

Lartington Parish Council

Minutes of Meeting held on July 11th 2017

Present

Mr. Campion, Mrs Parsons Munn, Mrs Cross, Mrs Stephenson, Mr Whetstone. Mr Jerred (Clerk).
Mr. Harris (DCC Heritage Officer)

01. Recording of the meeting

The Chair opened the meeting by enquiring whether anyone present intended to make a recording of the meeting. No one had such an intention.

02. Apologies

The clerk reported that Mrs. Hinchliffe and Mr. Crawford had submitted apologies due to important personal commitments. It was unanimously resolved that these be accepted and approved.

03. Disclosures of Interest

There were none.

04. Conservation Area Issues

The chair opened the discussion by welcoming Mr Harris to the meeting and outlining the concerns which she had previously raised with Mr Harris in a preliminary exchange of emails - copied below. Mr. Harris accepted that some of our concerns regarding the importance of the relationship between the Hall and the village were valid. He agreed that the hazel wicket fencing at Stable Lodge created a hard and unsatisfactory boundary with a very unsatisfactory visual impact and stated that he hoped to raise this with the landowners. He argued that the owners of the Hall had completed other works to a very high standard and with due regard to the listed nature of the building and was hopeful, therefore, of a positive outcome.

In regard to the proposed electric gates adjacent to Stable Lodge, he understood that these had now been removed, that planning permission would certainly be needed for such a structure and that any proposals would need to take into account the nature of the Conservation Area and local Historic Listings.

Mrs Parsons Munn also raised the recent application for a new gate and piers at the Old Station, which the Council had supported and which appeared to reference the railway heritage satisfactorily. Mr Harris defended his decision to object to this, arguing that the proposed structure was too grand for what had effectively been a railway goods yard.

The Clerk then raised the issue of the aqueduct across the old railway line. Although this had had some renovation work done in recent times and reportedly had been inspected and found in good order about three years ago, it was now leaking quite badly. Mr Harris agreed to refer this to appropriate colleagues.

Mrs Parsons Munn closed discussion by thanking Mr Harris for his attendance and for the manner in which he had dealt with our concerns.

04. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on May 9th were read and signed by the Chairman as a true record of the proceedings of that meeting.

05. Matters Arising

- a. Flooding on Green Lane - the Clerk reported that he had had no response from either Cllr. Bell or DCC Officers in regard to this. Disappointment was expressed at this. Mrs Parsons Munn reported that some work had evidently been done and was hopeful that this would address immediate problems but she questioned whether proper monitoring and maintenance procedures were being put in place. It was agreed that the Clerk should write to Cllr. Bell re-emphasising our concerns and requesting that he intervene to ensure that DCC officials do meet with us.

- b. Defibrillator - the Clerk reported that new pads had been fitted. He also reported on exchanges with Paul Brolly of NEAS in regard to ongoing maintenance of the equipment and that he had raised the possibility of a refresher course in its use. Mr Brolly was intending to liaise with Cotherstone PC and he had suggested that if Cotherstone was prepared to host such a course then we would happily support it but that we would arrange one ourselves if necessary.

06. Items of Urgent Business

There was no urgent business.

07. Principal Correspondence

- a. Various emails routinely circulated
- b. Pensions Regulator - Declaration of Compliance now completed
- c. CDALC - correspondence dealing with training course, the Charter, Transparency Fund and Subscriptions.

08. Statement of Accounts

The clerk reported that there was £1876.61 in the current account and £368.49 in the Deposit Account.

The Clerk reported that the Internal Audit had now been completed by Mrs Botterill and that documents were now with BDO.

He also reported that we were able to claim a further grant for ongoing maintenance of the website and it was agreed that this should be prepared.

09. Accounts to be paid

Hall Hire	£15
HMRC	£40
Clerks Salary	£160
Stamps	£16.66

10. PACT and Speedwatch

Mrs Parsons Munn reported that the response to our request for volunteers to support Speedwatch was very disappointing. It was a requirement of our agreement with Durham Police that we conduct two exercises per month and she asked that members be prepared to support Mr Crawford and herself, most being prepared to do so.

11. Footpath and Highway Issues

- a. Cemetery Signage - Mrs Stephenson and Mrs Cross reported that there was some confusion being created by new signage to Grey Close and Dairy Cottage. The "Private Road" sign made no mention of the Cemetery and they reported that some visitors were confused as to whether they were allowed access - although this is a Public Bridleway and pedestrian access to the cemetery is permitted. It was agreed that the Clerk refer this to the RC Diocese.
- b. Footpath 43 - it was reported that there was a significant pothole at the entrance to the field immediately after the gate to the new diversion. It was suggested that this be easily redressed with a bucket of soil and the clerk agreed to refer the matter to the DCC Footpath Officer.

12. Planning Matters

The Clerk reported that he had received notification that recent applications at Tower House, the Coachhouse and Lartington Hall Gates had all been permitted.

There were no further applications.

13. Date of Future Meetings

September 12th November 14th January 9th 2018

Note to Bryan Harris outlining our concerns regarding the protection of the Conservation Area

It is a matter of record that the Hall and village are synonymous with one another. Without the Hall, the estate style nature of the village would not exist. Indeed, the Conservation Area Character Appraisal states "Lartington Hall itself contributes as much for its historic connections to the village as it does for its architectural merit." Whilst we were grateful for your recent intervention in regard to the need for planning permission, my Council feels that recent developments together with the evident desire of the current owners to erect large electric gates, presumably with a substantial fence to match, signifies a partitioning of the Hall from the village which contradicts the history and traditions of both and threatens the open character of the area.

In addition, we feel much of the timber boundary treatment used to enclose Stable Lodge is inconsistent with the Conservation Area Character Appraisal which recommendations included the protection of " views out of, into and across the conservation area" and to "protect traditional boundary treatments throughout the conservation area and encourage the future containment and definition of space through the use of estate fencing and stone walls rather than alternative materials".