

SCOTTER PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of an Extraordinary Meeting of the Council held on 1st December 2008

PRESENT: Councillor C. Day (Chairman), Councillors N. Altoft, M. Armstrong, B. Billam, M. Brown, D. Capes, J. Fillingham and A. Sheardown, M. Brown (Clerk).

Two members of West Lindsey District Council addressed the Council during the public open forum on the issue of the gathering of youths on Friday evenings. Following the conclusion of the presentation and discussion and the departure of the WLDC officers, the meeting commenced at 8.05pm.

142 2008/09 : To receive and approve apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Councillor Bullivent who had a prior engagement and Councillor Rayner who had a domestic emergency.

RESOLVED : To accept and approve the apologies from Councillors Bullivent and Rayner.

The Council noted that apologies had also been received from the Ward Councillors who were attending a District Council meeting on the same evening.

143 2008/09 : To receive declarations of interest

Interests were declared by Councillor Capes in relation to item 11 on the agenda (minute reference 152 2008/09), Councillor Fillingham in relation to item 8 (minute reference 149 2008/09) and Councillor Day in relation to item 9 (minute reference 150 2008/09) due to their involvement in the organisations in question. The Councillors concerned stated their intention to abstain from voting on the respective matters.

144 2008/09 : To consider the potential installation (and the timing thereof) of a replacement safety surface under the senior swings in the playground.

Members of the Council, having inspected the safety surface in question, could find no evidence of tile lifting or failure or the appearance of cracks. In consequence, it was :

RESOLVED : That no action need to be taken at this time.

145 2008/09 : To consider the timing of the replacement of the ride-on mower.

The Council considered the paper provided, which showed that the annual depreciation does not vary up to and including the third year of operation. However, maintenance costs do vary, with year 3 costs likely to be significantly higher following the cessation of the warranty period (year 1) and the additional discretionary manufacturer's support (year 2). In consequence, it was :

RESOLVED : To replace the ride-on mower at the end of its second year of operation (i.e. in March 2009) at a part-exchange cost of £3219.03 plus VAT.

The annual mower service, planned for December 2008, now will not need to take place, at an estimated saving of £350 plus VAT.

146 2008/09 : To resolve whether, in accordance with Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public and press should be temporarily excluded from the meeting for the next item of business.

RESOLVED : To exclude the public and press for the next item of business only on the basis that it is related to a legal matter.

147 2008/09 : To consider a proposal from the legal advisor in relation to the Southcliffe Road verge

The Council considered the paper in support of the item and

RESOLVED : To approve the course of action proposed by the legal advisor at an estimated cost of £350 plus VAT plus disbursements of £20.

With the public and press able to return :

Initialed Chairman

148 2008/09 : To consider the District Council's proposal to remove the subsidy for Scotter Cemetery

The Council considered the letter submitted by the District Council, stating its intention to remove the subsidy given to cover net cemetery expenses with effect from 2009/10, against the background of the current extraordinary cemetery expense which the Council will fund from its own reserves in 2008/09 (the ground works for the cemetery extension in the estimated amount of £2.5k) and the forecast net cemetery expense for 2009/10 of £4.75k. Considering that there has been little notice of the proposed removal of the subsidy and the significant increase in percentage terms (c. 15%) that would result if this expense had to be added to the Precept, it was :

RESOLVED : To request that the District Council defer its proposal for one year.

This would allow time for the Council to properly inform the electorate of the proposed change and to seek opportunities for cost savings elsewhere in its budget for 2010/11 to minimise the impact.

149 2008/09 : To consider a request from Scotter Village Hall Association to release the donation provided for in the 2008/09 Precept and to include a further donation to the Association when setting the 2009/10 Precept.

The Council first considered the issue of the donation for the village hall set aside in the 2008/09 Precept and (with the exception of Councillor Fillingham who abstained), it was :

RESOLVED : To donate £4000 to Scotter Village Hall Association as provided for in the 2008/09 Precept. The Clerk will prepare a cheque for signature at the December Council meeting.

The Council then discussed the request for consideration of a grant during 2009/10 against the background of the proposed projects in relation to the hall, which include the provision of improved storage for users' equipment and work on the car park's surface. Councillor Fillingham explained that whilst the estimate for a full re-surfacing of the car park is in excess of £13k, the intention in the next year is to carry out a more limited scope of patching work, estimated at c. £2.5k. The Council also considered the financial position of the Association as at 30th September 2008. With the exception of Councillor Fillingham who abstained, it was :

RESOLVED : To include £4000 as a donation to Scotter Village Hall Association when setting the 2009/10 Precept.

