

Minutes, Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council 27 March 2023 at the Civic Hall.

Present: Cllrs P. Byrne . K. Dawson
M. Scholes J. Hudson
J. Curley L. Dawson
H. Bishop R. Knotts
B. Beeley J. Batty
M. Woodvine B. Lord
P. Lord S. Al-Hamdani
M. Bingley L. Lancaster

3396. To receive Public Questions

Cllr Byrne advised she had received a public question from the Scouthead & Austerlands Band Contest Committee but had decided to deal with it under Chairman's Urgent Business so it could be dealt with at the meeting.

3397. Chairman's Urgent Business

The Chairman read out her proposal:

"The Contest has used this field for many years but last year there was an insurance claim made by a person who sprained an ankle in a hole on the Field.

The hole, which was thought to be that in question, was inspected pre-Christmas and we were advised it is a meadow field and does have ups and downs.

The Assets Committee at their last meeting asked that there should be a 'Handover' responsibility for the field to the Contest.

The Clerk has now clearly established that the responsibility for the field surface itself is that of the Parish Council and not the Contest.

She went with a Contest Committee member to look at the original 'hole' which caused the accident to find it was not the one originally inspected.

It has now been arranged to have this area filled in to rectify the problem as best as can be.

The Field will be inspected by the Parish so as to be fit for the Whit Friday Contest.

It is now clear that the Parish hold the responsibility for the Field itself and the Scouthead and Austerlands Band Contest for their event and any equipment brought onto the field.

Therefore the Contest Organisers will not be responsible for the Field itself.

Should any holes or undulations appear during the contest time, as this is a Meadow Field, the contest will cone them off.

The Parish has their own insurance for the field and the Contest have theirs for the Event.

I ask that Council accept that the Conditions are accepted as stated. – that there will be no handover responsibility for the Field Condition to Scouthead and Austerlands Band Contest Committee prior to the Contest to be held on the 2nd June 2023."

There was some discussion around this. The clerk confirmed that SPC site staff would inspect the field periodically/monthly and would also inspect within 2 days of the Band Contest. The risk assessment had been prepared to reflect this.

Cllr Knotts asked whether this would also be extended to the Fun Day also held on the field.

The Chairman agreed, as long as SPC were notified of the event in good time.

It was proposed by Cllr Hudson, seconded by Cllr Knotts, all in favour.

3398. To receive apologies for Absence Cllrs G. Sheldon, K Phillips, D Simpson

3399. Correspondence None received

3400. To receive Declarations of Interest None declared

3401. Notice of Motion (Cllr Beeley) - Rail strategy for Saddleworth

The following Motion was debated:

This Council notes that:

- the current plans for improving rail speed and capacity in Saddleworth do not involve any physical works for at least 20 years;
- Saddleworth will be impacted in the intervening period by works on the line between Manchester and Stalybridge;
- there is currently no clear strategy laid out to show how the trainline through Saddleworth will manage high-speed services and local services, nor to show how the engineering works can be completed to allow high speed services to run along the current lines.

This Council believes that:

- Saddleworth has been the victim of poor public transport for far too long, and in particular, that the single station at Greenfield, which is inaccessible on one side, has seen regular cuts to services to the detriment of local people;
- improved public transport and, in particular, rail infrastructure is key to ensuring Saddleworth has good links to Greater Manchester, West Yorkshire, and beyond, allowing people to live in Saddleworth and work across the region;
- that if the current plans go ahead as stated, there is a severe risk that instead of improving public transport in Saddleworth, they could result in a severe reduction of access;
- the engineering works required to allow high-speed trains to operate across the current route could require major engineering works, tunnelling or a new railway line on stilts, all of which could have a significant impact on the natural beauty of Saddleworth and the Peak District National Park;
- the original plan put forward by Transport for the North, which involved a new high speed line running from Manchester to Leeds via Bradford, and improvements to the Saddleworth route, including electrification and increased services, remains the best plan to ensure comprehensive high-quality train services at local stations such as Greenfield.

