

SADBERGE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting held at 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday 14th July 2015 in Sadberge Village Hall

Present: Councillors Tate, Best, Heath, Heywood, Lazenby, Schott and Smith.

In attendance: Ward Councillors Brian Jones and Doris Jones Alastair Mackenzie – Clerk

1. Inspection tour of Sadberge Parish Council land and property

- 1.1 The inspection tour was carried out by Councillors Best, Heywood, Lazenby, Shott, Smith and Tate, accompanied by the Clerk.
- 1.2 See the checklist attached as Appendix 1 to these minutes.

2. Apologies

There were apologies from Ward Councillor Steve York.

3. Declarations of interest in items on the agenda

Councillor Schott declared an interest in item 10.5 – Work to paint the railings around the main part of the village green, and item 10.6 – Repair of the concrete post opposite the Buck Inn.

4. Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the meeting on 2-Jun-2015 were agreed to be a true record of the meeting.

5. Matters arising from previous meetings

- 5.1 Neither Councillor Best nor the Clerk has yet received a letter from Phil Haynes about the trees between Town Farm Field and Hampass.
It is understood that Darlington Borough Council has had the trees inspected by another expert, who has advised that they are unsafe.
- 5.2 It was agreed that the next location for the vehicle-activated speed sign will be Darlington Road.
The Clerk will write to two residents of Hill House Lane to explain why it has not yet been possible to deploy the speed sign on Hill House Lane. **ACTION:** A Mackenzie
- 5.3 One defibrillator is now in place in the centre of the village. The other defibrillator cabinet has still to be installed on the front wall of the village hall.
The defibrillator awareness and CPR training sessions will take place in September. **ACTION:** A Mackenzie
- 5.4 There was no news about the bus service, which is now running on one day per week.
- 5.5 The Northumbria in Bloom summer judging visit will take place at 1:30 p.m. on Wednesday 15-Jul-2015.
The Clerk will write a letter to Darlington Borough Council's Street Scene Team thanking them for their help in preparing the village for the judging visit. **ACTION:** A Mackenzie
- 5.6 The hedge in front of the Rectory has been cut.
- 5.7 The community composting facility is continuing to operate without any major problems. A local farmer has emptied bay 4 and the woody material that had built up beside the facility has been moved to the middle of Town Farm Field and burned.
- 5.8 The Clerk has still to investigate the costs and styles of benches that could be installed in recognition of retired parish councillors.

6. Sadberge Summer Festival

- 6.1 The Sadberge Summer Festival took place on Saturday 21-Jun-2015. It was a good day, despite the weather.

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- 6.2 The Northern Echo's article about the festival was disappointing.
- 6.3 The Parish Council approved a payment of £400 for the North Tyneside Steelband's performances at the festival.
- 6.4 The Clerk will write a letter of thanks to the Festival Organiser and Festival Committee.
ACTION: A Mackenzie

7. Brick bus shelter

- 7.1 The Parish Council considered a suggestion that the brick bus shelter should be converted into a store for festival equipment.
- 7.2 The following points were made during the discussion:-
- Darlington Borough Council would be prepared to consider transferring ownership of the bus shelter to the Parish Council.
 - The bus shelter is still used by children waiting for school buses.
- 7.3 It was decided to take no action on this subject at present.

8. Bonfire Night fireworks display

A Sadberge resident has agreed in principle to taking the role of Bonfire Night Event Organiser. Councillor Tate will check that the resident is happy with the remit for the role.

ACTION: Councillor Tate

9. Hanging baskets

- 9.1 Two local residents have expressed concerns that the hanging baskets on the village green pose a safety hazard. The following points were made during the discussion:-
- The concern is that watering the flowers in the hanging baskets involves going up a ladder, while if the hanging baskets are lowered sufficiently to allow them to be watered from ground level then there is a risk of people banging their heads on them.
 - At present, the hanging baskets have been lowered to allow them to be watered from ground level.
 - It is possible to use a hand-operated pump connected to a long nozzle to water hanging baskets from ground level.
- 9.2 It was agreed to provide the Garden Group with a suitable hand-operated pump and to reimburse the Garden Group for buying flowers for the hanging baskets (on presentation of the receipts) up to an overall total of £80.
ACTION: A Mackenzie

