

Parbold Parish Council

***Clerk: Mrs Elizabeth-Anne Broad JP, LLB (Hons), MA, CiLCA
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Minutes of the next Meeting of the Parish Council at 7.30 pm on Friday 10th January 2020 in Parbold WI Hall.

Present: Cllr Bithell (Vice Chairman), Cllr Blake, Cllr Gill, Cllr Holland, Cllr Stopford.

Vice-Chairman Cllr Bithell took the Chair.

1. To record apologies for absence

Cllr Butts absence excused due to illness. Apologies accepted from Cllr Arnold, Cllr Carruthers, Cllr Quirk, Cllr Schaffel

2. To receive declarations of interest

None declared.

3. To sign as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held 6th December 2019

The Minutes were accepted as a correct record of the meeting and duly signed by the Chairman.

4. Public Participation: The meeting will be adjourned for an appropriate time (four minutes maximum per speech) for members of the public to raise matters of concern or interest as notified to the Chairman.

With the development of large estates on the periphery of the parish ie Whalleys Farm land (Dalton's Way and The Woodlands), Skelmersdale would it be fair to anticipate that there will be new homeowners wishing to send their children into Parbold for school? The only concern is the increase in traffic and exacerbation of the parking issues already experienced around the schools. It would be helpful if the parish council had information on the catchment area that the schools serve. It is mostly parents accessing Parbold Douglas Academy that obstruct other traffic passing through the village on Lancaster and Tan House Lanes and it may be time to engage with school management once again to find a solution.

A concern was raised about the possibility of the former car sales site re-opening as a car wash. The Clerk was asked to obtain information as to whether this would require a change of use planning application.

Also, the clerk was asked if a planning application had been received for redevelopment of the former RBS building Scarisbrick House on The Common and she confirmed that there had been no formal notification of an application. However, Application Number 2019/1265/FUL was seen on the WLBC website as pending.

5. To confirm permission for Parbold Village Festival Committee & Parbold Unlimited to use Alder Lane Playing Fields in July 2020

It was resolved, in principle to grant permission for use of the fields however a proper understanding of the structure and organisation of the two groups is required and Councillors want documentary evidence of insurance showing that the Parish Council is indemnified.

As usual no heavy vehicles are to be taken onto the playing fields and any damaged caused should they do so will be repaired at the cost of the festival committee/Parbold Unlimited.

No request for funding will be considered unless that request is put forward in writing with a set of accounts from the previous event. A full itinerary of events will be required detailing a named person with overall responsibility at each stage and if alcohol is to be served written proof that licensing is in place and WLBC have authorised the sale of alcohol.

The Parish Council is happy to co-operate with multiple users but planning and policy needs to be understood by all. These requirements are to ensure compliance with the lease (between Parbold Parish Council & West Lancs Borough Council) for the playing fields which details:

Clause (1) Use is limited to that of a none commercial recreational purpose

Clause (10) Indemnification - The Parish Council have to indemnify WLBC against all losses or damages. This liability must be passed on to any authorised users who are in control of events

Clause (13) Not to sell liquor without the consent of West Lancs.

6. Village Hall Issues:-

- **To note issues of parking**

The parking complaints were addressed by hall users who have been asked to place cones outside on the road to prevent overcrowding-parking at popular events. This will be monitored.

- **Any update on Main Hall Heating scheme**

The lead-contractor has produced a plan for the first phase of the work, the underfloor heating. The project is proceeding according to that plan. The PCA has scheduled the previous weekend and Monday January 20th for work to clear the site and to store/protect equipment in the hall. The last weeks of February will be given over to restoring the full facilities. Invoices are likely to be presented in late February.

7. To ratify accounts and authorise payment of accounts presented

201219	RBS	Bank charges	d.d.	£5.00
281219	E A Broad	salary November 2019	s.o.	£818.63
281219	NEST Pension (£27.89 from parish, rest is employee contribution) £94.83			

10012020	Wrightington Windows	Cleaning at village hall	2888	£25.00
10012020	Parbold WI	Room hire 7th and 10th January	2889	£49.50
10012020	Argus Security	Annual check of cctv equipment VH	2890	£96.00*
10012020	Fire Equipment Services	VH annual fire alarm check	2891	£184.80
10012020	SLCC	Training course website compliance	2892	£40.00
10012020	Brian Arnold	Annual Chairman's Allowance	2893	£100.00

*contain VAT. The accounts were ratified and authorised for payment.

