**STRENSALL WITH TOWTHORPE PARISH COUNCIL**

The Village Hall, Northfields, Strensall, York YO325XW

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Chairman : Mr A H Fisher

**MINUTES OF AN PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD IN THE VILLAGE HALL ON TUESDAY 14th MARCH 2023 AT 7.15 PM**

**Councillors Present:** Andrew Bolton Chris Chambers Tony Fisher\*\* Lawrence Mattinson Susan Nunn Kevin Ogilvy Christopher Tetley

**In Attendance:** CYC Ward Cllr Paul Doughty Fiona Hill – Parish Clerk

**Public Present:** 2

\*\* City of York Councillor

1. **a) To receive apologies for absence given in advance of the meeting:** Wayne Wigley

**b) To consider the approval of reasons given for absence:** Resolved / Approved (Unanimous)

1. **To discuss the ordinary and casual vacancies:** The Parish Council had received one expression of interest, who would attend the Aprilmeeting to observe.
2. **To receive any declarations of interest under the Parish Council Code of Conduct or**

**Members register of interests:** Cllr Chamber – Grant requests Community Events Team and St Mary’s Church

Cllr Fisher - North Yorkshire Police Report

1. **a) To approve the minutes of the Parish Council meeting of 14th February 2023:**

Resolved / Approved (Unanimous)

**b) To endorse the approved Planning Committee minutes of 14th and 28th February 2023:**

Resolved / Endorsed (Unanimous)

1. **Public participation on any subject relating to the agenda:** Manor Park, Sheriff Hutton Road – sign on verge has been taken down.

Speed limit reducing **–** CYC Highways currently looking into this

Footpath between Manor Park and Village - NTR

**22/105 To receive matters raised by/with City of York Ward Councillors:** - Ward Grant match funding had bee agreed for repairs to bus shelter -Cllrs were hopeful that the Neighbourhood Plan would be approved by CYC Executive to proceed to referendum on Thursday 04th May 2023.-Cllr Mattinson had emailed before the meeting – “I have heard that the Government have asked the Councils of 240 cities within the UK to introduce trials of ‘Smart Cities’ where the Cities will be zoned as in Oxford where mass protests have taken place, which were not reported by main stream media at the behest of the Government. I would like our two Ward Councillors to comment on the trial plans for York, all of which should be fully minuted. I ask this question now to allow our Ward Councillors the opportunity raise this issue with their fellow appropriate CYC Councillors, if they themselves do not know the answer to my question”.

Cllr Doughty responded as follows *“My Group and indeed local association are not aware that the Government has made specific instruction but have asked Council’s to look at sustainable, active travel, local transport plans etc which is all part of the country’s move towards balancing the environment – net zero which all mainstream parties sign up to. CYC is in the process of developing plans and strategies though it  won’t have its Local Transport Plan in place for some time – and certainly not before the local elections.  My take is that smart cities / 15 minutes cities may not be as bad as some of the loudest conspiracy theorists claim for some locations but for York, smart and 15 minute city aims are thoroughly unworkable and certainly neither do I or our local party support them!*

*They may be an ideal for any new towns and/or major new developments that are built – why wouldn’t it be a good idea to have all local amenities such as schools, surgeries, shopping, access to public transport all within easy reach. But as I say, it would be a disaster here, particularly for Outer villages such as our own. The Conservative Group are against some of the policies already introduced by the current council in York and we’d roll some of those back so we certainly wouldn’t limit access for people to 15 minutes from their home.  We also rule out any form of congestion or zonal charging. A lot of the criticism referred to in the question, I believe, comes from places like Oxford, Bath and London. Those are choices by their local representatives and politicians, not forced by Government. Those local representatives will have to answer to their own electorate.*

*I can give you the response of our York Outer MP as an indication of what he has said to constituents who have asked some similar questions:-*

*I believe we should all strive to improve local connectivity and support businesses in our community but this should always be a choice. Since the 1950s, city planners have discussed the idea of urban villages. They have attempted (and failed) to create self-contained neighbourhoods which had all the amenities a family could desire, they ignored human nature. While residents appreciated the convenience of having amenities on their doorstep, they still wanted the option to travel further afield for entertainment and leisure. Furthermore, it contradicts the economic justification of large cities: the efficiency of large* *labour markets. Employers do not have to source their employees from the small pool near their premises and employees aren't limited to the choice of employers on their doorstep.*

