

Minutes of Marton-cum-Grafton Parish Council held as an “On-Line” Meeting on Thursday 7th May 2020 at 7.30 pm

Present: Mr R Shepherd (RS) Chair; Mr P Gill (PG) Vice Chair; Mr T Cole (TC); Mr A Robinson (AR); Mrs C Sanderson-Lewis (CS-L); District Cllr Ann Myatt (AM); Mrs E Gill (EG) Clerk

1. **Apologies for Absence:** None

Members of the Public Present: 10

2. **Declarations of Interest:** TC declared an interest relating to Stockfield Manor, Stockfield Lane.
3. **Minutes.** The minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 2nd April 2020 were signed and dated by RS.
4. **County Issues:** No report.

District Issues: AM reported that the Draft Local Plan approved in March had received a legal challenge from the Flaxby Group. Rubbish and recycling now functioning well although it was noted the majority of tips are not yet open to the public which is contributing to fly-tipping. Green notices regarding planning have not been put up for the past few weeks, AM to check when this will resume.

5. **Chairman’s Annual Report**

Welcome everyone to the May meeting of the Parish Council. Once again we find ourselves conducting an on-line meeting through Zoom, an unprecedented circumstance which would have been unimaginable to those presiding at our first meeting in 1894 when the Reverend J R Lunn was in the Chair.

We have been excused an Annual Meeting this year due to the Coronavirus pandemic, but I’m delighted to report all the Councillors have agreed to continue in their roles for another 12 months, as indeed has the Clerk.

However, despite the postponement of the AGM, I have decided to record a Chairman’s Report for the increasingly eventful 12 months to May 2020.

None of us foresaw the exceptional circumstances unleashed by the Covid-19 pandemic when we began the annual Parish year last May. The response within the village has been exceptional, from our key workers, all those adhering to the Government’s social distancing guidelines through to the huge number of volunteers giving their time & energy in assisting others. Our village institutions, namely the Helmes Charity, the Church, Primary School and our village shop have proved just how essential they are to the fabric of the community as have our postmen and the numerous delivery drivers serving the village.

Of course, back in May of last year we were focusing on more mundane matters. The Harrogate Local Plan remained in draft form, our tennis courts were getting a new lick of paint and improved security cameras were fitted to the village shop. The mass of historic Parish Council records were collated from various barns & lofts, sorted and stored in their new centralised home within the loft space of the village hall.

In June, discussions were held with NYCC and their building company, Brierly Homes, regards the parcel of land gifted to the village from the proposed Yew Tree Farm development site. In time this will provide a welcome addition to the village's green spaces. It will be landscaped following the completion of the development alongside a 12 month upkeep contract before being transferred to the Parish Council's responsibility.

At this time we were also advised by the North Yorkshire Lighting Engineer that street lighting could be omitted from both the Yew Tree Farm and Copse developments in Marton which was a welcome announcement for those of us keen to preserve the village's unique dark skies environment. A residents survey was subsequently undertaken as to the potential removal of all column lighting within the village. The outcome was to maintain the status quo but will prove a useful evidence-based exercise should we eventually develop a Neighbourhood Plan in the coming years.

Despite the inevitable upheaval and inconvenience caused by construction works at The Copse there is a silver lining in terms of Commuted Sums monies, or the newly sanctioned Community Infrastructure Levy due to the village. Both developments will provide for approximately £50,000 towards verges, play areas, churchyard maintenance and other village infrastructure. Half of these monies will be released midway through the projects, with the balance received on completion with the amounts having a ten-year period in which to be allocated.

Planning issues continued to dominate with a flurry of applications & other related issues throughout the reporting period. Thankfully, as the Harrogate Local Plan crept ever closer to being adopted in the autumn, the content of its policies started to attach increasing weight in planning decisions. A number of speculative applications within the village which didn't conform to the enshrined policies were refused where previously, with the lack of any local direction, they could have stood a significant chance of gaining approval. The village can therefore take some comfort that our conservation area heritage asset will be better protected going forward with less encroachment of development onto agricultural land or out-with the development line.

