

READ PARISH COUNCIL

08/07/2020

A meeting of the Parish Council was held held digitally on Zoom on Wednesday 8th July, 2020 at 7.00p.m.

Present: Chairman: Councillor Hacking
Councillors: Anderson, Greenhough, Pollard, Ridge

In attendance: Lesley Foster (Clerk)

0 members of the public attended.

1. Apologies for absence – Apologies were received from Councillors Bennett, Collinge, and Hanson.

2. Declarations of Councillors' Interest and dispensations

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

3. To approve the minutes of the previous parish council meeting held on 10th June 2020 – the minutes were approved.

4. Matters arising from the above minutes not on the agenda – regarding items 11k) and 11m), the dog bags, the notice suggested has been put up, and the stock of dog bags is now running low. Monitoring will continue until the September meeting and no new bags will be purchased before then. Also, the general waste bins currently lacking dog waste stickers ought to have these stickers.

One bin in the area had been temporarily covered for some unknown reason, but is now uncovered.

Simonstone Parish Council had been discussing the removal and relocation of one of their bins to Woodhead Road and Woodside Road, but this is now going to be placed in a different location, so if a bin is desired at Woodhead Road it will be up to Read Parish Council to place one there.

Regarding the missing footpath sign that had been on one of the finger posts, Councillor Pollard has discovered who has the sign, and will collect it from them.

5. Public participation:

- There were no queries from the public on this occasion.

6. Borough Councillor's Report – Councillor Bennett was not present, but had passed on the following report via email:

“I have nothing to report as far as Borough council is concerned save to say we are having zoom meetings. I along with other councillors have lobbied our MP Nigel Evans registering our objections to the possible take over of RVBC by the larger Blackburn Council. We have strongly voiced our objections to this.”

7. Clerk's Report - none

8. Reports from external meetings –

Simonstone Parish Council – Simonstone Parish Council have discussed the allotment road funding and would like to arrange a meeting between councillors from both councils and the other interested parties in order to further the discussions on this matter. The council also supported the recent footpath application relating to the Martholme Greenway. The issue of creating a dog exercise area was not discussed.

9. Playground:

a) **To receive the playground inspection report** – the playground is still closed and padlocked.

b) **Repairs and maintenance** – there is still some outstanding work that the lengthsman has not completed. Councillor Hanson will be requested to enquire about this, and in addition the Clerk will write to the clerk for Sabden Parish Council who coordinates the lengthsman scheme to ask for complete information about the outstanding jobs the lengthsman has on his list.

10. Allotment Management Committee report – A plot has been let to a new tenant, as the existing tenant according to the records claims it is no longer their plot. Some asbestos cement was discovered on that allotment, and the estimate for paying for removal is at least several hundred pounds, and may be more, as the service may need to be offered to other plot holders who have asbestos present on their plot. The Clerk noted that the council is not insured for councillors to remove asbestos personally.

There have been two resignations from the allotment committee, and the vacancies may be difficult to fill until a physical meeting is able to be held, as a number of the allotment holders do not use the internet.

11. Decision Items

a) **Website upgrade** – the Clerk had emailed Simonstone’s Clerk about their recent website upgrade, but Simonstone’s Clerk was not aware of any technical details of how this worked. The Clerk is able to use a content management system to create a new website, but would need to find out what precisely the role of RVBC’s IT support is in the existing system first to ensure that it would be possible to change everything over correctly. If a new website is created, it can also be created with the new accessibility guidelines in mind.

b) **Governance review** – the risk assessment was reviewed to ensure it was still accurate.

RESOLVED: The existing risk assessment document is accurate and no changes are required, except that some references to the name of the previous Clerk need to be changed to “the Clerk” or to the name of the current Clerk.

c) **Read Motor Bodies** – The Environmental Health Officer has been in touch with Read Motor Bodies regarding some waste oil on their premises, and had written to them twice regarding this issue. They are monitoring the situation.

The letter previously drafted had not yet been sent. However, Councillor Hacking had had a conversation with the owner of Read Motor Bodies which covered many of the letter’s points. The best course of action was discussed.

RESOLVED: To redraft the letter to read “further to the conversation with Councillor Hacking” and to allow until the end of the full six month period that was given in the original letter that was sent, and to say that the council will “seek advice regarding termination of the lease” if RMB are in breach of the lease at that time, and to send it after allowing councillors to view the draft.

d) **Repair work by lengthsman to walkway** – Councillor Hanson had passed on a number of pictures of the walkway, which were displayed at the meeting. The lengthsman is pricing a potential repair. There was some question over whether the walkway may be LCC’s responsibility. The Clerk will find this out.

If there is money left after dealing with the walkway, the stile at the bottom of Read Wood needs repairs. It was suggested that the lengthsman is asked to price this up too.

e) **Adoption of telephone kiosk** – the Clerk had written regarding the progress on this and had received a response, which was displayed at the meeting. The response indicated that a new consultation is in progress and that the council would once again need to express its intent to adopt the kiosk by the new deadline.

f) Cricket Club lease review – there was discussion of the lease.

RESOLVED: As a gesture of goodwill, due to the coronavirus, not to require the cricket club to pay rent during this financial year only. Normal rent conditions will resume next year.

g) Football Club lease review – there was discussion of the lease.

RESOLVED: As a gesture of goodwill, due to the coronavirus, not to require the football club to pay rent during this financial year only. Normal rent conditions will resume next year.

h) Cricket Club proposal – the Cricket Club's representative had sent some plans to the Clerk, which were circulated to the councillors. There was discussion of the plans sent and a number of concerns with those plans.