*On a slightly larger scale, the South Korean government commissioned five satellite towns to be built around Seoul to ease crowding in the capital city. They assumed these towns would be self-contained and put effort into ensuring there were employment opportunities equal to the number of residents. However, subsequent research found that most people kept their jobs in Seoul and those from outside the satellite towns filled the local job vacancies.*

*Although I am sceptical of their success beyond theory, I do believe fifteen-minute cities have admirable aims of reducing emissions and an individual's carbon footprint. However, we must use the carrot not the stick to encourage the public to make changes.*

*At the heart of the planning system are the homes we live in, the schools our children go to and the shops that serve our communities. Through the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill, the Government is seeking to establish a new Infrastructure Levy which will ensure that communities have the local infrastructure that new development creates the need for. The levy will fund a variety of infrastructure ranging from GP surgeries and affordable housing to schools and roads. To provide transparency for local people about how levy proceeds are spent, local planning authorities will be required to prepare infrastructure delivery strategies.*

*It is my firm belief that local preference should be at the heart of development and infrastructure projects as at the end of the day it will impact residents the most which is why I welcome the Government reforming the planning system in a way that will give local people a stronger voice. For example, the introduction of design codes will ensure that clear rules are set locally about the design of new development.*

*Locally, I would have concern about smart city policy being adopted in York as it would disenfranchise those who have no choice but to drive to the city centre – similar to the blue badge restrictions I strongly oppose.*

*I am aware of much speculation and misinformation around these schemes which clearly needs to be addressed constructively and cohesively by local authorities. I strongly encourage you to write to the council to make your views on this matter clear and I would be very interested to hear their response.*

*I want to make it ardently clear, that in efforts to create a more sustainable society that is more interconnected and convenient, we must seek to avoid an overarching state. I am all in favour of encouraging lifestyle changes such as cycling, walking, or taking public transport in favour of driving in city centres which can cause unnecessary delays, however, these need to be personal choices.*

*I very much agree with our MP on this last paragraph. Indeed, I have been at West Offices today where there was an Executive Member for Transport meeting about the Plan for local walking and cycling in York. I put forward a case for an off-road cycle path from Strensall to Huntington and will be presenting a petition signed by our residents at Full Council next week. Giving people choice, not taking choice away is always my preference”.*

Cllr Fisher responded as follows – *“The smart cities initiative is entirely to do with making services more accessible by the use of digital information technology. An example would be having more real time information on bus services displayed at bus stops.*

*The “15 minute city” is an aspirational concept where all residents have all essential services within a 15 minute journey on foot or by bike. The whole concept is to reduce CO2 emissions by ensuring that all essential services are accessible without the use of motor vehicles. It is in no way intended to restrict the free movement of residents around the city or to time limit their right to remain in an area, it is aspirational and may not be fully achievable in some locations, but can influence planning decisions and the use of CIL/Section 106 payments from developers.*

*York’s barrier access review is entirely to assess how well the city is addressing the needs of those with disabilities to move around the city and to negotiate barriers put in place to prevent the unauthorised use of areas by vehicles.*

*None of these initiatives will prohibit residents from accessing any part of the city as they choose, though vehicular access may be restricted in a few locations.*

*The protests referred to in the question concerned Oxford’s introduction of an Low traffic Neighbourhood (LTN) linked to the 15 minute city concept in its Local Plan. Whilst York has recently expanded the foot streets area in the city centre and introduced The Groves LTN, vehicles are still allowed into these areas at certain times. The public can access the foot streets area whenever they choose, though not with their vehicles during the hours when the foot streets operate. Plans are being developed to ensure that those with disabilities will have full access to the foot streets area.*

*York has no plans whatsoever to restrict free movement of its citizens and neither has it any intention to introduce a congestion charge. Though the Green Party supports the idea of a congestion charge, they do not currently control the Council. I personally would totally oppose a congestion charge as it discriminates against those who live on the outskirts of the city and who need access to services within the congestion charge zone which are not available outside it, such as banking services”.*

**22/106 To discuss and, if necessary, agree action on matters arising/ongoing issues:** a)North Yorkshire Police monthly reports – The Parish Council had received the February 2023 report b) Queen Elizabeth II Memorial Garden The Parish Council is awaiting permission from City of York Council regarding services.

