

Minutes of the Meeting of Lowick Parish Council held on 21 May 2020

1. Councillors Present:

L Ingham, G. Sanderson, B. Mitchell, S. Bailey. J. Edmondson

Apologies:

None

Meeting held virtually by WhatsApp.

2. Minutes

The minutes of the last meeting on 18 March 2020 were agreed and adopted.

3. Public Participation

None. This was the first virtual meeting with an abbreviated agenda focussed on assessing the viability of virtual meetings, protocol for any subsequent virtual public meetings and dealing with matters arising from the unexpected and sad death of our former clerk Irene Jewell

4. Declaration of Interest

None

5. Matters Arising from the last meeting

The Councillors wished to express their sincere condolences to Irene's husband Peter and her family. They wanted to put on record their heartfelt thanks for the many years of service Irene had given to Lowick PC.

6. Advertisement for a new Clerk

- a. Councillor Sanderson had contacted Blawith PC to seek guidance on the process they had followed in their recent appointment. This would be pursued.
- b. Councillor Sanderson noted and shared guidance provided by CALC re job specification, personal specification, advertising and selection. (Post meeting note: Councillor Ingham agreed to review the CALC guidance and draft a specific Lowick PC Advert for agreement including comparison with Blawith approach).
- c. It was agreed the post should be advertised in the CALC newsletter, the Coniston and Crake Valley Magazine, the Parish notice board. Councillor Mitchell will contact Rev Streeter and ask for advert to be put in the Parish Magazine currently published on the Churches website.

7. Remuneration of Temporary Clerk

It was agreed that the temporary Clerk should be paid at the hourly rate currently adopted by Egton PC of £11.91/hr worked. (Post meeting note: Councillor Ingham suggested that as a temporary position this should be paid bi-monthly in arrears against hours worked on the expectation of no more than 17hr work /2 months, any additional work to be itemised)

8. Retrieval of PC Documentation

Councillors understood the difficult position Irene's husband Peter was in both in respect of his bereavement and restrictions brought about by the coronavirus crisis. The PC has possession of the council laptop which, bar the last 10-11 months is up to date, and can function satisfactorily. In time arrangements will be made with Peter to collect and review remaining documentation currently in his possession.

9. Control of PC Finances

The temporary clerk now has possession of the council cheque book and there remain 3 signatories. Routine functioning of financial matters is possible. Councillor Sanderson has attempted to contact Barclays Bank to change the addressee for statements, other bank correspondence and upgrade the account to on=line banking but has been unable to communicate with anyone empowered to make any changes. As a consequence of the coronavirus crisis this is taking some time to achieve.

10. Accounts Audit

The annual audit is in any case deferred until August/September because of the coronavirus crisis but contact has been made with the council's auditor Tim Goodings to ensure he will be available as last year and that he has or will have the appropriate information.

11. Progress with website

Councillor Bailey reported he has purchased www.lowick.org.uk and good progress with the transfer of our data has been made. The Council wished to thank Celia Roblin for her valued assistance and continued support with the website content. The site is funded by paid subscription so adverts are avoided. The site also hosts and/or links to community related organisations currently, the Lowick Community Hall, the Lowick Green Management Committee and could support others. Councillor Mitchell to ask Rev Streeter if the Parish Church would like a link to their new site. It would be possible to charge if councillors wished and defray some of the cost of registration.

12. Protocol for virtual open meetings

The need to ensure public participation in future virtual (if needed) meetings was recognised and after discussion it was recognised that

- a. An appropriate platform for such meetings was ZOOM.
- b. To avoid inappropriate 'bombing' into meetings by people unknown and appropriate protocol was needed to control meetings
- c. This protocol should include attendance by invitation and password only with control of speakers, the screen and access by only the host (i.e. Chair or Clerk)
- d. Any member of the public wishing to attend should register interest with the Clerk or a Councillor and provide an email address, councillors are always happy to represent parishioner's individual views.

Councillors Bailey and Sanderson agreed to establish a working method to achieve this protocol using ZOOM including establishing whether or not it would be possible using the free version of the application although its limit to a 40 minute meeting may be disruptive. In this case it was believed a small monthly charge for any month holding a meeting would be affordable.

A trial, including inviting interested parties, will implemented before the next meeting.

13. Complaints

None

14. External Meeting Attendance.

None

15. Date and Time of Next Meeting

Thursday 16 July 19.30. Venue to be confirmed.