Despite this concern remains in respect to the spread of ribbon development alongside the A168, albeit the Harrogate Local Plan makes no provision for such encroachment.

Within this locality there has been an improvement in respect to the litter problems associated with the Allerton Waste Recovery Park with additional litter picking alongside the A168 carriageway combined with improved netting procedures for departing traffic.

In November the Section 106 agreement was finally concluded between North Yorkshire County Council and Brierley Homes, facilitating the transfer of ownership of the proposed Yew Tree Farm development site and allowing the process to continue. Planning permission was then granted in February and by April a construction partner had been appointed. It is anticipated the developer will be on site by late summer.

The Parish finances remain healthy, as such the precept for 2020/21 has been fixed at £4950 for another year and in January the ongoing shop rental agreement was linked to RPI.

In February we learnt through Harrogate Borough Council of a possible merger between our Parish and that of Upper & Lower Dunsforth brought about by the resignation in May of their existing Chairman, with no one willing to take over the role. It is the Parish Council's

view that a larger council would neither be in their interests nor ours and we have suggested they apply greater effort in finding an internal replacement.

Following the withdrawal of the holding objection from Sport England the proposed replacement pavilion was finally granted planning permission and the contract awarded to Chris Stephenson of Grafton. Progress to date, in spite of the Covid-19 lockdown, has been impressive and the structure is already a substantial improvement on the former building. The Parish Council would like to express their thanks to Marton resident, Rory Cunningham, who has driven this project through almost single handedly in a very efficient, professional manner whilst surmounting numerous difficulties & raising considerable funding along the way.

As the Parish year draws to an end we remain in unprecedented times as measures continue to control the spread of this virus. Quite what the year ahead will offer we have little idea but we remain fortunate in having a strong, close and supportive community to help us through whatever comes our way. The village shop, Helen Tessa and her staff and volunteers deserve huge credit for all they have and continue to do in supporting the community through this crisis. The small army of volunteers directed by Lynda Bullus through the Helms Charity are also in receipt of our thanks for their essential work in collecting and delivering prescriptions whilst offering support to those families & individuals self isolating, and we shall always be in debt to our key workers and their ongoing contribution to the national effort.

For those of us in lockdown it has been as though we've been transported to a former, quieter, age where the slower pace of life has given many of us time to appreciate the chorus of birdsong throughout the village, whilst overhead the clear skies remain the sole preserve of our returning swallows, martins & swifts. May this bright, sunny Spring weather we are currently enjoying be a harbinger for a brighter year for us all.

Rob Shepherd, Chairman

6. Playing Fields:

- a) Sports Pavilion Rebuild – Rory Cunningham (RC) reported (with pictures) that progress is ongoing with the builder expecting to be able to unfurlough 2 members of staff and anticipating completion by the end of June. RC confirmed so far it is on budget and on plan. Additional funding from Cobbett Environmental of £7.5k has been received.

After enquiry RC acknowledged that replacement of the water pipe to the pavilion is not included in the current budget but it is hoped moneys will be available from S106 funds.

- b) Woodland Committee – Tim Joynson has made enquiries with the Woodland Trust on the possibility of planting more parish owned land with trees. Potentially 85% grant funding is claimable as we are in the Northern Forest area. After discussion it was agreed that this should be reviewed further at the next Woodlands Committee meeting.
- c) It was agreed that HBC would be asked to conduct the annual safety inspection of skate park and playground at a cost of £55.00 each.

7. Village Shop: - Helen and her team continue doing an astounding job supporting the village.

8. **Village Hall:** - The Hall remains closed for bookings but continues to be used for extra storage by the shop.

