

ASKHAM BRYAN PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES of a meeting of the NATURAL ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE (NEC)

held on Thursday 17th March 2022 at 6pm in the Village Hall

PRESENT: Lisa Marriott (Chair)
Cllr. Julie Barber
Jo Fell
Jan Bennett
Cllr. Simon Peers
Kathryn Nolan

In attendance: Keith Langley (Parish Clerk)

1. Apologies for absence.

David Hartley.

2. Declarations of interest.

None.

3. Minutes of the last meeting.

The minutes of the meeting of 20th January were accepted as a true record.

4. Updates

i. Pond Work

It was reported that planning permission had been given for the tree work. The tree surgeon had been unable to start work on the date scheduled (9th March) due to the high-water levels and had rescheduled for 17th March but the water level was still too high and it was now too late in the season to do the work. The planning permission would be valid for two years. The £500 NEC budget would be rolled over to 2022/23 to allow for the cost of this work at later date.

ii. Tree Works

David had sent a report. The college would be ready to survey the area in April (early spring) to better assess species and their associated pathogens and were hoping to start working in the summer term.

iii. Trees for the recreational area

It was noted that the trees for the Recreational Area had arrived and need to be planted. David would be asked to mark suitable locations.

5. Projects

a. Storm Damage

It was noted that recent storms had caused damage to the trees in the recreational area. Five members of the Committee had volunteered to help tidy-up on the morning of Saturday 26th March (9:30am to 11:30am). Jo would bring a chainsaw and other the members of the Committee would bring appropriate gardening equipment. The wood would be left for a year to rot down. Cllr. Barber was able to use some of this for her wood burner.

b. Land adjacent to 149 Main Street

Jo had investigated appropriate types of tree to plant on this land and recommended two or three indigenous trees such as rowan, bird cherry (wild lilac) or similar small varieties. The horse chestnuts had been looked at, they needed maintenance and it was suggested that they be taken down. Cllr. Barber had spoken to the daughter of the lady whose late husband had planted the trees and she had questioned the necessity of removing the trees which had been planted as a Millennium legacy. The site had once been a pond and she had reported that it still occasionally flooded after periods of very heavy rain. The views of residents of other adjoining properties might need to be taken into account. The Chair went round the meeting asking each person present for their views on the way forward. It was felt that the trees could not be maintained indefinitely and that the trees could be pruned this year and a further review be considered in 2023. This work could be done without the need for a tree surgeon. Cllr. Barber agreed to communicate this decision to the daughter of the

resident concerned. The work would have to be done in the autumn if it was not done in the very near future.

This plot of land was considered for a wildflower meadow. The seed would be sown in September and preparation (i.e. removal of turf) could be done in stages in June or July. The parish magazine could carry an article explaining this project. City of York Council would need to be notified as they occasionally cut the grass. Jo was happy to cut the grass in the meantime and to write the article for the magazine. The Chair of the PC would be notified. Volunteers would be needed. The wildflower Meadow would get cut in the winter.

c. City of York Council tree canopy target

It was noted that City of York Council had received £25,000 from the White Rose Forest to support work towards their tree canopy target and an application had been made to it's Feasible Tree Planting Opportunities in time for their deadline of noon Friday, 25th February. The application was made for trees for the land adjacent to 149 Main Street.

d. City of York Council options to reduce the impact of pesticides on pollinators and wildlife

Jo reported that the use of glyphosates should be avoided whenever possible although it was recognised that they are effective. There was opportunity to register an interest in being one of the pilot wards (deadline 31st March 2022), it was decided not to pursue this.

e. Grant Funding

It was noted that Ward Cllr. Hook had offered grant funding to the Committee. Projects were considered such as benches (it was noted that one of the current benches keeps falling over). However, as this funding was primarily aimed at projects to tackle loneliness or which make provision for children and young people, it was felt that the work of the Committee did not meet the criteria for this source of funding.

f. Offer of a tree from the Women's Institute.

It was noted that the Women's Institute had offered a tree and there was discussion about possible locations. There were already enough trees at the pond and the land at the front of the Village Hall was suggested (although this was not Parish Council land). It was suggested but they might like to contribute towards the cost of the information board instead. Jan would report back to the Women's Institute.

Date of next meeting

19th May 2022 at 6pm at the Village Hall.

The meeting closed at 6:45pm

Signed

Chair
19 May 2022