

Cloughton on Brock Parish Council

The minutes of the Parish Council Meeting that was held at Cloughton Memorial Village Hall on Wednesday 10th January 2024, commencing at 7.30pm.

Those Present

Councillor F.J. Fitzherbert-Brockholes – Chairman
Councillor E. Leach
Councillor S.M. Dewhurst
Councillor R. T. Eccles
Councillor D. Swift – Wyre
Councillor S. Turner – LCC
J.E. Hallas – Clerk

Legend Fires North-West Stages Rally

Prior to commencement of the formal business of the Council Mr. Mark Hothersall the Director of this Event presented to the Council a comprehensive briefing on the preparations being made for this event and specifically the communications with Parish residents. Mr. Hothersall explained that two stages pass through routes in the Cloughton Parish over the weekend's event. Residents have or will be visited, and arrangements and provisions explained about issues such as road closures, emergency services, medical emergencies, essential business activities and a myriad of other items that have been covered by the organisers in conjunction with LCC the Police and other agencies. All residents will receive a briefing brochure in late February or early March, with full details of the event plus Q and A information.

Council Meeting

- 01/24 The minutes of the meeting held at Cloughton Hall on Wednesday 4th October 2023 were resolved by the Council to be a true record.
- 02/24 Declarations of personal or prejudicial interest - None.
- 03/24 Planning Applications
- a) The Chairman asked if the Lower Mill Farm application for the erection of 6 holiday lodges was still pending. The Clerk informed that he had not received a formal closure letter for this application but would ascertain the current position. (*Post Meeting Note – Application Refused by Wyre Planning*)
- b) The Council discussed the invitation to consult re Planning Application 23/O1199/FUL for 2 detached bungalows at Beecham Place, Westfield Road. No objections were raised.

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- c) The Council briefly discussed the Planning Appeal for Braeden/K9 that is due to be undertaken by one of the Planning Inspectors based in Bristol. This will be a 'desk-top' inspection. The Clerk informed that he had re-submitted the Council's previous correspondence, he had also included a further note to reiterate the Council's position in this matter.
- d) The outline plans for a new retail park located between Garstang Road and the A6 by-pass, presented to the Council at its July meeting, have not yet been submitted for full application.

04/24 Finance

- (a) The Council discussed the receipts and payments made since the last meeting for the year ending March 31st, 2024. Copies of the Current Account statement detailing all receipts and payments were presented for scrutiny. All payments made since the last meeting were reviewed and approved. The Current Account was reconciled with the latest Bank Statement number 188, dated 27th December 2023, was approved, and signed by the Chairman.

05/24 Lancaster Canal Towpath

The Clerk explained that he had been approached by Councillor Turner with a proposal for a joint project with LCC and other neighbouring Parish Councils for the radical improvement of the Canal Towpath between Barton Grange and Garstang. This work will involve creating a hard walking surface for a distance of approximately 7 kilometers. Councillor Turner explained to the meeting the background work he has been doing with the Canal and Rivers Trust and the other interested parties, and the arrangements provisionally agreed for the leadership of the project and various sources of funding already pledged, firm or provisionally. The Council members present fully agreed that they will support the project, which they all agreed will provide the rapidly increasing number of residents with significant community Health and Leisure and Social well-being benefits. Councillor Turner informed that Barnacre PC had agreed to raise £8000 and Catterall PC £4000. These amounts are based on the approximate length of path through each Parish. Therefore Cloughton-on-Brock PC will need to contribute a further £8000. In addition to the Parish Council contributions the large bulk of the funding needed will be provided by the Lancashire Enterprise Fund and a Health and Leisure grant source.

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06/24 Parish Council – New Noticeboard

The Clerk informed that the Council's request to install a noticeboard adjacent to the entrance to the footpath that provides access to Woburn Way from Garstang Road (opposite the Brockholes Arms Pub) has now been agreed by Wyre Council. The Clerk confirmed that he had signed a 'Heads of Agreement' for Wyre Legal services. No rent is involved and the Parish council's only obligation is ensure the board is of good quality and both the board and surrounding hedge is kept tidy. It now remains for the Council to select a suitable product and arrange installation. Funding of approximately £1500.00 will need to be raised via precept.

07/24 Memorial Hall

The Clerk provided a brief update on the Memorial Hall refurbishment project. He explained that the Project Leader – Christina Campion had planned to attend this evening's meeting but was unwell and had instead provided a briefing note which will be distributed to members by email.

08/24 Annual Budget and Precept for 2024/2025

The Council discussed the draft budget statement prepared and distributed by the Clerk for members' comment. The Clerk explained that the past two years had seen greater demand placed on the Council's stretched resources. He pointed to the fact that Cloughton PC is and always has been an extremely prudent and very cautious Council. Cloughton Parish, unlike some Parishes, had never sought to build unnecessarily large reserves of funding but had always raised more or less just the amount needed each year. However, due to a variety of reasons at the end of this financial year the Council's carry forward reserve will be £3000.00 and this needs to be improved. The Council discussed all of the issues at great length, specifically Councillors' concerns about the increased cost-of-living pressures on families and others, which are well understood. In conclusion to this discussion, agreement was reached to increase the budget from the current £21,000 to £27,000 to provide sufficient funds to cover routine expenditure plus anticipated inflation increases and to provide some reserves for contribution to planned work at the Memorial Hall, and as contingency for unplanned arisings. In addition, the precept figure will include a further one-off amount of £8000.00 to cover the Parish Council's share of the Canal Towpath improvement project. The increase for 2024/25 will therefore result in the Parish Council's precept for a typical band D property increasing for that year by 62 pence per week. A resolution was raised by Councillor Eccles to raise a precept of £35,000.00, this was seconded by Councillor Fitzherbert-Brockholes, and unanimously supported by the other members present.

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09/24 The Wyre Area LALC meeting is scheduled for the 31st of January 2024.

10/24 The next Quarterly Meeting is booked for Wednesday 17th April 2024 at 7.30pm. The AGM will be held prior to this meeting.

Minutes prepared by: J.E. Hallas (Clerk)

Approved by:F. J. Fitzherbert-Brockholes (Chairman)

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