried with three in favour, one against and one abstention. The discussion did discuss the reason why funds are relatively high and confirmed it was the lack of well-defined and costed projects. A request for ideas in the newsletter resulted in only one suggestion. The councillors agreed to “try harder” to receive project ideas from the community. Cllr Smith took an action to ask for ideas on Facebook sites (Community and Parish Council pages) and create a poll to measure their popularity. There was some concern regarding the audience for Facebook – assumed to be younger residents and so Cllr Smith will send copies of her post to Cllrs Tagger and Stones. Cllr Tagger will post similar requests on the noticeboards and Cllr Stones will ask Cllr Thompson to include an entry in the Parochial Church Magazine. These measures are designed to address all ages within the total population of the village. Cllr Jackson enquired about the “walking bus” to accompany children to school from the Spread car-park. The chairman confirmed it would certainly be investigated should residents request it after seeing the publicity.

ACTIONS PS to inform Wakefield MDC of 3%rise

FS to post requests for ideas on Facebook pages and forward test to AT & VS

AT to put notices in shop and notice boards

VS to ask LT to put into next church magazine

### **2019-12-06 Planning Matters:**

- i) Woodlands, Great North Road, Wentbridge.  
Extension to front to provide vertical transition from existing ground floor to lower ground floor parking.  
Application has been approved by Wakefield Planning
- ii) Grovehall Lane, Knottingley  
Demolition of timber office, construction of new workshop and office, and new entrance lobby.  
Application has been approved by Wakefield Planning
- iii) 15 Sotheron Croft, Darrington  
Remove existing conservatory and build new larger conservatory.  
No comment from parish council.
- iv) 2 Beech Crescent, Darrington  
Two storey extension to side.  
No comment from parish council.

**2019-12-07 Christmas Planning:**

No discussion as details already covered.

**2019-12-08 Reports:****School Report**

Ofsted have inspected within the last month. They gave the customary twenty-four hours notice. After two days of inspection the report stated that the “school was good in all areas”. The parish council asked Cllr Tagger to pass on their congratulations to the school. Next year the school will have a new project “2020 Vision” – a vision for the future. The children will reflect on the last ten years and what they envisage might happen in the next ten years.

**Village Field**

Nothing to report.

**“In Bloom”**

The councillors re-visited the quotation from “First Impressions” – the quotation is identical to last years. (£3,119.40) Cllr Jackson proposed this quotation is accepted. Cllr. Britton seconded the proposal and it was passed unanimously. The clerk will write back and confirm acceptance of the quotation.

**ACTION IT / PS re 1<sup>st</sup> Impressions Acceptance of offer****Gardening Club**

Cllr Tagger reported yet another excellent meeting including a quiz. The club continues to prosper and remains popular.

**Police Report**

The following report is exactly what Cllr Stones has received from the police.

- 2 Nov -Westfield Lane - Nuisance youths, report of fireworks being thrown
- 3 Nov - Kyte Hotel – suspicious female taking photos of the hotel and leave in a vehicle
- 8 Nov - West Park Homes – speeding vehicles driving irresponsibly along the narrow lane
- 9 Nov - Sotheron Croft – Concern for safety, male arrives at address and argues with resident
- 14 Nov - Spread Eagle Pub - Public order, male arrives and argues with another male in the pub
- 20 Nov – Greenroyd Court – Threatening phone call from ex co-worker threatening violence
- 22 Nov – Estcourt Road – Three males attempt to break into the shop, window smashed
- 24 Nov - Beech Crescent – Phone stolen from vehicle – window forced open
- 27 Nov – Carleton Road – Theft of vehicle from layby
- 28 Nov - Kyte Hotel – vehicle stolen from car park

## 2019-12-09 Minor Items:

- i) Cllr Tagger gave a DVD of the “air crash memorial-day” to all of the councillors. The DVDs on their cover have a statement stating commissioned and produced by Darrington Parish Council, an acknowledgment to Direct Digital for the production, the clerk's email address lest any comments of requests by recipients and also mentioning the plaque in the church. There were circa twenty requests for the DVDs from members of the public and Cllr Tagger has currently distributed fifteen of these DVDs.

**ACTION AT to distribute remaining request copies**

- ii) The clerk reported that the defibrillator pads will require changing in February and Cllr Stoners offered to contact “Community Heartbeat” to confirm we have a maintenance agreement which covers new pads and pass on the ordering information to the clerk.

**ACTION VS to confirm arrangements with Community Heartbeat**

- iii) The clerk made a request for some training finance. He stated that “SLCC” is the society for local council clerks and provides training and qualifications that are recognised throughout the UK. Step one is the “ILCA” – the “Introduction to Local Council Administration”. It is an online programme studied at home with video tutorials. There are five modules. To obtain the certificate one must pass a “revision exercise” which has an 80% pass mark. The cost is £99 plus VAT.

The clerk feels that this training will be beneficial to the parish council. Currently Darrington is one of the two parish councils within Wakefield MDC which do not pay the clerk. However, it is highly likely that Darrington is the only parish council with an “unqualified” clerk. Once this accreditation is received not only will he be able to confirm current practices are correct but also be in a better position to advise on the legality of any future decisions. Another benefit is that he will have access to the central pool of knowledge within the SLCC and be able to ask experts within the society for advice should it be required.

There is a second accreditation, much more comprehensive, covering specifics which the clerk currently feels are not appropriate to a small parish council. These include items such as “cemetery legal compliance”. The clerk feels that having taken the Level 1 training he will be in a better position on judging whether training is required for Level 2.

He also stated that it was certainly not his intention to “tout for business” as a clerk but told the meeting that should he ever take up a paid position within another council he would repay in full any training costs. He stated he has no intention of looking further afield and will never charge Darrington for his services.

Cllr Britton proposed and Cllr Jackson seconded paying the £99 plus VAT fee.

**ACTION IT to register and order the course**



iv) Cllr Stones has received the £100 advertising fees from Darrington Parish Council and will pass the cheque to the RFO.

**ACTION VS**

**Date Of Next Meeting:** 9<sup>th</sup> January 2020