

SIMONSTONE PARISH COUNCIL

16/04/2023

A meeting of the Parish Council was held at **St. Peter's School Church Hall, School Lane, Simonstone BB12 7HR on Thursday 13th April 2023 at 7.00p.m.**

Present: Chairman: Councillor Peat
Councillors: Barker, Finn, Hampson, Hargreaves, McKelvey, Meloy & Pollard.

In attendance: April Collinson (Clerk)

2 member of the public attended.

1. Apologies for absence – no apologies for absence were received however a notification that councillors Barker and Hargreaves would be slightly late.

2. Declarations of Councillors' Interest and dispensations

Councillors Barker and Hargreaves arrived at this time.

2.1 To receive declarations of interest from Councillors on items on the agenda. – none.

2.2 To receive requests for dispensations for disclosable pecuniary interests (if any) – none.

2.3 To grant any requests for dispensation as appropriate – none.

By way of full disclosure Councillors Barker, Hargreaves Meloy and Pollard declared non-pecuniary interest in the Martholme Greenway and Councillors Finn and McKelvey declared a non pecuniary interest in the Village Hall.

3. To approve the minutes of the previous Parish Council meeting held on 16th March 2023 – Councillor Barker raised to amend the minute 11.d) to add that Councillor Hampson had made comment that a cycling expert had advised that cycleway 685 along the old railway route was not wide enough and that no evidence of this had been provided.

4. Matters arising from the above minutes not on the agenda – none.

5. Public participation – Gayle Wray from the environment group came to discuss making both Read & Simonstone Environmentally Friendly Villages and gain an award for doing so. The scheme had come about from a group called Surfers Against Sewage and aims to reduce carbon emissions and single use plastic. A request was made that the council lead by example and give up some single use plastic items in their homes as well as supporting plastic free initiatives. Councillors discussed that this is a small council without offices etc so as a council itself there is not much plastic to give up and that the scheme may be better aimed at larger councils such as Ribble Valley Borough Council. Councillors were open to receiving further information and agreed to discuss this at the next meeting after the elections. Further information will be provided to councillors prior to the next meeting.

6. Borough Councillor's Report – Councillor Peat reported that the Ribble Valley Health and Housing department has confirmed grants will be available to those living with dementia to help with the cost of adaptations and assistance needed.

At the Parish Council Liaison Councillor Swarbrick discussed 20mph speed limits and it was confirmed that there will be a £500 grant available to Parish Councils as coronation funding and also litter pickers and bags available.

7. Clerk's Report

The Crime statistics for March are as follows;

1 Burglary (shed)

1 Assault

1 Criminal Damage

3 Road Related Offences

The Clerk confirmed that the accounts are being prepared for Audit and will be reviewed by an internal Auditor before going to an external Auditor. The Internal Auditor used previously was Les Pickering, the Council discussed that there have been no issues when using him previously and resolved to use his services again.

8. Reports from external meetings

Martholme Greenway – Dry stone walling has been taking place and is nearing completion.

Village Hall – the village hall has hosted two net plays which have been very successful including *Pirate Bonnie* which was aimed at children during the school holidays. Film nights are also being hosted. The Village Hall aims to provide a variety of entertainment activities for all ages.

9. Facebook and Website Report

This Parish Council Meeting was advertised on the Facebook.

10. Decision Items

a) Coronation

Funding of £500 is available for the coronation from Ribble Valley Borough Council. Currently £200 has been committed to the celebration at the Village Hall. Litter picking grabbers are also available and borough councillors should be contacted about this. It was suggested that the Martholme Greenway Group and Environment group could work together to do a litter pick locally. The council received word that a "Litter & Lunch" event was being organised by the environment group.

The council were advised that the cost of the event at the village hall currently stands at £440 (equivalent to £220 per council), currently £200 has been pledged. Councillor Hampson suggested that the remaining funds could be used to purchase a fixture such as raised beds in the parish garden for growing vegetables etc. concerns were raised about both the initial cost and the maintenance cost of raised beds. It was suggested that a picnic bench/table with a commemorative plaque could be erected.