RESOLVED: The Clerk will write to the Cricket Club regarding the concerns and suggesting a meeting between representatives of the council and the Cricket Club.

i) Village Hall update – The village hall had sent the following report:

Update on Read and Simonstone Village Hall

The Village Hall was forced to close in March due to lockdown restrictions. The Trustees felt that this enforced closure could be put to good use whilst there were no user groups using the building. Since May, Trustees and volunteers have undertaken the following work:

- Replacement of the Hub floor – as councillors may know, the old floor was uneven and presented a potential trip hazard. The old floor has been removed and repairs carried out to the floor joists which were partly damaged due to damp ingress. New floorboards have been laid and we hope to have a carpet fitted once decorating has been completed. Other work carried out included the installation of 7 additional electrical sockets and central heating pipe insulation. See attached photograph on next page, showing progress to date.
- A telephone line was installed earlier this month, so the Hall now has WiFi throughout which will be free to all users.
- Renewal of the kitchen. We have removed the old kitchen (see attached photo) and are currently in discussions with several kitchen companies about the re-design of the kitchen. Once a suitable design has been chosen, the kitchen will either be installed by Trustees/volunteers or the supplier.
- Plans are being drawn up for the Community Garden & Car Park (formerly allotments). Planning permission will be required to drop the existing kerb to create a new entrance from East View and we hope that Read Parish Council will support our application.
- Read & Simonstone Help and Assist. The VH Trustees have co-ordinated a group of volunteers (around 60 at the peak of the health crisis) that is helping approximately 40 households currently isolating. Help given included collecting prescriptions, shopping, dog walking and friendly phone calls. This informal help has been really appreciated and may continue into the future.

Apart from the kitchen, the funding for all the improvement work is being paid for from reserves. As we have no income from lettings, our financial position is weaker but we do benefit from those residents who generously donate £5 per month so that we can continue to offer this vital resource to our villages.

It is hoped that the Hall can re-open in September.

The Trustees welcome any support Read Parish Council can offer in any way to support your Village Hall. Also, should any Parish Councillor wish to view the on-going works, please feel free to come in, if the front door is open.

There was discussion of the contents of this report, especially the section about volunteers dealing with the coronavirus situation. Councillor Hacking had received a further email from a Village Hall representative stating that 21 of the 40 households being helped were in Read, and providing some details about the nature of that support. The hall is hoping to open again in September. Once the guidance permits it, it is hoped that council meetings can return to taking place in the hall.

j) Playground – There was discussion of whether to reopen the playground based on the current government guidance. Complying with the guidance would require a high level of monitoring and staffing which it would be difficult for the council to provide.

RESOLVED: To keep the playground closed at the present time, and to update the notice on the gates.

k) Car park flooding issues – Councillor Hacking has been in touch with John Lofthouse, and he is planning to perform some work on the car park this week. It has not yet been done but should be done within the next few days.

l) Payment for Zoom meetings – the council meetings are currently being held via Zoom using the Clerk's premium Zoom account, which enables the meetings to last for longer than 40 minutes. The cost of premium Zoom is roughly equivalent to the typical cost of room hire for a physical meeting.

RESOLVED: To reimburse the Clerk £20 for council use of premium Zoom for two months.

m) Allotment road – the condition of the road is good, with a little wear due to the car park flooding issue and also some wear at the corner. Councillor Anderson has put up a sign asking people to use the full width of the road to reduce wear on any one part. Continued maintenance of the road will be required to prevent future deterioration.

n) Allotments – there is some fencing on one allotment that may need maintenance, but it is not the council's responsibility to pay for this. Councillor Anderson is trying to arrange a date for the annual allotment inspections. Regarding the asbestos issue that was discussed under item 10), more information was needed before agreeing to pay for professional removal. In the meantime, as asbestos cement is less risky than regular asbestos and only produces dust when handled in certain ways, Councillor Anderson volunteered to cover the asbestos with a suitable wrapping, at his own risk, using appropriate safety gear and not doing more than is permitted under health and safety guidelines for a trained member of the public to attempt themselves without a licence on this type of asbestos.

o) Gratuity for internal auditor – a gratuity is typically paid to Geoff Lambert, the appointed internal auditor, for his work.

RESOLVED: To pay a gratuity of £60 to Geoff Lambert, the internal auditor for the 2019/2020 accounts.

p) Appointment of internal auditor for 2020/2021 – there was discussion of the appointment of the auditor for the coming financial year.

RESOLVED: To appoint Geoff Lambert as the internal auditor for 2020/2021.

12. Correspondence – the application form for the Concurrent Functions Grant had been received. The Clerk will fill this out in due course.

13. Planning Applications/Decisions/Enforcements – There was one planning application received since the time of the last minutes, as follows:

Application 3/2020/0379 95 Whalley Road Read BB12 7RP

Proposed garden room building with ancillary store to front garden.

Read Parish Council Planning Committee

No objections to this application

14. Finance & Accounts:

a) Payments

15/6/2020	Insurance payment to Came & Company	£346.95
25/6/2020	LF Salary May 2020	£242.22

b) Income

30/6/2020	HMRC VAT 2019-2020	£439.80
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c) Bank reconciliation as at 31st May, 2020

Opening Balances 01.04.20			
Community Account	£2,776.49		
Business Saver Account	£14,575.13		£17,351.62
Add: Receipts			£10,801.03
Less: Payments			£14,255.00
Balance			£13,897.65

15. Items for the next agenda

- **Website update**
- **Read Motor Bodies**
- **Cricket Club proposal**
- **Lengthsman and footpath repairs**
- **Playground**
- **Car park**
- **Dog bags**
- **Ordering of new bin**

The meeting ended at 9:30 pm.