**22/107 To discuss and, if necessary, agree action on matters raised since last meeting:** a) Tree works, Year 3 / Northfields Play Area Climbed Report – Five contractors had been asked to provide a quote and three had responded. Resolved / The Parish would accept the quote from Adam Forester of £1300.00 for the Year Three Tree Works. (Unanimous) Resolved / The Parish would accept the quote from Lewis Trees of £144.00 for the Northfield Play Area Trees Climbed Inspection. (Unanimous) b) Tree risk assessment for years 2024 – 2026 Four contractors had been asked to provide a quote and two had responded. Resolved / The Parish would accept the quote from BHA of £1650.00 for the Year Three Tree Works. (Unanimous) c) Grass Cutting Contract November 2022 – October 2025, contractor changes The Parish Clerk reported as follows – “Rob Cartmell was awarded this contract at the meeting on 13 September 2023 (agenda item 22/40c). However, due to unforeseen circumstances, he can no longer continue with the whole contract. He can only deal with the cemetery, war memorial and Northfields junior play area. I thought is was best to obtain quotes for the work been done by Rob along with another contractor against a requote for the whole contract by the contractor who was next in line price wise. Rob Cartmell quoted £5473.00 for the cemetery/memorial/play area and York Landscapes quoted £10000.00 for the rest, so that is a total of £15473.00. York Landscapes quoted £14640.00 for all areas. All prices are per year, net of VAT and all contractors have been used before by the Parish Council”. Resolved / The Parish Council would award the whole contract to York Landscapes who had quoted £14640.00 (Unanimous)

 d) Access gates to public open space The Parish Council has received a request from a parishioner, who owns a property, which borders Wild Haven. They wanted to install a gate in their boundary fence, so they can have direct access the public open space. Unlike a number of others, who have installed gates, without contacting the Parish Council, they have asked if there any objections. The Parish Clerk contacted City of York Council, as owners of the land, and they have advised that “As the Parish Council have a 99 year lease on the land, it is up to them whether they allow a gate to be put in the fence”. The Parish Council must accept that a precedent has been set with other householders, as gates have been fitted in several locations. The Parish Clerk felt that something should be agreed, which can be minuted, as guidance going forward. Resolved / The Parish Council does not object to pedestrian gates been fitted by householders in their boundary fences, but would strongly recommend that guidance is sought from City of York Planning Department, before any work take place. Access to Public Open Space is subject to all relevant laws. (Unanimous)

**22/108 To discuss and, if necessary, agree action, on any correspondence received:** a) Grant Requests: Strensall Community Events Team – Carnival Resolved / Approved, a grant of £316.30 towards the First Aid Provision (Unanimous) St Mary’s Church – Graveyard Maintenance Resolved / Approved, a grant of £500.00 towards the graveyard maintenance (Unanimous) New Earswick Swimming Club The Parish Council is awaiting a completed grant application form

The Carnival Committee had also requested: - Use of the Play Park - Grass and hedge to be cut prior to the event - Use of office as first aid room - Use of dustbins This was agreed and the Parish Clerk would deal with these. b) City of York Local Plan Main Modifications Consultation 2023 The Parish Council noted the content of this consultation

**22/109 To discuss matters raised by/with Responsible Financial Officer (RFO):** a)Bank reconciliation, income received, payments made to date: The Parish Clerk had circulated a bookkeeping spreadsheet by email, with bank accounts totalling £201838.15 b) Internal Controls Checks: Cllr Tetley conducted the checks and found everything in order. c) GDPR Data Audit: The Parish Clerk had conducted the audit and circulated details around Cllrs. d) Yorkshire Local Councils Association: Information provided was circulated around Cllrs.

**22/110 To confirm the date of the next meeting as Tuesday 11th April 2023 at 7.15 p.m.:** Resolved / Approved (Unanimous)

Important Dates: Annual Parish Council Meeting Tuesday 09th May 2023 @ 7.15p.m.

 Annual Parish Meeting Tuesday 23rd May 2023 @ 7.15p.m.