

MICKLEFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE EXTRAORDINARY MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 18 JANUARY 2024

MEMBERS PRESENT: Cllr J L Auty, Cllr D Brown, Cllr J A Crossley, Cllr P Meir, Cllr E A Robertson and Cllr G E Whysall

ALSO PRESENT: Public (9)

In Attendance: J L Hebden, Clerk to Micklefield Parish Council

The meeting opened at 7.32pm and was chaired by the chairman, Cllr J A Crossley.

24/X1 – DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

There were no disclosures of interest for the purposes of the Localism Act 2011, s31 and the Councillor Code of Conduct para 9 and Appendix B paras 4 – 9.

24/X2 – APOLOGIES

Members received apologies from Cllr R M Czwarno, Cllr N Duff and Cllr G A Rycroft.

Proposed by Cllr J A Crossley

Seconded by Cllr P Meir

RESOLVED by unanimous vote to approve Cllr R M Czwarno's, Cllr N Duff's and Cllr G A Rycroft's reasons for absence.

24/X3 – DISPENSATION REQUESTS

No dispensation requests were received by the Clerk prior to the meeting.

24/X4 – ORGANISATIONS

Cllr J A Crossley gave an overview of the different organisations and agencies involved with Peckfield landfill site, their respective roles and the interface that the Parish Council has through its representative membership of the Peckfield Landfill Site Liaison committee.

Members noted the following information:

- Caird Peckfield manages the landfill site
- The Environment Agency (EA) monitors the site in accordance with Caird Peckfield's permit to operate
- Leeds City Council checks that the site is operating within its planning approval and the conditions applied to the approval
- Micklefield Parish Council has three representatives on Peckfield Landfill Site Liaison Committee. Other committee members include Micklefield residents, Kippax and Methley ward council members and the director of Caird Peckfield
- Leeds City Council also has the ability to investigate site operations via its Scrutiny Board, which was the case between 2015 and 2017.

In respect of Parish Council representation at Peckfield Landfill Site Liaison Committee, Cllr J A Crossley offered the following information:

- Eight years ago, a proposal was considered by the committee that the Parish Council's representation be dropped from three members to one. After negotiations, three representatives were maintained
- There were problems at the recent meeting when the Parish Council's third member attended without prior notification despite the fact that the Parish Council has not routinely informed the committee chair of its representatives or their intended attendance
- To avoid confusion, the Parish Council should inform the chair that the Parish Council's current representatives to the Peckfield Landfill Site Liaison Committee are Cllr J L Auty, Cllr D Brown and Cllr R M Czwarno; that all will be attending meetings (subject to their availability) but that representatives could change in May when the positions will be considered at the annual Parish Council meeting.

24/X5 – RECENT ODOURS

Members (and members of the public present) confirmed that there had been persistent, almost daily odours, throughout October, November and December 2023 and into January 2024. Most members present and members of the public had reported the smells to the EA both before and after Christmas. A school governor present reported that on days that the smell was particularly strong, the school children were not allowed to play outside, as they had previously complained of headaches when the smell was strong. Members noted that the EA had received 182 reports of odour in December and 96 up to 16 January (figures for October and November 2023 had not been provided). They also noted that there had been problems with disconnected gas pipes, which had led to the release of gas and that the method of capping employed seemed to be 'funnelling' gas to one release spot. Cllr J A Crossley summarised the Parish Council's understanding of the cause of the odours being due to disconnected gas pipework and a methodology for capping used by Caird Peckfield that is contrary to Environment Agency advice.

24/X6 – PECKFIELD LANDFILL SITE LIAISON COMMITTEE

Members received a report on the Peckfield Landfill Site Liaison Committee meeting held on 16 January 2024. Committee members were limited to what they could report but confirmed that the EA had served enforcement notices on the site in October, November and December and would soon be making a site visit to check that any necessary work had been undertaken. The repair of the gas pipes and capping of the cell (due to be completed in 6 to 8 weeks from the liaison committee meeting) should stop the odours. No date for the completion of works to the site had been provided to the liaison committee, but it was believed to be sometime in 2024. The date of the next liaison committee meeting was Tuesday 9 April.

24/X7 – MEDIA RELATIONS

Members noted the Parish Council's current Media Relations, Social Media and Electronic Communication policy (last reviewed on 9th June 2023) and that it focused on pro-active and reactive PR, rather than raising public awareness issues related to third parties.

24/X8 – PUBLIC MEDIA

Members considered if the Parish Council should approach public media in order to publicise the odour problems. They noted that the Parish Council had relied on working within the system to affect change. They discussed the difficulties in bringing publicity to the issue at that moment in time [in view of the upcoming EA visit and the site management's stated

intention to complete cell capping in a 6 to 8 week timescale] and the realistic potential for a positive outcome. Members also noted that issues stemming from the landfill site had been taken up by the media on two previous occasions [instigated by members of the public, not the Parish Council].

(i) Proposed by Cllr P Meir
Seconded by Cllr E A Robertson

RESOLVED by a majority vote (5 for and 1 against) to approach public media in order to publicise the odour problems.

(ii) Proposed by Cllr G E Whysall
Seconded by Cllr P Meir

RESOLVED by unanimous that if, by the Parish Council meeting held on Thursday 4 April 2024, the gas pipes have been reconnected and the cell has been capped but the smells have not diminished, the Parish Council will consider its approach to public media in order to publicise the odour problems.

The meeting closed at 9.33pm.

Signed:

(Chairman)

Date:

Joanne Hebden, Clerk and RFO
Micklefield Parish Council
(Sole Trustee of Micklefield Recreation Ground Charity)

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