

MINUTES OF GISBURN PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON THURSDAY 21 MARCH 2013
AT 7.30 PM

Present: John Falshaw (Chair), Darren Jackson, Mary Kirby, Peter Ryde
Clerk, Borough Cllr Richard Sherras and 18 members of the public

APOLOGIES

Colin Corlett

MINUTES OF MEETING OF 18 FEBRUARY 2013

The Minutes of the meeting of 18 February 2013 were accepted as a true record of proceedings at that meeting and duly signed.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Deposit Account	£1,188
Current Account	£1,360

The Clerk advised that £1,000 had been transferred from the Deposit to the Current account.

ACCOUNTS FOR APPROVAL

Mrs C A Holmes (Clerk)	£120.00
Post Office Ltd (Clerk's PAYE)	£30.00

PLANNING MATTERS AND APPLICATIONS

Strawberry Fields – outline application for 11 houses

Strawberry Fields – outline application for 5 houses

Peter Ryde declared an interest in these applications

Members of the public were invited to offer their opinions on the above applications and there was considerable debate. The Parish Council considered their collective opinion on the applications and it was agreed that a formal objection be lodged with RVBC for the following reasons:

Firstly, the applicant has already received outline planning permission for 21 houses at the same location. At the start of the process the applicant was advised by Mr Colin Sharpe, RVBC Senior Planning Officer, in writing in a letter of 27 April 2012, that a development of 37 houses was not sustainable and was excessive in relation to the size of Gisburn and the services available. The Parish Council were not opposed to a development of 21 houses and many of the residents living close to Strawberry Fields could also support a small scale development. However, the Parish Council and many local residents agree that a development of 37 houses is excessive relative to the size of the village and there is not the infrastructure to support such a number of new dwellings.

Secondly, despite what the utility company and application form may claim, there is a flooding problem at that end of the village and the problem could only be exacerbated by the construction of more properties.

Thirdly, there are serious access issues with regards to Phase III of the development. Access would be along a single lane with no turning area. This would cause problems for delivery and emergency vehicles and anyone visiting a Phase III property could park in the lane thereby completely blocking it. There do not appear to be any pavements along the access lane which again is a safety issue. Also, there is a drop of approx. 2m from the access lane into the car park/oil tank area of the properties in front of the Phase III development and with an increase in vehicular traffic along the access lane there is greater potential for dangerous accidents.

Fourthly, the height of the intended Phase III properties relative to those to their front means that there will be a loss of privacy for those dwellings which will be overlooked. Development of Phase III would also negatively impact on the properties to its front as well as on Nethergill and Langlands in terms of increased light and noise levels.

Fifthly, the Phase III development is on agricultural land which has never been part of the diner site. Development on the brownfield site on which the diner was sited would generally be acceptable but encroaching onto greenfield areas is unacceptable.

Sixthly, an increased level of traffic having to enter and exit the development onto the busy A59 can only lead to the increased likelihood of an accident, particularly as many drivers approach the village in excess of the speed limit.

Seventhly, there are two trees – a Horse Chestnut within Langlands and a hawthorn tree – which would be adversely affected by the development of plot 37. The application form is therefore incorrect when it says there are no trees on adjacent land that could influence the development.

Eighthly, the current electricity supply to the area is supplied via overhead cables which would go through the development site and the double pole mounted transformer box would be in the middle of the access road. Whilst it is accepted this is not a planning issue it is a practical issue which would require (expensive) resolution.

It was noted that many of those present intended to write their own letters of objection to RVBC. It was further noted that there was disappointment that the applicant and his agent had failed to mention Phases II and III when they attended the Parish Council meeting in May 2012 to discuss Phase I.

YEAR END MATTERS

- a) Annual Risk Assessment
- b) Review of Asset Register

The Clerk advised that it was necessary for the Parish Council to consider both its Asset Register and a Risk Assessment Schedule for the year 2012/13. Both of these documents had been circulated prior to the meeting. After further consideration the meeting duly approved the Asset Register and Risk Assessment Schedule for 2012/13.

c) Review of Effectiveness of Internal Audit

The Clerk advised that the Parish Council was required to undertake a review of the effectiveness of the internal audit process. The review was to cover five areas, namely: scope of internal audit, independence of the internal auditor, competency of the internal auditor, relationships of the auditor to the Council and planning and reporting. The Clerk outlined what each of the aforementioned categories covered using a document from the external auditors and the Council discussed each item as required. It was concluded that the current arrangements for undergoing the internal audit were effective.

d) Year End Timetable

The Clerk explained that the Annual Return and supporting information had to be returned to BDO LLP by early June 2013. It was hoped to pass the books to the internal auditor during April with a view to the accounts and Return being signed at the May 2013 meeting.

RECREATION GROUND

The Clerk advised that she had received a quote from RVBC for cutting the grass on the Recreation Ground. The quote totalled £753.54 and confirmation or otherwise of its acceptability was required by 31 March 2013 as cutting usually began in April of each year. It was agreed that RVBC were effectively the only local organisation with the necessary equipment to cut large areas of grass so the quote was deemed acceptable.

COMMUNITY RIGHT TO BID

The Clerk advised that the Localism Act 2011 created the new Community Right to Bid. This right allowed defined community groups to ask a Council ie RVBC to list certain assets as being of community value. Where an asset was added to the list of assets of community value, the owner of the property was required to delay any subsequent attempts to dispose of the asset because a moratorium process came into effect, the purpose of which was to assist community groups to potentially acquire the property. It was agreed that the Right to Bid required further consideration and discussion so the matter was deferred to the April 2013 meeting.

FESTIVAL HALL REFURBISHMENT

The Clerk advised that she had received notification that the Festival Hall would be undergoing refurbishment for 6/8 weeks commencing on 15 April 2013. The main hall would be closed for 6/8 weeks but the Committee Room would remain in use. It was agreed that the next meeting would be held in the Committee Room as usual and that the condition of the Room during refurbishment would be assessed at that time.

PARISH LENGTHSMAN

It was noted that the Parish Lengthsman had not submitted an invoice for recent work as they were intending to add it to their next invoice which would be presented in April 2013. It was noted that interest in the lengthsman work had been expressed by another party and it was suggested that it may be worth putting the position out to tender if this other party confirmed their interest.

It was suggested that perimeter fencing be erected around the Cenotaph Gardens in an attempt to prevent damage to the area by bicycles and the Clerk was asked to look into the potential cost.

CORRESPONDENCE

A letter had been received from Diane Rice. Head of Legal at RVBC, advising that she had contacted Mrs Smith of 5 Sycamore Bungalows directly about her concerns. Ms Rice had asked the Parish Council to note that Sycamore Bungalows were entirely under the ownership of Ribble Valley Homes and RVBC therefore no longer had any involvement with the Bungalows. Mrs Smith advised that she had also received a reply directly from Ribble Valley Homes and thanked the Parish Council for their assistance in the matter.

The Clerk advised that Gisburn Primary School had issued a letter to parents and the wider community asking for volunteers to assist in the clearing of the garden at the school on Saturday 13 April 2013 ready for its conversion to an allotment.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Chair reported that the intended purchase of the public toilets by a local business was ongoing and that the business concerned had recently had an offer declined as it was considered excessive. There was, however, no indication that the intended purchase would not proceed.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Parish Council Meeting Thursday 18 April 2013 at 7.30 pm

