

Hawes and High Abbotside Parish Council

Minutes of the Meeting of 8th August 2016 held at Gayle Institute at 7.15pm

Present: Cllrs J Blackie (Chairman), Ms A Caygill, G DiDuca, A Fawcett, S Hunter, Mrs A Rhodes, I Woolley.

In Attendance: Mr I King (Clerk), Sgt S Grainger (N Yorks Police), Mr K Tasker (Chairman of Governors of Hawes Community Primary School) and 23 members of the public.

Apologies: Cllrs Mrs S Alderson, Ms D Allen, B Fawcett.

The Minutes of the Meetings of 7th March were accepted as a true record, and signed by the Chairman.

Cllr Di Duca questioned the accuracy of Minute 5 of the Minutes of 9th May 2016, but they were approved by 5 votes to 1. There were no Matters Arising.

Chairman's Items

1) The potential removal of 24/7 Critical Care Services at the Darlington Memorial Hospital, including the 24/7 Accident & Emergency (A+E) Service and the 24/7 Consultant-led Maternity and Paediatrics Service.

Cllr Blackie reported on the ongoing consultation – the *Better Health Programme* - which covers the 4 major hospitals (the James Cook University Hospital, Middlesbrough, 60 miles from Hawes - the North Durham Hospital, 60 miles - the North Tees Hospital, Stockton, 55 miles - the Darlington Memorial Hospital, 35 miles).

Only 2 of the 4 hospitals are due to retain these emergency services and Cllr Blackie suggested that the Better Health Programme (BHP) is likely to propose they would be the James Cook and the North Durham hospitals. The consultation process started last January, but the people of the Upper Dales were not included even though they had fought long and hard to save services at the Friarage Hospital, Northallerton. They are also the largest community farthest away from emergency services in all of England.

After Cllr Blackie had raised the issue at the County Council in May three extra seats were created on the Joint Health Scrutiny Committee of the BHP, one of which was awarded to him. This led to a consultation meeting in Hawes on 1st August 2016 which attracted 45 local people. It was noted that the Friarage Hospital A&E now only offers an Urgent Care service, and does not accept children under the age of 16, who are sent to the Darlington Memorial Hospital or the James Cook. Emergency ambulances with patients bypass the Friarage for either the DMH or the JCUH.

Dr Malcolm Hamer observed that this is a foolish time to be cutting services when ambulances are being forced to wait outside A&E departments for hours. He fears that the James Cook University Hospital will be swamped, and unable to cope. Cllr Blackie agreed and added that the Better Health Programme envisages no additional facilities or resources, so the two chosen hospitals will be completely overwhelmed with patients diverted from the hospitals that have lost their 24/7 Critical Care services.

There was some discussion on the possibility of using the Royal Lancaster Infirmary, which is about the same distance from Hawes as Northallerton or Darlington. Cllr Di Duca argued that Darlington is strategically placed to serve the remote parts of the Dales and that this should be preferred to the 3 other hospitals, which are fairly close together and could therefore lose one of them without major impact.

Council resolved that the BHP is a major threat to the Upper Dales and it will campaign to maintain all the 24/7 critical care services at the DMH.

2) Hot Food Mobile Service.

The Chairman reported on an exchange of emails with Joanne Jones from Askrigg, who wishes to operate a hot food van in Hawes on Friday and Saturday nights, from 9.00 pm to 11.00 pm. She had received no opposition from other businesses in Hawes, and promised to only use local shops or suppliers. She also agreed to clear all rubbish.

The Parish Council agreed to allow this on a trial basis, but it would re-visit this permission should there be public disorder or excessive noise when it is operating.

3) Police Issues.

Sgt Grainger prefaced his report by apologising for the long gap since his last appearance. He said that the Police are very aware of the problems being caused by ambulances stacking up outside hospitals. He said that ambulances from the Bainbridge Station can be sent as far away as the Airedale Hospital near Keighley, and that once they are there, they can be required to operate in West Yorkshire rather than returning to base.