10. Maintenance of Parish Council property

- 10.1 Ernie Lowther will refurbish the benches in and around Sadberge. It was agreed to reimburse him for reasonable expenses for materials.
- 10.2 Ernie Lowther will replace the wooden post that has gone missing from the edge of the village green in front of the Old Post Office. It was agreed to reimburse him for reasonable expenses for materials.
- 10.3 Ernie Lowther will arrange for the notice board near the brick bus shelter to be varnished and for the gold lettering to be refreshed, provided that the total cost is no more than the budget agreed by the Parish Council.
- 10.4 Ernie Lowther will obtain a quote or estimate for the refurbishment of the "Sadberge" plaque. The plaque will need to be taken down so that it can be properly dried out and so that the work can be carried out indoors.
- 10.5 Councillor Schott has still give the chainsaw carvings another coat of decking oil.
ACTION: Councillor Schott
- 10.6 Councillor Schott has cleaned and repainted the railings around the main part of the village green and repaired the concrete post and fence rail opposite the Buck Inn.
Councillor Schott left the meeting.
It was agreed that the work had been done to a good standard.
Councillor Schott returned to the meeting.

11. Parish Council land and property

Discussion of the issues identified during the inspection tour of Parish Council land and property was deferred until the next meeting.

12. Allocation of the old age pensioners' bungalows in Sadberge

Ward Councillor Doris Jones informed the Parish Council that applications for council housing need to be made via the COMPASS on-line system. Allocation of council housing in the whole of the Tees Valley is made on a points-based system based on needs, which can include "quality of life" issues such as being able to obtain support from family members. Ward Councillors Brian Jones and Doris Jones can help people to compose their applications.

13. Accounts and Annual Report for 2014-15

13.1 The Clerk reported that the External Auditor is unhappy with two aspects of the Parish Council's Annual Return.

- The 2015-16 precept and Council Tax Support Grant were received during the 2014-15 financial year, so they should be included in the 2014-15 accounts and Annual Return.
- The Parish Council had not paid for the defibrillator cabinets by 31-Mar-2015, so they should not be included in the fixed assets reported in the Annual Return.

The External Auditor will be making a charge of £30 for raising the first of these issues.

The Clerk does not agree with the External Auditor on these issues, but had prepared revised accounts for 2014-15 and had amended Section 1 of the Annual Return.

13.2 The Parish Council approved the revised accounts for the year ended 31st March 2015.

13.3 The Parish Council approved the revised statement of Accounts in Section 1 of the Annual Return for the year ended 31st March 2015.

13.4 It was decided not to appeal against the £30 charge being levied by the External Auditor.

13.5 The Internal Auditor, Megan Myszka, presented her report on the 2014-15 financial year. Her overall conclusion was that the Parish Council's accounts were adequate. She made the following suggestions:-

- Order the budget and annual accounts transactions consistently so a quick comparison can be completed line by line
- Complete a variance analysis between the budget and actual to highlight any significant variance. This will assist in the budget planning for future years.
- Create Clerk procedures in case of Clerk unavailability. Once written there needs to be a procedure review process implemented, similar to the risk register review process.

14. Insurance

14.1 The Parish Council decided to include the defibrillators and their cabinets in the insurance policy rather than carrying its own risk for these items.

14.2 The Parish Council decided to continue with the current insurance arrangements – a group insurance policy arranged by Darlington Borough Council – and approved the insurance premium payment of £262.02.

15. Publication scheme

The review of the Parish Council's publication scheme was deferred until the next meeting.

16. Planning

The Parish Council noted the outcome of the following planning application:-

- Granted 15/00429/FUL Erection of a first floor extension over the existing garage and conversion of the garage to a habitable room at 24 Norton Road.

17. Cleveland Local Councils Association (CLCA)

There was no report from the CLCA meeting held on Wednesday 8-Jul-2015.

18. North Villages PACT

- 18.1 Darlington Borough Council is going to put white lines around the corners in St. Andrew's Park to discourage people from parking in inappropriate places.
- 18.2 Ward Councillor Brian Jones has spoken to the Acting Superintendent of Durham Constabulary's Traffic Unit, who will be attending the Middleton St. George PACT meeting being held at 6 p.m. on Wednesday 29-Jul-2015.

19. Payments

The Parish Council approved the following payments:-

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| • Painting the railings around the main part of the village green | £318.00 |
| • Repairing the concrete post opposite the Buck Inn | £264.00 |

20. Correspondence

The Parish Council noted the following correspondence:-

- Letter from the Tees Valley Rural Community Council about community transport in Stockton and Darlington.

21. Agenda items for the next meeting

No agenda items were proposed for the next meeting.

22. Date of the next meeting

The next meeting of Sadberge Parish Council will be held at 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday 15-Sep-2015.

Alastair Mackenzie
Clerk to Sadberge Parish Council

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 14th JULY 2015.

I hereby certify that these minutes are a true record of the meeting.

Signed: Councillor L Tate _____ Date _____