

**Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Sowerby Parish Council
held in Thirsk and Sowerby Town Hall,
on Thursday 14th March 2013.**

Present: Cllr. W. Austin, Cllr. P. Bardon, Cllr. P. Beadle, Cllr. D. Bentley, Cllr. P. Chapman, Cllr. G. France, Cllr. S. Hoyland, Cllr. M. Robson, (Chairman) and Cllr. E. Storm.

In Attendance. S. Minting, Darlington and Stockton Times and three members of the public. PCSO Nigel Warby, NY Police.

Members of the Public. A request was made that the main points from the Annual Parish meeting be posted on the website and notice boards.

1. Apologies were accepted from Cllrs. A. Turner, D. Wood and County Councillor N. Huxtable.

2. To approve and sign the minutes of the previous meeting held on 14th February 2013. The minutes were approved, with one amendment in Item 5 'The so called bedroom tax being brought in on April 1st 2013 would affect the Housing Benefits System and social housing', and signed.

3. North Yorkshire Police.

PCSO Warby gave a comprehensive report which indicated a lessening of incidents and a reduction of anti social behaviour. The Chairman asked that the matter of straying horses off Gravel Hole Lane be dealt with before a serious incident occurs. There had been numerous complaints.

4. To receive the report from County Councillor N. Huxtable on items of relevance to Sowerby and Thirsk.

There was no report from Cllr. Huxtable who was ill and unable to attend. A letter of thanks for his 4 years of service would be sent at a time near the end of his term of office.

5. To receive reports from District Councillors.

A 37 year old female had been prosecuted by HDC for fraudulently claiming £22,500 worth of benefits.

The Chairman agreed to find out more information about a 2.26% increase in Council Tax in Sowerby.

6. To Discuss Matters Arising.

6.1 School Provision as a result of Sowerby Gateway. There would be a full consultation between the Education Authority, the County Council and the schools on how the money is spent on school provision and to agree what is needed, at a later stage of the Sowerby Gateway Project. By then the need will have been identified.

6.2 Town End Roundabout. This roundabout which is in need of painting, will be improved in line with improvements in the locality as a result of the Chapel Street development and the first phase of the Sowerby Gateway roads development. The Chairman reminded the meeting that all infrastructure, including slip roads at the A168, works to Gravel Hole Lane and works in the town would have to be complete six months after the first house is occupied.

6.3 Homechoice and Homelessness. Helen Fielding, Housing Manager, HDC had been invited to attend and address a future meeting of the Council.

- 6.4 *Dog Fouling.* More spray painted signs would be put on the footpaths in a wider area. A request was made that perpetrators be identified and if possible photographs taken as evidence. Let HDC know or the Clerk.
- 6.5 *Work to resurface part of the A61.* Part of the resurfacing had been done.
- 6.6 *Re-cobbling the Market Place.* Work had been delayed by inclement weather.
- 6.7. *Road to Tip.* Repairs to the road would commence very shortly.
- 6.8 *Works to Trees.* A replacement lime tree had been planted to replace the one which had to be felled on Front Street. An inspection of the tree outside Cllr. Bentley's had shown that it was not in need of any work.
- 6.9 *Trees Obscuring Lamp Posts.* The owners of trees would be contacted again.
- 6.10 *Litter.* This was a major issue around parts of the village and the employment of someone for a few hours a week might be looked into in the future. Parked vehicles obstruct the work of the mechanical sweeper and advance notice for sweeping may be investigated.
- 6.11 *Overgrown hedge in Blakey Lane.* Area 2 were going to approach the owner.
- 6.12 *Former BT Phone Box near the Crown and Anchor.* A reply from BT indicated that a petition of 50 signatures had requested the box's removal citing incidents of abuse and anti social behaviour. BT would be asked for a copy of the petition.

7 Planning Applications.

7a Decisions.

See updated pro-forma.

7b New Applications.

See updated pro forma.

8. Financial Matters.

8a Receipts. Approved as tabled.

8b Payments for approval. Approved as tabled.

- Notice had been received that the processing fee for the payroll will increase to £15 per payroll run because of the extra work which will be required for the new requirements from HMRC Real Time Information, although at this time it is unclear what the full implications will be.