Sgt Grainger went on to discuss some problems with Sunderland Football Club Supporters coming in large numbers to the Hawes and District Gala, with some of them causing problems. This year he had responded with additional policing, and would continue to do so as long as the disruption continues.

Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) have been reduced from 4 to 2, with an inevitable lessening in availability. Local PCSO Don Foster now covers Hawes, Middleham and Jervaulx.

Various ongoing police operations were summarised, and the Chairman expressed the Council's thanks for the excellent support of the Police at the recent War Memorial dedication.

There followed a long discussion on the problems caused by visiting motorcyclists, and the Chairman praised Sgt Grainger for all his efforts in tackling this. There was also a brief discussion on speeding in Hawes and Gayle, and Sgt Grainger said that there is a page on the NY Police website where persistent speeding problems can be reported.

Gayle resident Mrs Vicki Blades suggested the installation of speed humps on Gayle Lane, as there is much concern over speeding there in the presence of children playing in the Play Park near Bealah Bank. Cllr. Blackie had organised a site meeting with NYCC Highways which had been attended by several mothers, and various possible solutions had been discussed. The Chairman thanked the Gayle mothers for their interest and involvement.

4) Hawes Primary School.

The Chairman invited Mr Kevin Tasker to address the meeting. He said that he will make the report written by Mr Simon Ashby (one-time Executive Head Teacher) available on the School's website. He also gave a brief report that stated that the School is still controlled by the Local Education Authority until 1st October, when it is due to join the Yorkshire Collaborative Academy Trust (YCAT - a Multi-Academy Trust).

A new Head Teacher has been appointed, effective from September. He emphasised that the Governing Body and the School Staff are focussed on turning the school around. Cllr Blackie commented that, when he started on the Parish Council, it had had a member on the Governing Body. Times change, but he

asked if the Parish Council could expect a term by term report. Mr. Tasker replied that he would look into this and report back to a future Parish Council.

Cllr.Blackie also mentioned that he had been told that YCAT is not aggressive, but now understands that Leyburn Primary School is also a target. His concern is that, like several Multi-Academy Trusts, it would become too large and unmanageable, and the best interests of all those involved with Hawes Primary School, especially its children, be relegated to be of secondary importance because of our geographical isolation.

Mr Tasker said that YCAT does not intend to grow rapidly, and will continue to be a Primary Education Specialist Trust. He said being within YCAT was the best option for Hawes School.

5) Business Signage in Hawes.

Mr Glenn Payne (from Herriots Hotel) had complained about excessive signage outside the new Firebox Café at the Dales Countryside Museum. Cllr Blackie had been to see the proprietor of The Firebox, who had agreed to manage with only one sign. However a business proprietor had reported the issue to the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority (YDNPA) and the Firebox Café has become an enforcement case. Then a business proprietor had been around Hawes taking pictures of the signage for various businesses and reported them to the YDNPA, and there are now 11 enforcement cases.

The YDNPA is in discussions with Cllr Blackie to try and resolve the problem without taking enforcement action. He said he would bring the outcome of the discussions to the next meeting of the Parish Council.

6) Car Parking outside Hawes Youth Hostel.

There have been problems caused by visitors to the Hawes YHA Youth Hostel whose inconsiderate car parking had completely obstructed the pavement, causing pedestrians to walk into the busy road to Ingleton at a point where it narrows. This road is often used by HGVs serving the quarries near Ingleton, and by logging artics.

The Clerk reported on a phone call from an irate visitor who claimed that his car had been seriously damaged while parked there. However, the complainant had not followed this up with an e-mail, as promised.

The Chairman had visited the Youth Hostel and had spoken with the Manager asking her to address the issue. She had agreed it was causing a problem and said her staff would do their best to impress upon visitors that they should not park there. Cllr. Blackie had said that the Parish Council would have to report the matter to the YHA Head Office and the Police if there were more examples of the pavement being obstructed by cars belonging to visitors the Youth Hostel.