8. To consider notes of Budget Meeting on 8th January 2020 and set precept for Financial Year 2020/21

Parbold Parish Council resolved to request £33,638.00 (Thirty-three thousand, six hundred and thirty seven pounds).

An anticipated council tax support grant of £1,362.00 will give available funds of £35,000.00, which is deemed necessary to meet the needs of running the Parish Council as determined by the budget review.

9. To note Planning and Planning Applications

No current Borough applications to consider however the LCC Parbold Hill Landfill Application was responded to as follows:

Objection on behalf of Parbold Parish Council

To amended planning application LCC/2019/0028: Former Parbold Hill Quarry

(This objection is made to the amended planning application as notified to Parbold Parish Council on Friday 6 December 2019. Please note that our original objection still stands in every respect other than the specific matters to which this objection refers).

ACCESS

The proposed access would be repositioned, and sited a few metres beyond the western extremity of the existing lay-by at the top of Parbold Hill, leaving the lay-by intact.

In the position now proposed, the formation of the access for HGV tipping lorries would require excavation of a substantial earth bank. The bank rises directly from the carriageway edge, and carries the public footway which runs from the lay-by, safely over the summit of the Hill and down, ultimately to the public viewing area at the 'Parbold Bottle' commemorative monument.

The access proposal emphatically does not represent an improvement to the scheme, for the following reasons:

(1) At this point, visibility onto the highway is restricted in both directions: looking eastwards, by the brow of the hill; and looking westwards, by a bend in the road. Visibility is slightly better looking westwards, but it is primarily right-turn manoeuvres which would involve the need for a clear westward view: and right-turn movements would be slower and take longer. Also, the gradient of the road is shallower westwards, a factor which tempts cars to overtake slower vehicles as they near the top of the hill and approach the bend. Looking eastwards from the entry point, vehicles approaching the top of the hill could not be seen until they had crested the hill. The available visibility splays would be inadequate to provide a safe access for HGVs at this point even if the existing speed limit (60mph) were reduced.

(2) To form an access would require the excavation and removal of a large volume of material forming the existing earth bank. This would substantially disrupt the appearance of the hilltop over a wide area, especially as the excavation would not simply be 2 lanes wide, to allow 2 HGVs to pass each other, but would have to be much wider than this in order to provide any sort of visibility splay (albeit that we say this would be inadequate in any case).

(3). The proposed access would prevent pedestrians from using the existing footway, which runs along the site boundary close to (but not quite at) the top of the bank. If the footway were to be retained, a flight of steps would have to be provided from carriageway level (to which the bank would have to be excavated) in order to reach the level of the existing footway. This would limit pedestrian access to the existing popular public viewing area at the 'Bottle' monument: they would either have to cross the new HGV access road and negotiate the long flight of steps; or be forced to cross the A5209 carriageway twice in order to reach the monument, and twice again on the way back. Given that Parbold Hill is a busy road with a lot of fast-moving traffic including HGVs, this would increase danger for pedestrians.

PPC Objection Part 2

SURFACE WATER DRAINAGE

The Applicant insists that the proposal to tip material on top of the existing uneven cap would result in improved drainage, through limiting infiltration into the cap, and encouraging runoff. We would dispute this, as it has not been demonstrated exactly where surface water would go, and whether runoff would have potentially harmful effects.

Excavation of the quarry disrupted the former drainage pattern, which appears in any case to have involved infiltration via the gritstone and the emergence of water along a spring line at the level where the gritstone met the underlying coal measures. The tipped material has very different properties, including the likelihood of voids within it (anecdotal evidence suggests that tipped stone and rubble was in practice not crushed before tipping as planning conditions demanded, but often simply dumped in situ). Environment Agency maps suggest 'preferred' routes for the drainage of water, in a southward direction down the hill, across the landfill: but this cannot be confirmed on the ground, and there is no sign of streams, surface or sub-surface, in the area of the landfill or between the landfill and Wood Lane.

On the adjacent open farmland to the west and south-west, beyond the boundary of the former quarry, recent heavy rain has washed away a great deal of topsoil in which seed had

been planted. This has happened despite much attention having been paid to soakaway drainage prior to planting. The soil was washed down onto the carriageway surface of Wood Lane. It is likely that a similar effect would occur all over the new cap now proposed for the top of the former landfill. There is no existing watercourse on or adjacent to the landfill site into which surface water could be directed. Leaving it 'up to nature' could bring future problems in the woodland to the south of the site, along the southern stretch of Wood Lane, and possibly create further problems on the adjacent farmland to the southwest.

