

**Minutes of Newton le Willows Parish Council meeting**  
**held on 6 September 2021**

**Present:** Councillors L Ryder, V Wilthew, T Clarkson, C Audritt and parish clerk T Sanderson

**Also present:** Councillor R Ormston and 9 members of the public

1. There were no '**apologies for absence**'.
2. There were no '**Declarations of Interest**' in items on the agenda.
3. The **minutes** of the Parish Council meeting held on July 2021 were signed and approved.

**4. Wensleydale railway** – the Chairman welcomed Chris Williams and Teresa Chapman from the railway. The Council had been approached by parishioners back in February 2021 with the vegetation clearing that was taking place. Concerns were raised about the extent of the clearance and the impact it would have on wildlife. Representatives were asked to appear at the meeting to explain what was happening and how communication can be improved moving forward. The Council is aware that residents work/volunteer for the railway and the railway plays a part in the local economy as a tourist attraction.

Chris Williams, General Manager for the railway explained their viewpoint. With limited resources, both financial and volunteers, the vegetation is currently in need of drastic attention. The railway operates on a zone system – red, yellow and green. This is the same for Network Rail and Wensleydale Railway. The red zone is that closest to the railway and 3 metres either side of the line needs to be clear of all vegetation. The yellow zone follows that and is the next 2 metres, termed the action zone, which must be checked for any potential obstructions. The green zone is outside this 5 metre rule and is where the biodiversity is looked at.

A test run was carried out in October 2020 when the train hit many trees and branches. A plan for clearing the vegetation was drawn up and work began soon afterwards. This was to improve safety on the line and safety of passengers who ride the trains.

With hindsight, the railway accepts communication could have been better and will strive to notify communities effected by the clearance in the future. They are awaiting a report being produced by Network Rail that will highlight what needs to be done to ensure biodiversity is managed safely within the green zone. It will lead to a blue print/action plan moving forward and is expected to be published no later than March 2022.

Wensleydale Railway will be used as a training/test scheme as it is on a quieter line than the main line. It already means further clearance needs to take place from Crakehall up to Leyburn and work should commence shortly. It will be carried out within network guidelines.

A lively discussion ensued with differing opinions raised. Lessons have been learned and communications will improve. Where possible, information will be passed on to the newsletter team so that all parishioners can be notified of their work. No further burning of matter will take place within the parish boundaries. Concerns about rabbits along the side of the embankment, specific wildlife issues (tree sparrows for example) were taken on board. A local representative of Network Rail's Ecologist is to be appointed. Flooding issues have been looked into and resolved where they were the responsibility of the railway. Trespass was raised as a concern and it was agreed that another notice will be placed in the next newsletter particularly as trains will start to run more regularly.

**5. Matters arising:**

- **Wet and Forget** – to be applied imminently.
- **Defibrillator signage** – will be installed imminently.
- **Wasp nest** – this has been treated by RDC and a report passed to the Parish Council.
- **Bus shelter** – some further clearing has taken place.

- **Recent social events** – have proved to be successful (both the afternoon picnic and the Village show).

## 6. Reports:

- **Village Hall Trustees** – last meeting 21 July and the next meeting is on 8 September. The balance at the last meeting stands at £33,967.29. An online bank account has been opened. Repairs continue to be carried out – lights in toilets replaced, glazing bars on windows replaced, kitchen wall units about to be replaced. Decorating – both inside and outside, is still to be done. The Village Hall is hosting the Big Spoon Charity Bike Ride on 12 September. Green Room has opened up for after cricket home games and will open for the forthcoming PIN events in September. Table tennis starts back on 15 September.
- **Atkinson Clarke Education Trust** – there is nothing to report and the next meeting is later in September.
- **Richmondshire Climate Action Plan developments** – there are currently talks being held between Yorkshire First and electricity network providers over possible electric vehicle charging points for village halls. A meeting is to be held at Richmond Methodist Church on 2 October and is aimed to reduce carbon emissions and waste and promote environmental enhancement.

## 7. Specific matters:

- **Participatory budget** – to be carried over to the next meeting.
- **Playground** – the picnic bench is on order as is the climbing frame upgrade. However, some concern was raised about the installation and delivery charges for the seesaw. Alternatives are being looked at and the clerk will contact the RDC grant committee if changes need to be requested to the application. The project needs to be completed within six months of the grant being approved (July 21).
- **Prevention of drainage issues** – to be carried over to the next meeting.
- **Building Site Planning Breach** – C Audritt looked into this as there have been concerns raised over the contractors' vehicles and parking arrangements. As part of the planning approval, a clause was added stating that parking provisions would need to be made for vehicles to be parked off the highway. After speaking with the relevant planning officer, it was found that a breach was in place and an enforcement officer was now involved.
- **Website** – to be carried over to the next meeting.

## 8. All financial matters were approved:

- Village hall hire and insurance £140, Wasp nest treatment £58, Web hosting £86.26, Clerk's wages and expenses £800.40.

## 9. The Parish Council had no comments/observations to make on the following **planning applications**:

- **21/00555/Full** - Full planning permission for change of use of existing building from tearoom/offices to offices/live/work purposes at Owl Barn, High Parks, Newton le Willows to No Mans Moor Lane, Newton-Le-Willows, North Yorkshire, DL8 1TP.
- **21/00594/Full** – Full planning permission for change of use of land for two yurts with composting toilets at Stubbing Nook Barn, Stubbing Nook Lane, Newton le Willows, Bedale, North Yorkshire, DL8 1TJ.

**10. Items** for the next meeting will include participatory budget, drainage, website, grit bins.

**11. Date** for next meeting – Monday 18 October at 7.30pm.

**Meeting declared closed at 8.50pm.**