This Council resolves:

- to write to Oldham Council, TfGM, Transport for the North, the Department of Transport and to MP Debbie Abrahams to express our balanced concerns on the need for investment in train infrastructure in Saddleworth, but that the current plans may not achieve the results that are needed; and to emphasise our support for the original Transport for the North plans;
- to invite Transport for the North to come to Saddleworth Parish Council to talk through their proposals, and discuss whether the current plans are achievable, and what their impact would be on local train services and the wider environment.

Cllr Al-Hamdani explained their concerns in more detail; that the current line is not capable of High Speed trains so a major engineering project which also encompassed PEAK Park would be planned and we need assurances that there would not be major disruption for Saddleworth. The original proposal which the Motion supports is to make the Manchester to Bradford Line via Rochdale the HS2 line but would also increase capacity on the Greenfield Line.

Cllr Batty queried this as the present line doesn't go through the National Park.

Cllr Al-Hamdani responded it might not necessarily go through it but would impact on the setting; we need clarity of the intention.

Cllr Woodvine advised he had been in meetings with Network Rail and he said their plan is to consult all Parish Councils with their aim to deliver £11 billion of improvements to Saddleworth by 2030 which includes disabled access and additional parking at Greenfield Station.

Cllr Battye advised he had spoken to Debbie Abrahams and had also attended a Transport for the North meeting for more information.

Cllr Al-Hamdani said it appeared that there would be a gap in the electrified line in the Saddleworth area and the plan doesn't make it clear how it would be linked up.

It was agreed that this Motion would be sent to Mayor Andy Burnham and Network Rail as well as to Oldham Council, TfGM, Transport for the North, the Department of Transport and to MP Debbie Abrahams.

This Motion was proposed by Cllr Beeley, seconded by Cllr Al-Hamdani. 15 in favour, 1 abstention.

3402. To approve and confirm as a correct record the Draft Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 27th February 2023.

The minutes were proposed, seconded and approved.

3403. To note the Minutes of the extraordinary Council Meeting held on 20th February 2023

The minutes were proposed, seconded and approved.

3404. To note the minutes of the Strategic Planning Meeting held on 23rd February 2023

The minutes were proposed, seconded and approved.

3405. To note the minutes of the Planning Meeting held on 6th March 2023

The minutes were proposed, seconded and approved.

3406. To note the Minutes of the Extraordinary Assets Management Meeting held on 7th March 2023

Cllr Scholes requested further info on the removal of the hawthorn hedge. The Clerk replied she had been requested by Assets to write to the President of the Allotments with these concerns; she was waiting a response. Cllr Al-Hamdani asked whether SPC had received a copy of the gate key for Dawson's Field. Cllr Knotts said it was in hand and they should have it by the end of the week.

With this the minutes were proposed, seconded and approved.

3407. To note the Minutes of the Environment Meeting held on 13th March 2023

Cllr Al-Hamdani advised that the SBI survey of the allotments would not take place until early June. With this explanation the minutes were proposed, seconded and approved.

3408. Report back from Oldham Council Standards Committee Meeting 16th March 2023 (Cllr Beeley)

Cllr Beeley updated Councillors on the OMBC Standards Committee meeting she had attended where they advised they were adopting the Local Government (Disqualification) Act 2022. Copies were shared with Councillors and it was discussed.

Cllr Beeley advised that all Borough Councillors are required to have a DBS check and she proposed that all Parish Councillors also undertake one.

Cllr Bishop advised it was free for volunteers and the Clerk advised that once DBS checked Councillors could subscribe to the annual update service. Councillors all agreed it was a good idea.

Cllr Beeley will prepare a proposal to be shared at the next Ordinary Council meeting.

3409. Updated Data Protection Policy and Privacy Notice – for approval

Copies had already been shared prior to the meeting. The Clerk advised she had updated the SPC Data Protection Policy and Privacy Notice in line with NALC guidance and asked Councillors to approve them. Unanimously approved.

3410. Accounts for Payment February 2023 Income £5259.41 Expenditure £17,701.05
Accounts for payment were approved.

There was some discussion around the date for the Association of Councillor's Meeting. It was agreed the Clerk would circulate a date for the meeting to be held after the election but before the AGM.

3411. Date of the next meeting– Monday 24th April 2023 @ 7.30pm

3412. Association of Councillor's meeting- Monday 15th May 2023 @ 7.30pm