PPC Objection Part 3

LEACHATE

The information newly submitted by the Applicant is welcome to the extent that it recognises points which the Parish Council (and others) have raised previously in relation to leachate. However, we do not consider that the Applicant has been able to substantiate a case for any need, for a scheme of the proposed kind and on the proposed scale, to 'solve' an alleged 'problem'.

The former landfill was established on the 'dilute and disperse' principle which was very commonly used in practice in landfills all across the UK at that time and for many years beforehand. It relies upon the infiltration of water to break down chemicals contained in the landfill, to use underlying permeable strata in effect as a filter, and to disperse the resulting leachate through the surrounding rocks, where it would be rendered harmless over time. All these factors apply in the case of Parbold Quarry landfill.

The view of the regulatory bodies and consequently of the waste industry on the use of the 'dilute and disperse' principle have changed over time, in particular under the influence of the EU with the imposition of its own demanding regimes of environmental standards. Landfilled waste is now commonly contained and isolated within sealed cells. However, in the case of many earlier landfill sites, sufficient time has now elapsed since the ending of the 'dilute and disperse' regime for the work of water infiltration to have operated quite effectively to prevent pollution, to the point where leachate is no longer a problem. The Applicant's submitted evidence concludes that significant dilution occurs in wet periods. We say that this is surely a good thing? But the Applicant maintains otherwise.

The Applicant alleges, in effect, that the infiltration of increased amounts of rainwater into the existing landfill mass has resulted in unreasonable and unmanageable quantities of leachate, and that in the absence of the proposed development, unreasonable expense will be incurred in pumping the leachate for disposal (at Appley Bridge) into the public foul sewer.

However, there are numerous questions surrounding the pumping of the leachate, which have not been adequately answered.

Firstly, there is no planning condition which explicitly requires leachate to be pumped. It is said that the implication of keeping the leachate 'sump' at a constant maximum level would in itself require surplus leachate to be pumped away from the site. But the quantity said to have been pumped is so small in proportion to the amount of total calculated water infiltration that the question remains - what has happened to the rest? And if it has leaked into the surrounding land mass, it appears to have done so without any harmful impact in terms of pollution, as no significant pollution of groundwater or surface water has been identified.

(The single, odd example of ammoniacal nitrogen is probably something to do with agriculture somewhere in the surrounding fields).

If there really is a continuing requirement to pump, it is unlikely to continue for long, as further dilution and attenuation of the leachate takes place. Reducing infiltration would prolong higher concentrations of potential pollutants within the leachate. The nearest Groundwater Protection Zone lies some 6 kilometres to the west of the site. There is no need for concern here about drinking water (none is abstracted) or about pollution of groundwater or of watercourses. Sampling evidence indicates that there is no current impact on groundwater quality or on surface water quality in the immediate area or anywhere else.

There is some doubt, in any case, concerning the extent to which leachate has actually been pumped from the Parbold site. We are not satisfied, on the basis of the submitted evidence, of this. The equipment is in poor condition, suggesting that it is unusable. Monitoring records are quoted in the Applicant's evidence: but it is not clear at what precise point in the system these readings were taken. There is a suggestion locally, which cannot be refuted on the basis of the evidence submitted, that the pipe has been blocked and attempts have been made to clear it.

PPC Objection Part 4

The Quantity of Material to be Tipped

The current proposal is to tip 88,000 tonnes of inert waste. This represents a very considerable reduction as compared with the original quantities proposed.

The Applicant states that this is "the minimum amount of material necessary". However, this assertion is nowhere explained, substantiated or justified.

The previous planning permission allowed tipping to the point at which the site contours resembled those which existed before the hill was quarried. Planning conditions did not state that the original site profile must be replicated. (It is doubtful that the original contours were ever in fact reached, because anecdotal evidence is that tipping operations were concluded hastily when the adjacent landowner refused an extension of the lease on the haul road from sidings at Appley Bridge).

Subsequent sinkage of the landfill has occurred for various reasons. But there is no demonstrable reason why the original profile - or anything like it - should be restored.

The Appellant's 'Landform Maintenance Method Statement' does provide for the repair of the joint between the engineered clay cap and the quarry sidewall, and for the repair of other cracks in the clay cap (and also for the eradication of Japanese Knotweed through the removal of contaminated soils: also for the 'finishing' of the surface area with topsoil so that suitable vegetation can be encouraged. These measures are welcome, and are no doubt required by the Environment Agency.

