

Minutes of an Extra-ordinary Meeting of Strensall with Towthorpe Parish Council held on Tuesday 15th December 2009 in the Village Hall, Strensall.

Agenda Item 1 - Attendance: Parish Councillors P. Jesse (Chairman), K.. Marquis (Vice Chairman), R. Plant, Miss E. Blacklee, J. Scott, N. Smith, T. Young, J. Chapman, Mrs J. Smith, D. Baxter and Mrs S. Walker (Parish Clerk).

Agenda Item 2 – To receive and accept apologies for absence: Parish Councillors A. Swales, C. Chambers, I. Cuthbertson and Mrs S. Nunn.

As this meeting was on the last day of Mrs S. Walker's employment Cllr K. Marquis agreed to take the minutes of the meeting.

Agenda Item 3 – To discuss the current situation in connection with the recruitment of a Parish Clerk and decide actions: Cllr Jesse outlined the circumstances which had led to the present situation where Mrs Walker's resignation was effective from today's date and the person interviewed as replacement had indicated that her commitments had led her to withdraw her interest in the post.

Cllr Jesse advised councillors that there was a possibility of an offer to undertake the duties of the Parish Clerk from within the Parish Council and there may also be someone else who could be considered. Cllr Jesse was in consultation with YLCA regarding the procedure to be adopted to recruit a replacement as the advertising procedure had been already carried out.

The question of payment of salary to a Councillor was also being investigated. Cllr Plant stated that the offer from within was sensible and should be progressed if possible and proposed that the Recruitment Committee should make further investigations which would be brought back to the Council. Cllr J. Smith asked what progress had been made by Ward Councillor Wiseman who had offered to see if any of the City of York Council employees would be interested. Cllr Scott seconded the Cllr Plant's proposal but Cllr N. Smith indicated that the councillor concerned was a member of the Recruitment Committee and that there may be a conflict of interests. Cllr Marquis indicated that if necessary another councillor could be co-opted onto the committee to avoid any conflict of interests and with this amendment the vote for Councillor Plant's proposal was unanimous.

It was agreed that Councillor Marquis would deal with incoming correspondence and emails and pass them to other members of the council for attention. Councillor Jesse reminded all councillors that when communicating with outside bodies that he, as Chairman, must be kept informed of any communications.

Councillor Marquis wished to record his appreciation of the assistance provided by Councillor's Jesse and Chapman in the efficient way that equipment and records had been transferred from Mrs Walker's home to the new office. He also expressed thanks to Mrs Walker for all her assistance in ensuring the move went smoothly. Cllr Marquis also indicated progress on the current purchase of equipment and furniture for the office and that there was still money within the budget to complete the agreed items.

Agenda Item 4 – To examine the draft contracts for carrying out the duties of the Clerk to the Burial Authority and the provision of assistance to those carrying out the duties of the Parish Clerk and to agree the final versions: - The contract for the Clerk to the Burial Authority was considered first and with an amendment to clause 4 together with an alteration to the wording of the final paragraph this contract was agreed unanimously and duly signed by Councillor Jesse on behalf of the Cemetery Committee and by Mrs S. Walker. The contract would commence on 16th December 2009 and run initially for a period of twelve months when a review would take place.

Cllr J. Smith requested that Mrs S. Walker compile a comprehensive list of duties applicable to the post of Clerk to the Burial Authority and Cllr Jesse indicated that this was already in hand.

The Consultancy Contract for provision of assistance by Mrs S. Walker to both councillors who were carrying out the duties of the Parish Clerk and the new Parish Clerk when appointed was agreed unanimously by all members of the Parish Council without alteration, after Cllr N. Smith requested that due diligence be taken both by Councillors and the yet to be appointed Parish Clerk in regard to the amount of assistance required, and was duly signed by Cllr Jesse for the Parish Council and Mrs S. Walker. This contract would also commence on 16th December 2009 and would again run for a period of twelve months.

At this stage of the meeting Councillor Jesse presented Mrs S. Walker with a letter of thanks and her gratuity payment cheque for her long and faithful service to the Parish Council and all members of the Council present applauded this gesture.

Agenda Item 5 – To examine the draft terms of reference for the Leisure and Recreation Areas Working Group and agree the final version: The draft terms of reference which had been compiled by Councillor Plant were examined and a slight alteration to the wording of Clause 2b was agreed together with a similar alteration to Clause 2d.

Councillor Jesse requested that an additional requirement for the Group to consider was to create a working relationship with City of York Council in regard to the offer of funding under the Playbuilder scheme.

With the agreed alterations to Section 2, as indicated above, and the addition of the Playbuilder reference it was agreed unanimously that the Terms of Reference be adopted for the Leisure and Recreation Areas Working Group and that Cllr N. Smith would compile the Final version to be passed to Councillor Jesse for signature.

Agenda Item 6 – To receive a report concerning the need for purchase of wood chips for the Play Areas and decide actions arising: Cllr Scott outlined the need for additional wood chips to be spread on the play areas and it was proposed that he arrange purchase from Darren Baxter. Seconded by Cllr J. Smith. Cllr N. Smith queried the need for the contractor to carry out strimming and weed killing prior to spreading the wood chips but accepted that this was best left to the contractor for safety reasons.

There was no further business and the meeting closed at 20.20.

Signed

Date