**RIBCHESTER PARISH COUNCIL**

**Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting on Monday 17 June 2024**

**PRESENT:**

**Parish Councillors:** Caunce, Cromie, Ellis, Finch, Mason & Yates

**Borough Councillor:** Barnsley

**Residents:** Six

**Apologies:** Cllr Dickinson**,**  A McLoughlin (Knowle Green).

**11 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:** None

**12 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:** The success of the Field Day Cricket Match on Greenside was reported and the information that 30-40 young people attended was welcomed, as was the information that there was a positive, supportive atmosphere. This led into a suggestion that there should be a Youth Club facility set up in the village. The practicalities of this were fully considered, and the previous existence of such groups (eg, SWYG at St Wilfrid’s Church) and the current involvement of young people in RATS was noted. Various problems were also referenced, not least the availability of adult residents who would have the time, interest and capacity to take on this responsibility.

Cllr Barnsley reported that he had already had discussions with Sarah Wells (RVBC) to arrange for the **Lancashire Youth Bus** to come to the village.

During the discussion it was proposed that a one-day pilot session be arranged, to judge the level of interest/engagement and to identify a core group of participants.

**ACTIONS:**

A1 - Council to support the proposal for the Youth Bus initiative; to follow with consideration of the level of interest and engagement.

A2 – To publicise to adult residents to review level of interest/availability to contribute to any Youth Projects being proposed for the village.

A3 – To engage with neighbouring villages to investigate levels/types of engagement elsewhere. To share information/experience.

**13 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**: The Minutes of the meeting of 20 May 2024 were confirmed and duly signed.

**14 MATTERS ARISING**:

**14**.1 (**Action** A1) It was noted that the previously anticipated possibility of a recurrence of anti-social behaviour over the Bank Holiday weekend had not materialised. The Police had been alerted to the possibility of local difficulties, but none occurred; probably related to the inclement weather over the holiday weekend.

**14**.2 (**Action** A4) Following the presentation of information about Public Rights of Way to the Council, the Chair and Mr Beary had met to discuss further. The document provided on the British Standards for Gaps, Gates and Stiles has been considered. The Ribble Rivers Trust (which has done some work on stiles etc,) has advised that the landowners are responsible and should be approached to sign to confirm this understanding.

Information from County Councillor Swarbrick confirmed that should the Parish Council become involved (eg, in repairing or renovating), that all future issues would be referred to the Council on a presumption of assumed responsibility. The advice was to avoid this situation and to make it clear that it is the landowners who remain responsible and not the Parish Council.

It was noted that any damage or deterioration to stiles, gates and gaps may be reported on-line via the ‘Love Clean Streets’ App. It was further reported that Mr McLaughlin in Knowle Green had replaced stiles on his land with gates (at a cost of £140 each).

In respect of Minute 5.3 it had been confirmed that the newly renewed Insurance Policy covered the work of volunteers (up to a maximum of`70 hours per week).

14.3 **MIN 88** & **Action** A7 – Plan to register Greenside as a Village Green. It was reported that a small sub-group had been formed and that the early stage plan has a Facebook page. It was clear that this nascent plan required further development – in terms of management, establishing that there is majority support in the village for such registration etc. The need to examine all possible positive and negative elements was stated.

**ACTION:**

A5 – further information to be obtained. Refer to next Council meeting.

**MIN 10.1** – It was reported that the new benches for the Millennium Garden had been delivered and installed. The improvement to the Garden was welcomed. It was also noted that the benches are very comfortable.

The other benches in the Village are to be the next to be attended to, either by repair, restoration (or removal if past improvement). Cllr Caunce reported that she had been in contact with RVBC which confirmed that it supplied the originals in the village, and whilst they will replace those beyond repair, it will not maintain them. An effort had been made in Ribchester to try and identify surviving residents who may have placed memorial plaques on benches but, to date, none has been found. Further efforts will be made to identify to identify to whom the benches were dedicated.

It was proposed that a Policy (recently researched by Cllr Mason) be adapted for use in Ribchester in respect of memorial benches, their placement and the identification of reasonable periods of a ‘right to remain’.

**ACTION:**

A6 – to present draft Policy to next Parish Councl meeting.

14.4 – Environmental Projects

14.4.1 The Council Chair was acknowledged and thanked for his idea for a Parish Council ‘presence’ in the Field Day Marquee to publicise the ‘Greening of Ribchester’ project. This had been well-received on Field Day and had generated other ideas and suggestions for further planting schemes, ‘re-wilding’ projects etc.