Councillors discussed whether to give further funding to the village hall event. Councillor Hampson reminded the council that the event is being ticketed at £3 per person or £10 for a family of four so there would be income. The income from tickets was intended to be given to a local charity with the village hall not taking any profit or charging for the hire of the facility. It may be that the additional costs are taken from the ticket sales money. It was noted that the Mayor and Mayoress/deputy Mayor & Mayoress will be attending.

Gayle Wray and councillor Barker asked for litter pickers to clean up the local environment for the celebration.

RESOLVED: *The clerk will get quotes for a picnic bench/table.*

b) Active Travel Plan

The letter proposed at the previous Parish Council meeting had been circulated and was read out again for clarity Councillor Hampson raised that the cycleway would not connect places of work for commuting and was purely a recreational pathway however the active travel scheme was to encourage cycling for commuting.

Councillor Pollard pointed out that cycleway 685 connects to the canal, Rosegrove train station, Padiham Greenway along the old railway, Mill Hill and Great Harwood, he advised the route would travel within one mile of ten industrial estates. Councillor Barker added that the route is currently mainly used for recreation but could easily be used for commuting once it is fully connected. Councillor Meloy advised that this scheme is being driven by national government and is being pushed out to parish

councils who know their local areas better. The many of these types of plans are supported by friends of the earth, parish councils, it can help improve the health and wellness of local residents improving life expectancy as well as helping keep cyclists safely away from traffic. Councillor Meloy seconded the proposal to send the letter. Councillor Barker explained that currently there are 7 miles on road of the cycle route out of 32 miles total. If the scheme can connect sections this would greatly reduce the road portion down to 200-300 yards. Councillor Hampson stated that although she was committed to active travel, she felt that Simonstone residents would have to cycle further to make use of cycleway 685 making their journeys longer, she did not feel it is a viable commuter route. She felt uncomfortable with the content of the letter as it seemed similar to a letter from Martholme Greenway to Ribble Valley Borough Council. Councillor Hampson accused that she believed the letter to be the Martholme Greenway attempting to conduct it's business via Simonstone Parish Council. Objection was received from Councillor Meloy. Councillor Meloy responded that the Martholme Greenway had not been discussed and this discussion was only about the Active Travel Plan. Only Councillor Hampson had mentioned the Martholme Greenway. Councillor Hampson requested a named vote on the matter. It was noted that improvements and further connections to the cycleway would benefit the wider community giving access for walkers, cyclists, wheelchair users and horse riders and that the Parish Plan did ask for improved access to industrial estates.

RESOLVED: Councillors Barker, Finn, Hargreaves, McKelvey, Meloy & Pollard voted to support the proposal to send the letter. Councillor Hampson voted against the proposed letter. It was determined that the letter would be amended to include both meeting dates and to change that "the council was unanimous" to "the council resolved".

c) Arrangements for AGM

As elections are due to take place on 4th May it would be logical to delay the AGM until after this so that jobs can be assigned to the new Council should its members change. The outgoing Chairman will make a report and notices will be posted as usual.

RESOLVED: The AGM will take place on 18th May 2023. The clerk will arrange a meeting room for this.

d) PROW (Public Rights of Way) Scheme

Councillor Pollard brought forward that there are several footpaths which are in need of maintenance. On the footpath (FP1210003) from Trapp Lane near Law Farm leading towards the tennis courts where several footpaths join together (with footpaths FP1210004 & FP1210005), there is a stile which would be best replaced with a gate. It was noted that some small or older dogs may have trouble tackling the stile, this would also improve accessibility. Comments were made that Footpath FP12090007 was waterlogged, there are currently some flagstones placed to alleviate this however further flagstones could be placed to improve the surface, the trouble being that the land does not belong to the council, permission would need to be sought before any flagstones could be placed.