150 2008/09 : To consider a request from Scotter War Memorial Playing Fields Committee to include £800 in the 2009/10 Precept to cover employers liability and public liability insurance at the field for the year commencing 1st February 2010.

The Council has previously approved this annual request and included an amount of £800 in its Precept for 2008/09 to meet the expected request in February 2009 (currently estimated at £750). Whilst the cost in February 2010 is not known, the Committee has requested an amount of £800 to be included in the 2009/10 Precept for this purpose. Having considered the most recent financial accounts received from the Playing Fields, and with the exception of Councillor Day who abstained, it was :

RESOLVED : To include an amount of £800 to cover the cost of employers liability and public liability insurance at the playing fields when setting the 2009/10 Precept.

151 2008/09 : To consider a request from Scotter Junior Football Club to include £1259.60 in the 2009/10 Precept to cover the cost of grass cutting at the playing fields.

The Council considered the letter of request from SJFC with accompanying quotation, showing how the sum requested would be spent during the 2009/10 cutting season. It also considered the financial position of the Club for the year ended 31st March 2008 and :

RESOLVED : To include £1259.60 when setting the 2009/10 Precept to cover grass cutting costs during that season, such monies to be released on receipt of invoices in substantiation.

The Clerk reported that, despite chasing, she has yet to receive any request for release of the funds set aside in the 2008/09 precept for grass cutting costs at the field during the current year. With lack of

Initialed Chairman

any other information, she has assumed a maximum amount of £1250 will be requested, such sum included in the expected expenditure for the remainder of this financial year.

152 2008/09 : To consider a request from Scotter Bowls Club to include an amount of £458.35 in the 2009/10 Precept to cover the cost of top dressing of the green.

The Council considered the letter from the Bowls Club, which itemised the make-up of the requested amount of £458.35. It also examined the financial position of the Club for the year ended 31st December 2007 and, with the exception of Councillor Capes who abstained, :

RESOLVED : To include £458.35 when setting the 2009/10 Precept to cover the cost of top dressing the green, such monies to be released on receipt of invoices in substantiation.

153 2008/09 : To consider a request from Scotter Good Companions to include an amount of £760 in the 2009/10 Precept to fund two coach trips.

The Council considered the letter from Scotter Good Companions, which itemised the make-up of the requested amount of £760, to cover two coach trips that are open to all parishioners. The cost of the coach is forecast to be £260 on each occasion, with the balance of the request covering refreshments. The Council also examined the financial position of the club and its expected bank balance at the end of its current financial year (31st January 2009). Considering the relatively small number of members of the club, it was :

RESOLVED : To include £520 when setting the 2009/10 Precept to cover the cost of coach hire only for two trips during that year, such monies to be released on receipt of invoices in substantiation.

154 2008/09 : To consider a request from West Lindsey Citizens Advice Bureau to include an amount in the 2009/10 Precept in support of its work.

The Council considered the request for assistance against the background of the significantly increased debt-management workload faced by the local CAB due to the current economic downturn and

RESOLVED : To include £200 when setting the 2009/10 Precept in favour of West Lindsey Citizens Advice Bureau, such monies to be paid in April 2009.

The letter in response is to state that this doubling in the usual amount donated is in recognition of the particularly difficult economic circumstances currently being experienced and should not be seen as the new “norm”.

155 2008/09 : To consider and approve the Council’s Precept requirement for the financial year 2009/10.

The Council considered the paper circulated with the agenda in relation to this item, which included an evaluation of payments expected for the rest of 2008/09 and an estimate of payments expected to be made in 2009/10, an evaluation of the income expected for the rest of 2008/09 and an estimate of income expected in 2009/10 (excluding the Precept amount) and an evaluation of the costs of running Scotter Cemetery. The expected payments figures were amended in light of the resolutions already passed at the meeting. The Council then considered the proposed payments and receipts on a line by line basis and made the following specific resolutions in support of or to amend the paper :

In light of information provided by Mr Selby, WLDC, on the level of on-cost to provide,

RESOLVED : To increase the allowance for a litter picker to £2000 in the 2009/10 Precept.