7) The Little White Bus Service

The Chairman announced that the LWB had been awarded a new contract after tendering for the Home to School bus service from Hawes to Settlebeck School in Sedbergh. This has created 3 local part-time jobs.

8) The closure of the HSBC Bank

It has been announced that the HSBC Bank in Hawes will close on Friday 21st October. The Chairman has written to complain about the short notice, the total lack of consultation, and that the bank has treated its customers and staff very badly.

There was some concern that all the accounts held there have already been transferred to the Settle branch, and not Leyburn, suggesting that the days of the HSBC Branch in Leyburn are numbered.

Cllr Abbie Rhodes, Manager of Hawes Post Office, advised it can offer routine banking services for personal and business customers. However she envisages a problem with the supply of change. They are investigating whether it can secure a 24-hour cash machine.

The Chairman stated that the Post Office will do all that it can to help, noting that the local economy, especially the smaller shops and businesses, depends very heavily on cash being available in the town.

9) Flooding at Appersett and Town Foot, Hawes.

Recent heavy rains in June had flooded houses in Appersett. North Yorkshire County Council (NYCC) is the relevant Flood Protection Agency, and had found that several of the “catches” on the road down from the Appersett railway viaduct were blocked. It was also noted that the relief flood water channel under the road at Appersett Bridge was also blocked and the valve which opens automatically by the pressure of flood water was jammed shut.

NYCC Highways will tackle these issues. Other measures proposed, including dredging the river, were being ruled out by the Environment Agency. The cost of works on the walls to the road from Appersett Viaduct to the village centre was estimated by NYCC Highways at around £5000 - £10,000. However the Environment Agency said to meet its standards a scheme would cost an eye-watering £150,000.

Two houses had also been flooded at Town Foot in an incident which also threatened the Central Dales GP Surgery and Health Centre, and properties on Hardraw Road. The Chairman had convened a high level meeting attended by a number of officers from NYCC which had taken place at the Highways Office in Brompton-on-Swale.

He said NYCC was taking this flooding very seriously, and found that there is a conduit coming down from the Manse opposite the Ropeworks, under the Town Foot play park and the A 684, and then down the syke beside the Ropeworks. This conduit has several blockages and will continue to cause floods until it is sorted. The plan is that all the landowners affected - including the Parish Council for the play park, NYCC Highways, and the Ropeworks - should pitch in to pay for a contractor to remedy the situation, working to a scheme of works drawn up and supervised by NYCC Highways.

The fear of flooding was causing deep anxiety amongst property owners along the Hardraw Road, some of whom were present in the audience, and Cllr.Blackie promised them he would press NYCC Highways to ensure this work was completed ahead of the winter.

10) Service of Dedication of the War Memorial to the Fallen of Hawes and High Abbotside.

The War Memorial Service on Sunday 17th July was attended by over 300 local residents and was praised by all Councillors as being both fitting and appropriate. Councillors expressed their thanks to Cllr. Blackie and the others in his team who had organised it so well. Cllr Blackie responded that he had received personally many appreciative comments on both the Services of Dedication of the War Memorial and the new Parish Council Cemetery on Old Gayle Lane.

Cllr Hunter proposed that a letter of gratitude be sent to Jim Spensely, the local stone-mason who had crafted such a wonderful Memorial. Thanks were also expressed to Cllr Woolley who had spent much time supervising the building of the War Memorial.

11) Poor service from Richmondshire District Council (RDC).

The Chairman expressed huge disappointment and had received many complaints about the unannounced reduction of the cleaning of the Penny Garth public toilets, from 3 times a day to once a day, despite those in Hawes being the busiest within the District. The Parish Council agreed that once a day was totally inadequate.