Grateful thanks were expressed to the children from school, Viki Mason and Julie Cunliffe for arranging and planting up the flower bed in the Millennium Garden.

14.4.2 The Chair had met with representatives of Ribble River Trust along the brooks that meet in Ribchester. There is a funding stream called the ‘Community Catchment Programme’ that may deliver some money to create some natural flood interventions along these tributaries. It was noted that interventions along Boyce’s Brook would be preferable as these would impact both flood zones on Ribblesdale Road and Greenside. The next stage is to engage landowners and RRT will continue to update us.

14.5 – Giant Hogweed Investation in Village

Following recent spraying of Giant Hogweed in and around the village and riverbank, there had been an incident of a dog falling ill after coming into contact with the treated plants. Although there had been a plan for spraying to be carried out by residents in the village, it was confirmed that this had not been done, given the very poor, wet weather conditions.

It had been further confirmed that RVBC had not undertaken any spraying or removal of the infestation. Councillor Barnsley confirmed that responsibilities were clear – RVBC had the duty to clear the riverbank, LCC roadside infestation removal. It was confirmed that local volunteers should leave matters to these formal systems.

It was noted, however, that this plant will not die back until September/October.

**ACTION**

A7 -Residents be informed via information on Facebook, Your Ribchester, PC Website and in the Notice Board. (Clerk + Cllr Mason.)

14.6 – Provision of SPIDS (traffic calming measures). This has been a regular item for several meetings, but the final part of the plan is still to be achieved. It was noted that there will be a cost to the village of £150 for each SPID installed (which will collect data for eight days). This remains an active item and will continue to be pursued.

14.7 – Public Right of Way - The Weind. A meeting had been held 0n site, between County Cllr Swarbrick, Cllr Barnsley and Cllr Yates. Cllr Swarbrick confirmed that the Right of Way would be confirmed in due course, but it would be some time before the ‘adoption’ of the walkway would be confirmed. The resurfacing would take place at some future point, yet to be confirmed.

It was noted that Sir Peter Openshaw had confirmed that he would, once again, write to LCC in support of the application.

**15 PLANNING APPLICATIONS:**

**Two applications from this week’s list were reported:**

3/2024/0246 – *Ribchester Arms* – Take away food service counter

3/2024/0041 – *Buckley Dene* – Partial demolition of building and remodelling and extension of two-storey building.

**The following updates of previous applications were given:**

3/2024/0226 – *Moorcock Farm* – Approved

3/2024/0006 – *Beck House,* Stoneygate Lane – No decision yet

3/2023/0974 – *Land adj to Knowle Hey,* Stoneygate Lane – No decision yet

3/2024/0190 – *Lower Alston Farm* - No decision yet

3/2024/0192 – *Higher Beck Farm* – Approved with conditions

**8 FINANCIAL MATTERS**

8.1 – Financial arrangement with B4RN project

It was reported that the proposed financial arrangements made to assist the project with the transfer of funds had been replaced by a direct link between the Project and RVBC. This was welcomed.

8.2 The Cash Book Summary was received, and noted.

8.3 It was **RESOLVED** to make the following payments:

SS Peter& Pauls Centre Room Hire X 2 for Meeting and Annual Meeting (May) £60

D S Groves – Clerk’s Salary mid-May to mid-June £461.40

Zurich Municipal (Insurance) £363

(Problem with HMRC payments not yet resolved) TBC

It was agreed that the Clerk should make enquiries about possible repairs needed for the laptop before any steps taken to replace the current one.

**9 VILLAGE MATTERS**:

9.1 An issue concerning the current environment in the area of the Stoneygate Lane allotments had been raised at the Annual Meeting, which had led to some enquiries being made about ownership of the land and the individual allotments. It had been discovered that the land is owned by the Woodford Estates and has a manging agent, neither of which had any continuing interest in the land. In the past, plots on the land had changed hands for payment and there was a belief among residents that they had title to the land. There was no resolution identified, but further information was to be sought.

This led to a discussion about some of the riverside allotments which did not appear to be currently ‘active’. Cllr Barnsley to enquire of RVBC of any known plans to update the long-established Tenancy Agreement (related to the riverside Allotments) which might provide some new guidance as to optimum levels of upkeep.

There being no other public business, the meeting closed at 9.15 pm