9. **Planning:**

Planning Notifications

- a) 6.71.72.B.FUL 20/01258/FUL – Limebar House, Limebar Lane, Marton-cum-Grafton. Demolition of existing dwelling and outbuildings and erection of replacement dwelling and associated garaging. The PC has no objections.
- b) 6.71.72.C.FUL 20/01259/FUL – Limebar House, Limebar Lane, Marton-cum-Grafton. Demolition of existing dwelling and outbuildings and erection of two dwellings and associated garaging. The PC has no objections.
- c) 6.71.202B.CON 20/01276/CON – Land comprising field at 441716 Yew Tree Farm, Marton-cum-Grafton.
A planning application seeking the demolition of an outbuilding at Yew Tree Farm. The PC has no objections but wished to comment that the bat survey is now out of date.
- d) 6.71.175.D.PNA 20/00833/PNA – Grafton Lodge, Low Field Lane, Marton-cum-Grafton. Prior approval application for a new barn. The PC has no objections.
- e) 6.71.34.CLEUD 20/01317/CLEUD – Grafton Grange, Limebar Lane, Marton-cum-Grafton. Certificate of lawfulness for the continued use of two buildings for storage and repair and maintenance of agricultural and heavy goods vehicles (Use Class B2/B8). The PC has no comments to make.

Decision Notifications

- f) 19/04621/FUL – Amber Hill, Thorny Hill Lane, Marton-cum-Grafton
Demolition of bungalow and construction of two storey house with undercroft garage parking. Planning has been GRANTED by HBC subject to conditions.
- g) 20/01114/AMENDS – Stockfield Manor, Stockfield Lane, Marton-cum-Grafton.
Non-material minor amendments to allow amended window heads to front and painted windows to rear elevation re planning permission 17/01757/FUL – Erection of detached dwelling with detached garage. Planning has been APPROVED by HBC.

10. **Financial Matters:**

Out:

Date	Item	Total £
25/03/2020	Clerks Salary (March)	£183.37
30/03/2020	PC Insurance Policy	£869.05
11/04/2020	Clerks Expenses	£36.37
11/04/2020	YLCA Membership fee	£208.00
14/04/2020	J C Trees - tree removal	£451.20
	Total out	£1,747.99

In:

Date	Item	Total £
26/03/2020	FCC Communities (grant pavilion)	£10,000.00
08/04/2020	HMRC VAT refund	£5,858.99
08/04/2020	Shop Rent	£1,218.00
	Total received	£17,076.99

Current account balance at 14 April: **£28,085.68**

Deposit account balance at 14 April: **£23,711.74**

£3.70 interest

Payments to be authorised:

T3TC Limited – web hosting costs	£69.46
Clerk's Expenses (printer ink)	£47.80
W T Webster – hedge cutting	£54.00

Total: £171.26

11. Correspondence:

- a) A request from a resident that Lime Bar Bank Road should be marked as “unsuitable for Motor Vehicles” was discussed. It was agreed this was a North Yorkshire Highways area of responsibility and as the request had already been made by the resident in question no further input from the Parish Council was required.

12. Any Other Business:

- a) A number of stiles on public footpaths are broken or in poor state of repair. RS to contact the County Council Footpaths Group to enquire about repairs.
- b) A member of the public commented that there is no public access at Priestcar Lodge and also at Marton Moor Farm to use the public footpath, both of which are dead ends. RS to speak to County Council Footpaths Group.
- c) Lighting bollards which have been installed on The Copse which are not believed to be in accordance with the planning permission granted. Enforcement have been notified. Agreed that RS should send a formal letter to Mulgrave asking for the lighting to be removed/muted. CS-L to contact Ecology Dept to see if they can be removed on ecological grounds.
- d) Thanks were expressed to NYCC for clearing the Church Lane footpath .
- e) TC has requested a copy of the survey on the condition of the village roads prior to development in The Copse but has not yet received a copy.

The meeting was briefly adjourned at 8pm to allow participants to join in the nationwide ‘clap for carers’ and closed at 8.50 pm.

Date of Next Meeting: Thursday 4th June 2020 at 7.30 pm – venue to be confirmed.

Signed:

Dated: