

KELBROOK AND SOUGH PARISH COUNCIL



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Meeting of Kelbrook and Sough Parish Council
Wednesday 29th January 2025
7.00pm Kelbrook Village Hall

DRAFT MINUTES

25.29.01.1 **Welcome**

Councillor Christine Elley welcomed all present to the meeting at 7:00pm.

25.29.01.2 **Attendance, Apologies and Non-Attendance**

Recorded attendees were Cllrs C. Elley, A. Mayers and D Galway.
Apology received from Chair, L. Katiff due to ill health.

25.29.01.3 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations recorded on the agenda items.

25.29.01.4 **Minutes of previous meeting. To approve the draft minutes from the meeting held on 13th November 2024.**

Moved to resolve at the end of agenda item 5.

25.29.01.5 **Response to questions raised at the meeting held 13th November 2024.**

Councillor Elley explained that she would be addressing and answering some of the questions previously asked by members of the public:

25.29.01.5.1 ***Where has the information been published about the AGAR?***

Access to the information is on the website, but, according to a member of the public, the document was displaying an error message. Council couldn't account for the error message, but the issue was resolved and is now on the website. Councillor Mayers confirmed it is still there. Councillor Elley went on to explain that there had been some 'blips' with the website where agendas and minutes have gone missing and despite contact with Easyweb, the issue is still not resolved. Screen shots are being taken to provide evidence of issues. Those present at the meeting were encouraged to report website issues to the Council.

25.29.01.5.2 ***Do the comments on the agenda accurately reflect what is on the AGAR certificate?***

Council had checked that, stating that all the AGAR documentation is available on the website, but went on to say that the statement on the agenda being queried was lifted verbatim from External Audit and not from Section 3 of the certificate.

25.29.01.5.3 *What is the Council doing to keep pressure on the planning committee and developers at Cob Lane to ensure it is being built to the precise specifications, and highlighted that there had been an application regarding treatment of surface water?*

Council had consulted with a member of the parish and an attenuation tank had been fitted that was supposed to deal with the surface water. Councillor Elley went on to say that the Council are not experts in planning, are lay people and do not have the expertise, but can chase things up for people. Council wanted it to be known that they are not experts, and suggested residents may wish to contact planning department themselves. Council would keep an eye on the Cob Lane Development.

25.29.01.5.4 *New Application for Land North of the Stables on Old Stone Trough Lane?*

A member of the public had pointed out that the proposed development was in fact outside the settlement boundary. At the time the Council felt that this was ok, but it wasn't. With help from a member of the parish, council responded, and planning has not gone ahead.

25.29.01.5.5 *Who is the current RFO?*

Councillor Elley reminded those present of the changes in personnel and confirmed that it was Carol Singleton who subsequently resigned. Then it was Sharon Ashley, who also resigned. RFO and Clerk is currently a shared duty with Councillor Elley as RFO. The clerk is not with us at the moment, but Karen is taking voluntary notes for us.

25.29.01.5.6 *Where is the public record of grant applications?*

Councillor Elley confirmed there was only one application from the school which was minuted 12th May 2024.

25.29.01.5.7 *Where is the public record of all payments listed for consideration and approval?*

Councillor Elley stated that the council would have to come clean and had dropped the ball and hadn't recorded them as they should have done. The question has prompted the council to make sure it doesn't happen again.

25.29.01.5.8 *Was there a cost for FOI requests and who pays?*

The question was answered at the previous meeting. Council confirmed that the cost comes out of the parish money, and it was either £604 or £640.

25.29.01.5.9 *How many FOI requests have there been in the current financial year?*

Councillor Mayers stated that the FOI log is on the website.

25.29.01.4 *Minutes of previous meeting. To approve the draft minutes from the meeting held on 13th November 2024.*

Councillor Elley asked that the minutes from the meeting held 13th November 2024 be approved and accepted. Proposed: Councillor Galway, Second: Councillor Mayers

Resolved to approve and accept the minutes of the last meeting held Wednesday 13th November 2024 as an accurate record.

25.29.01.12 *Public Participation*

Councillor Elley explained that agenda item 12, Public Participation, would be the next item as it had been incorrectly placed on the agenda. It was also made known that as there was no public forum on the agenda, questions relating to agenda items did not require prior notification and could therefore be asked on the night. Volunteer clerk advised Councillor Elley to take nonrelated agenda questions during public participation and to take agenda related questions as the item arises.

There were no non agenda related questions.

24.29.01.6 Christmas Trees and Lighting

Councillor Elley confirmed that the trees for Christmas 24 had been expensive, however, going forward, council had been offered a free 12ft tree for the coming year which will save money and will therefore be taking advantage of the offer. Council will also be talking to a local business with a view to putting lights on their tree. Other options were muted including an existing tree in the village hall car park.

Regarding the lights on the trees at the beck in Kelbrook, the council have been unable to locate the contract/service agreement signed by the previous council. Whilst attempts have been made to get the lights switched off, the company have not responded, so for now they will remain on. Much time was spent prior to Christmas trying to get the lights switched on at Sough, again, to no avail. The lights cost the parish £12k so the contract needs to be found. There is no service level agreement and Councillor Elley pointed out that £12k in comparison to the precept was a lot of money.

24.29.01.6.1 *A member of the public asked if the £12k was a one off or for a contract?*

Council confirmed it was for a contract but without a copy of the contract it is difficult to resolve. Councillor Mayers confirmed she has spoken to the installation company, and they have stated there is no agreement for them to do anything. Councillor Galway stated that the lights may well be on all year.

24.29.01.6.2 *A member of the public asked who pays for the electricity?*

Council responded that nobody pays as it comes from the grid, and we do not pay.

24.29.01.6.3 *A member of the public asked ... In relation to Sough Christmas Tree Are they going to get one or is the tree proposed just purely for Kelbrook?*

Councillor Mayers stated it is unlikely that the gifted tree will be in Kelbrook, so it will be in Sough.

24.29.01.7 Notices to Dog Walkers

Councillor Elley asked Councillor Galway to update the council on this matter. Councillor Galway confirmed that the signs are ready and that consultation with the local farming community would be sought regarding positioning in relation to people walking dogs on farmland. Councillor Mayers re-iterated the council's intent to bring the local farming community together to get their help with this. Councillor Galway confirmed that posts still needed to be procured, however, questions will be asked to try and avoid having to buy them. A member of the public offered help. Councillor Galway stated that Stuart Ellis will also be helping.

24.29.01.8 Setting the Precept (See Appendix)

Councillor Elley stated that the council had had a good stab at the budget and went on to explain what the precept is, likening it to a household budget and confirmed that most of the budget was for paying bills and if there was anything left it could be spent in the community. Councillor Elley confirmed that within the budget an amount had been set aside for Sough Park stating that it has been an ongoing issue and that various discussions had been had with Pendle Borough Council and Earby Town Council on the subject. Whilst it is in the budget Council are not sure what to do as yet stating that if it is not used on Sough Park then the money can be redeployed on other things within the village. Council Elley confirmed that the budget had been set, and the precept would not increase, therefore, remaining the same as last year.

24.29.01.8.1 *A member of the public asked a question in relation to Sough Park What's the latest, what's going on, has there been any discussions?*

After confirming that no discussions had taken place, Councillor Mayers reminded Councillor Elley that there had been some discussion. Councillor Mayers confirmed that the council attended a meeting with WCAC and other interested parties stating that Earby Town Council didn't attend and hadn't attended other meetings on the subject of Sough Park. Councillor Mayers went on to say that Earby Town Council had a meeting on Monday where they definitively said they are not supporting it, they are not going to fund Sough Park, but also stated it was not a decision forever It's a decision that they have taken at this moment in time because they don't feel they are getting the information they want or that Pendle Borough Council are doing the work that's needed to find funding from elsewhere. If any of that changes, Councillor Mayers felt they may come back on board. Following on with a personal opinion that the park should not be allowed to fall into disrepair, Councillor Mayers stated that this was a decision for the community to take and imagined that in the not too distant future, a public meeting would have to be called to see what the community wants.

24.29.01.8.2 *The member of the public asked if there are any further discussions planned or are the council going to discuss it in a meeting?*

Councillor Mayers re-iterated that the council would have a public meeting and are talking to David Whipp a lot confirming that he had messaged to say that they will stump up as much as they can find from other pots to be able to continue with the maintenance.

24.29.01.8.3 *The member of the public asked Can I just confirm whether the gates will be shut or Sough Park will be shut as per ?*

Councillor Mayers confirmed that David Whipp had messaged today to say he forgot that 'that was said at the meeting'.

24.29.01.8.4 *The member of the public asked So, what he said at WCAC wasn't true?*

Councillor Mayers confirmed it was said at the meeting and that different people remember different things.

24.29.01.8.5 *The member of the public asked So, they are saying the gates can be closed?*

Councillor Mayers replied NO.

24.29.01.8.6 *The member of the public asked So, the gates can't be closed?*

Councillor Mayers replied NO, but the conversation about the gates being closed took place at a meeting about Sough Park.

24.29.01.8.7 *The member of the public askedBut they can't be?*

Councillor Mayers replied NO.

24.29.01.9 AGAR Planning

Councillor Elley confirmed that the AGAR Internal Audit would take place on 11th April 2025.

24.29.01.10 Planning Matters

No new planning matters had been received however Council had been asked to attend a site meeting to discuss a footpath at Craven Game Barn also being discussed at WCAC which council will also be attending.

24.29.01.11 To approve the financial report (See Appendix)

Councillors considered expenditure, income, bank reconciliation and payments for approval according to appendix.

Resolved: To approve all of the above.

24.29.01.11.1 **Approve spend for an additional Laptop.**

Councillor Mayers asked for approval to purchase a new laptop for the clerk. Background information is that council currently have two laptops. One that will not run anything above Windows 7 making it very difficult to use as it is not compatible with today's software for communication and file transfer between the clerk and councillors.

To approve a purchase of approx. £600. Quotes presented and reviewed.

Resolved: Council agreed to purchase a new laptop for the clerk.

24.29.01.13 **Date of next meeting**

Councillor Elley confirmed that the date of the next meeting would be 19th March 2025.

24.29.01.14 **Exclusion of the Press and Public**

Councillor Elley brought the meeting to a close in order for the council to consider agenda items 15 and 16 in private session, thanking all who attended for coming to the meeting.

Volunteer clerk also left the meeting at this point. Minutes for agenda items 15 and 16 to be taken by Councillor Mayers.

24.29.01.15 **Clerks Contract, hours and rate of pay.**

Draft contract was presented to the council for consideration. Hours agreed at 21.66 per calendar month, pay scale 14 within the range of LC1 as set out in the National Agreement of Salaries and Conditions of Service of Local Council Clerk in England and Wales. Employment to commence 1st February 2025.

Resolved: To offer contract of employment to Karen Elizabeth Shorrocks for Kelbrook and Sough Parish Council RFO and Clerk.

24.29.01.16. **To consider applications for Co-optee Councillor Roles**

Council considered two applications from parishioners. The first was from a previous councillor, Sharon Ashley who had resigned due to work/life balance issues. Having resolved those issues, Sharon felt that she was now able to resume the role and had much to offer. Council was happy to welcome Sharon Ashley back as a member of the council.

Resolved: That Sharon Ashley be accepted as a co-optee onto Kelbrook and Sough Parish Council.

The second application considered was from parishioner Heidi XXXX who the council felt has much to offer the council and community. With a business-based skill set and an eye for detail Heidi will be able to contribute to all aspects of council business.

Resolved: That Heidi Wright be accepted as a co-optee onto Kelbrook and Sough Parish Council.