RESOLVED: Enquiries will be made to the lengthsman scheme about installing a gate where the current stile stands as well as about the waterlogged area.

e) Lengthsman Scheme

Councillors Pollard confirmed that the current Lengthsman is due to finish and will be replaced by two new Lengthsmen. The Lengthsmen are paid £15 per hour for jobs, this is subsidised at 20% from the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and £500 from Lancashire County Council toward footpath works and £300 toward

biodiversity. The Scheme is administrated by Angela the clerk to Sabden Parish Council. An invoice had recently been received for a deficit of funds in the scheme for £335.76.

RESOLVED: A cheque will be drawn for the deficit.

f) Maintenance issues

It was brought forward that some of the top stones along the Parish Garden wall had been removed, the reason is unknown. There is also a gate to the parish garden which has been damaged and has become stuck. The “Simonstone Lane” sign at the junction with the A678 has been knocked over, this is the responsibility of Lancashire County Council. The “Simonstone” Village Sign on Whalley road at the East entrance to the village has been removed to be painted. Councillor Hampson added that she had reported some faded white lines on School Lane as well as some blocked drainage channels.

RESOLVED: The issues with the Parish Garden will be reported to the Lengthsman for maintenance and the knocked over sign will be reported to Lancashire County Council.

11. Correspondence

A statement of Persons nominated has been published by Ribble Valley Borough Council for the upcoming elections, voting will take place o 4th May 2023.

12. Planning Applications/Decisions/Enforcements – There was one planning application received since the time of the last minutes;

Application 3/2023/0113 Higher Trapp Hotel, Trapp Lane, Simonstone, BB12 7QW

The application is for change of use of woodland to provide additional leisure offer involving siting of three hot tubs on raised decking together with new footpaths and footbridge. The development is within a protected woodland, close to an electricity substation and a water main.

Councillors discussed the application and there were no objections.

13. Finance & Accounts:

a) Payments out

date	Chq no.	Description	Net	VAT	Total
20.03.2023	101498	Clerk's Wage (March)	£228.74	£0.00	£228.74
20.03.2023	101499	Clerk's expenses	£132.56	£0.00	£132.56

b) Unpresented cheques

Cheque no.	Description	Net	VAT	Total
101495	Ribble Valley Citizens Advice Bureau	£150.00	£0.00	£150.00

c) Income

Description	Net	VAT	Total
Interest	£11.95	£0.00	£11.95

d) Payments to be made

Description	Net	VAT	Total
Clerks Wage (April 2023)	£228.74	£0.00	£228.74
Remainder of Clerk's expenses	£5.75	£0.00	£5.75
R & S Village Hall rent (17.03.2023)	£20.00	£0.00	£20.00
R & S Village Hall rent (17.11.2022)	£20.00	£0.00	£20.00
Barrie Tyrer Domain & hosting fees	£133.05	£0.00	£133.05
Lengthsman Scheme deficit	£335.76	£0.00	£335.76

Xmas tree electricity supply (2021/2022)	£5.31	£0.27	£5.58
Xmas tree electricity supply (2022/2023)	£3.86	£0.19	£4.05
UseIT – Microsoft office package	£11.28	£2.26	£13.54

e) Bank reconciliation

Balances 31.03.23			
Community Account	£8,018.08		
Business Saver Account	£9,640.59		£17,658.67
Add: Receipts			£9,500.06
Less: Payments			£10,070.11
Less: Unpresented cheques			£150.00
Balance			£16,938.62

14. Items for the next agenda

-

It was noted that this will be the last meeting of Councillor Graham Meloy as a Councillor on Simonstone Parish Council. Thanks are extended to him for his years of service. The same thanks are extended to any councillors who may not return following the election.

The Next Meeting will take place on 18th May 2023.

The meeting ended at 8.15 pm.