In light of information provided on the trade-in value of the ride-on mower,

RESOLVED : To increase the machine replacement reserve to £1600 in the 2009/10 Precept.

In light of the proposed layout of the new cemetery area,

RESOLVED : To include an amount of £2.5k in the forecast expenditure for the remainder of 2008/09 to cover the cost of ground works in installing concrete raft foundations.

Initialled Chairman

The Council's intention is to have the riverbanks strimmed and the verges at the outskirts of the village flail-mowed on three occasions per annum from 2009/10, rather than the two occasions annually achieved in recent years. In light of this :

RESOLVED : To increase the allowance for flail-mowing and bank strimming to £1200 in the 2009/10 Precept.

With some wear and tear starting to be visible,

RESOLVED : To include £450 in the 2009/10 Precept to re-paint the War Memorial plinth.

In light of a specific request from Scotter United FC,

RESOLVED : To release £1800.00 of the funds set aside in the 2008/09 Precept for the club's project work. The Clerk will prepare a cheque for signature at the December Council meeting.

In light of the proposed project to establish potential solutions to the problem of the mass congregation of youths in the village on Friday evenings,

RESOLVED : To donate £500 of the 2008/09 Community Projects budget towards the project costs.

The Council considered the recent letter from WLDC regarding the loss of external funding for the Wheels to Work scheme from 2009/10 and

RESOLVED : To make no provision for the scheme in the 2009/10 Precept. A specific request for financial support will be considered in the future if this involves a parishioner in need of the scheme's services. Such support may be provided from the Community Projects budget.

With the exception of Councillor Day who voted against, it was :

RESOLVED : That, in accordance with its powers under section 137 of the Local Government Act, 1972, the Council will utilise up to £150 of the 2008/09 Community Projects budget on additional Christmas lights which, in the opinion of the Council, is in the interests of the inhabitants of the Parish and will benefit them in a manner commensurate with the expenditure.

It was further :

RESOLVED : That, in accordance with its powers under section 137 of the Local Government Act, 1972, the Council intends to make a donation of £75 in 2009/10 for a poppy wreath which, in the opinion of the Council, is in the interests of the inhabitants of the Parish and will benefit them in a manner commensurate with the expenditure.

Finally, subject to the outcome of the course of action under minute 148 2008/09 above, it was :

RESOLVED : To submit a request to the District Council for net cemetery expenses in the amount of £4750 for 2009/10. The addition of this amount to the expected income during 2009/10, takes the total expected income (excluding the Precept) to £9189.50.

On the conclusion of the line by line examination and taking into account the resolutions already passed, the summary position is as follows :

Opening Cash Book Balance at 01.04.2008	12,130.68
Add Projected Receipts to 31.03.2009	48,607.37
	60,738.05
Less Projected Payments to 31.03.2009	57,810.99
Projected Closing Bank Balance at 31.03.2009	2,927.06

Initialled Chairman

Opening Cash Balance at 01.04.2009	2,927.06
Less Mower Replacement Reserve at 01.04.2009	-
Less Memorial Safety Reserve at 01.04.2009	640.00
Less Budgeted Payments for 2009/10	<u>44,162.75</u>
	-41875.69
Add Budgeted Income for 2009/10 (excl. precept)	<u>9,189.50</u>
Nett Expenditure (excl. precept)	-32,046.19

The Council then considered and discussed an appropriate level of contingency to be applied to this figure to cover unexpected expenses and to allow for a year end bank balance and it was :
RESOLVED : To submit to the District Council a Precept for 2009/10 to cover general expenses in the amount of £35000. The necessary paperwork in support of this will be completed and signed when received from the District Council.

In the event that the District Council decides to impose the removal of the cemetery subsidy for 2009/10, the Council had no option but to further
RESOLVE : That, if the subsidy is removed, the general expenses figure of £35000 for 2009/10 be increased to £39750 to take into account the net expense of running Scotter Cemetery.

156 2008/09 : To approve the letting of cemetery allotment no. 4.

The Council considered the proposal to let the recently vacated allotment to the next parishioner on the waiting list and :

RESOLVED : To approve the letting of cemetery allotment no. 4 to the next parishioner on the waiting list. The Chairman and Vice-Chairman signed the rental papers.

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 9.24pm.

Clerk:

Chairman:

Date:

Initialled Chairman