But the tipping of as much as 88,000 tonnes of material (including inert waste as well as the final topsoil) is nowhere justified by the evidence. No attempt has even been made to justify it on the basis of the expense involved in providing a new access for tipping. We see no reason why the existing access from Parbold Hill, and the existing haul road along the

northern perimeter of the site, could not be used to gain access for tipping in the area where some degree of tipping is required.

It remains the case, in our view, that the defects in the existing landfill cap are being used by the Applicant as an opportunity for tipping which might be classified as restoration work, and thus provide a commercial opportunity to dispose of waste while avoiding landfill tax.

Conclusion

We acknowledge that the Applicant has made an attempt to respond to the many objections made to the original proposal, including our own.

However, we maintain our objection, to the amended proposal, on similar grounds:
That the proposed tipping goes far beyond any import of material which might be necessary to repair damage to the original cap, both in its central area and at its junction with the quarry sidewall;

That the proposal cannot be justified by reference to surface water drainage or to the production and disposal of leachate;

That the proposal may cause surface water problems on adjacent land;

That the access now proposed would cause highway danger and inconvenience on Parbold Hill, both for the drivers of vehicles and for pedestrians;

And, finally, that there are no very special circumstances in this case sufficient to outweigh the harm caused by inappropriate development in the Green Belt, together with other harm which has been identified.

We ask that this planning application be refused.

10. To confirm article for PCA newsletter

The following text was agreed and it was requested that problems of parking around the schools be added to the next newsletter.

Just a reminder that the Village Hall will be undergoing a major project to replace the outdated heating system in the main hall. This may result in some noise disturbance for neighbours, for which we apologise and will keep to a minimum and will result in restrictions to parking and the non-availability of the car park on occasions. Construction vehicles will require the use of the car park so it is strongly recommended that private vehicles avoid the area, as all cars are parked their at owner's risk.

Inconsiderate parking is causing concern at present. If you are attending a local event, please consider leaving your vehicle at home and walking. There have been particular worries about parking for village hall events around the Greenfield Avenue area. Over Christmas there were so many cars parked there that there was no room for emergency vehicles to fit through. Do remember the Highway Code and don't park on corners or double-park. Please note the restricted parking around the shops as this area is to facilitate passing trade and not rail commuters and avoid parking on the Tan House Lane/Brandreth Drive junction. All these areas are becoming commonly used for prolonged stay parking and it is putting people at risk

as they are dangerous to negotiate when cluttered with parked cars because drivers' visibility is severely reduced and larger vehicles, including emergency services cannot get through.

11. To confirm Poppy Wreath Presentation for November 2020

It was resolved to re-use the wreathes and continue the donation to the Royal British Legion without ordering new wreathes. The churches will be asked to store the wreathes from one Remembrance celebration to the next.

12. Councillors' agenda items for future meetings

Cllr Holland - Add school parking problems to a future agenda please. Ask school for statistics of their catchment areas; general data, where pupils live, how many make their own way and how many are accompanied to the school. Encourage those in walking distance to walk and put something into the PCA newsletter.

Cllr Bithell - review of the financial situation with regard to business banking switch. Clerk would prefer that this await the end of the financial year at 31st March 2020 and conclusion of the village hall heating project to ease the heavy work load at this time of year.

Cllr Stopford - return to issue of cctv at Alder Lane, and extra playground equipment at Burnside. With approximately £3k CIL money to spend on it could there be an application to Whitemoss fund (Grantscape) to add to the fund and get something substantial?

All Councillors requested an item to decide whether paper agenda and Minutes be distributed as some would prefer electronic documents and others would prefer to have paper. It was agreed to add to the next agenda and Councillors can chose whether to have paper or electronic communications. One email to contain all documents required for the meeting will be attempted though this will not be possible where late information arrives.

Cllr Blake - Parbold Landfill group met again and appear to be in need of funding. As it is an issue affecting residents adversely Section 137 monies could be applied because

A Parish Council, in accordance with its powers under section 137 LGA 1972, may incur expenditure which, in the opinion of the Council, is in the interests of the area or its inhabitants and will benefit them in a manner commensurate with the expenditure

However, the group themselves must make the approach and include accounts as the legislation adds [at Section 137A.(4)] *It shall be a sufficient compliance with a requirement imposed that there is furnished to the local authority concerned an annual report or accounts which contain the information required to be in the stated. And at Section (5) A statement (or any report or accounts) provided to a local authority in pursuance of such a requirement shall be deposited with the proper officer of the authority.*

There being no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 8.45 pm.

Cllr Brian Arnold
Chairman

7th February 2020

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