Richmondshire District Council (RDC) has also taken £4,000 out of the budget of the Upper Wensleydale Community Office, producing deliberately falsified statistics that only 20 people a week use it for RDC business. Cllr Blackie said there had been 27 RDC callers on one day alone. He has invited the Director of Services at RDC to the next meeting of the Parish Council.

12) Foul smells in Hawes.

The Chairman reported that the odour loggers had recorded a virtual nil return for hydrogen sulphide smells. The Creamery has increased its discharge to operate 24 hours a day but at reduced strength. Cllr Blackie is to write to the Chief Executive of Yorkshire Water to highly commend the YW team, whose plan and work programme has so far seemed to have resolved this problem. **Councillors strongly supported this commendation.**

13) Gayle Green Public Meeting.

The Chairman apologised for not having had the time to organise this meeting. It was agreed that it might be held on a Saturday.

14) Hawes Gala.

Council agreed a donation of £500 to the Hawes Gala Committee. The Clerk read out a letter from Mrs Claire Lambert calling for the advertising boards and signs for the Hawes Gala to be taken down. Ms E. Guy, Chair of the Hawes Gala Committee, said that she was aware of the problem, and was trying to get a group together to remove them.

15) YDNPA Planning Applications

R/56/482 - Barn at Cubble Head, Burtersett. Full planning permission for conversion of barn to a local occupancy three bed dwelling. **Very strongly supported.**

R/56/474 - Bands Lane, Gayle. Full planning permission for demolition of modern extensions and conversion of barn to form a three bedroom dwelling for holiday accommodation. **Strongly Supported.**

R/56/24Y - Brown Moor Caravan Site, Hawes. Full planning permission for the erection of Assistant Warden’s bathroom / utility pod. **Supported.**

Concerns were raised about rumours that the Brown Moor Caravan Club site was to be closed for 6 months between January and July next year for refurbishment linked to this planning application. The Chairman said he would raise this with the YDNPA Planning Officer and ask that he contacts the Caravan Club for an explanation.

16) YDNPA Planning Decisions

R/48/16Q The Green Dragon, Hardraw Full planning permission for construction of a small range of outbuildings to house a cycle hire, micro brewery and a garden store building – Refused unanimously on 2

occasions by the Planning Committee, each time with Cllr. Blackie proposing refusal, in view of the strong objections to the application by the Parish Council.

Planning Appeal for an Extra Care Housing Complex at Turfy Hill, Hawes – Appeal refused

17) Correspondence

Richard Noble – Thanks to PC for its support of Hawes in Bloom. **Noted, and Council confirmed its intention to donate £1000**

Upper Dales Health Watch – Minutes of the July meeting – **Noted.**

Robin Derry, NYCC – Community Emergency Plans – **Noted.**

Hawes Gala Committee – Request for a donation. (See Minute 14)

Town Foot play park inspection – RDC safety inspection report – **Noted.**

Friends of Lady Anne’s Way – appeal for donation. – **Noted.**

Tim Smithies, Chapel Gallery – Information on Ukulele Event over August Bank Holiday weekend and request to use the Community Field for camping. – **Noted.**

18) Financial Matters.

The Clerk had appended a Financial Report to the Agenda, and it is attached to these Minutes. **Council approved the list of payments already made, and the two items still to pay.**

The Chairman proposed that he, the Parish Clerk and Cllr. Mrs Rhodes should be delegated to determine the future banking arrangements for the Council in view of the closure of the HSBC Bank in Hawes. **Agreed.**

19) Any Other Business

Garsdale Station Anniversary. Mrs Ruth Annison thanked the Council for its donation to the celebration of this Anniversary, and reported that it had been very successful. She also urged that there should be some sort of welcome for the hundreds of people who arrive in Hawes by bus.

Road Surface at the top of the Holme – reported that this is in very poor condition. The Chairman would take this forward with NYCC Highways.

Meeting closed at 10.30pm.

Date of next meeting – to be confirmed.