- Notice of an increase of 1.5% (approx 20p per hour) for the rent of the Town Hall.

9. To discuss CIL

The Community Infrastructure Levy CIL will replace Section 106 in April 2014. It will raise funds from new building and new extensions to fund community infrastructure. The current proposal is that there will be a charge of £85 per square metre for private market housing and £10 per square metre for agricultural buildings. The matter is in the first phase of a public enquiry and it was felt that these rates were too high, especially as there was such a need to promote more building. 14% of monies raised would be available to a bidding Parish if there was no Parish Plan. Hambleton District Council would act as the collecting agency and pass funds to the County Council.

10. To Receive Correspondence.

- Users of Thirsk and Sowerby Town Hall park in the Conservative Club car park at their own risk as the former arrangement whereby there was a business agreement between the two organisations has now ceased.

- David Tucker. Sowerby Parochial Hall has agreed to become an emergency rest centre in the case of need.
- RAF. Notice of increased aircraft movement from RAF Leeming during March. Some night flying and low flying.
- Thirsk Cricket Club. Invitation to become a match ball sponsor @ £30 inclusive of VAT per ball.

11. Website and Electronic Communication.

The Chairman reported to members that on the 28th February, a Facebook page purporting to belong to Sowerby Parish Council was launched. **This was done without authorisation.** In the 5 days that it was running, undesirable comments were posted. The perpetrator withdrew the site when challenged, but Councillors were asked for their opinions as to if this had been the correct course of action. A meeting had been held with the Communication's Committee, Cllrs. Hoyland, Robson and Wood and the Clerk and the Vice Chairman Cllr Austin, to clarify the position. Cllr. Hoyland said it had resulted from a misunderstanding and had been an attempt to reach out to younger people via Social Media. Cllrs. Hoyland and Wood would report back to the Council in six months.

It was agreed that it was more important that the website was improved and that there would be no Facebook or Twitter at the moment. If ever Social Media was used there would need to be full control over what was posted. Guidance would be sought.

12. To Receive Reports from Sub-Committees.

Skate Park. Cllr. France reported that the Committee was looking for volunteers to open and lock the gate. The Woodland Group had volunteered to plant trees on the site.

Thirsk and Sowerby Town Hall. Cllr. Bardon asked if a financial risk assessment had been undertaken before plans were made by the Town Hall to withdraw from the agreement with the Conservative Club to pay for parking for Town Hall users. He questioned if there might be implications for both Thirsk and Sowerby Councils as there may be a loss of revenue from groups no longer willing to hire the Town Hall because of parking issues. Cllr. Robson reported that groups who had already moved had done so because their group was unviable and to his knowledge only one user group felt that the parking issue was a problem. £3000 per annum was a lot of money to find for the parking agreement and difficulties in communication between the two bodies over a long period of time had compounded the matter. Cllr. Bardon felt that user groups should have been consulted.

13. Any Other Business.

- Illegal Parking on the Greens. Signs would be placed on cars illegally parked on the Village Greens, warning drivers that they risked prosecution.
- It was disturbing that Estate Agents continued to refer to Sowerby as part of Thirsk.
- A suggestion was made that CCTV should be installed on the approaches to Blakey Lane to gain evidence for instances of damage to Blakey Bridge. The Chairman reported that usually offenders have been identified.
- The triangle of land in front of Villa Place has to remain as an open green space in separate ownership and will not be developed as part of the Cherrygarth project.
- Play Area Refurbishment. Work was mostly complete but the weather had interrupted the planned painting. The bank had been rotavated and seeded. The picnic table, old roundabout and springer had not been

retained as none were fit to re-use and a 1915 penny and an old glass bottle found during the course of the work were handed to the Clerk for safe keeping. It had been agreed to skim the wet pour under the bucket swing as the surface needed repairing, at a cost of £950 + VAT. The play area would open as planned for the school holidays but there was uncertainty as to how users could be kept off the seeded areas.

- It was suggested that the Office computer and printer might be replaced.

The next meeting will be held on April 11th 2013.

Chairman

Date