

**MUKER PARISH COUNCIL**  
**MINUTES OF PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD AT 7.30PM Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> December 2023**  
**THE MUKER VILLAGE INSTITUTE**

The Parish Council meeting was held on the 7<sup>th</sup> December 2023.

Councillors: Cllr Porter, Cllr Reynoldson, Cllr Rukin, , and Cllr Calvert Chair presiding.

The Clerk was Mr Michael Cleminson. Also, present Mr J. Wainwright NYC, Mr C. Stanley Chair for Muker Village Hall and Mr R. Miles for the Farmers Arms Community buy out.

- 1. Apologies for Absence:** Cllr Metcalf and Cllr Peacock.
- 2. Declaration of Interests:** None.
- 3. Minutes of previous meeting:** The Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 5 October 2023 have been circulated. The Minutes were approved as a true and accurate record. Proposed By Cllr Rukin and Seconded by: Cllr Reynoldson
- 4. Matters Arising**

Emergency Planning. Mr Jason Wainwright The Emergency Planning Officer for North Yorkshire Council (NYC) presented to Muker Parish Council details of how emergency planning works for communities. He referred to the Melbeck Council Emergency Plan, which could be used as a template or tailored to suit the needs of the Parish. Muker Village Hall is already being progressed towards a Community Satellite Hub. Mr Wainwright stated that Northern Powergrid, following Storm Arwen, had allocated money for councils to seek a grant for equipping a Community Satellite Hub. Grants of up to £20,000 per year are available. Although the bidding process has closed for this year, the Parish Council should consider seeking grants for 2 generators, one for Keld Village Hall and one for Muker, and he would assist with any applications. A brief discussion took place about the installation, security and management of generators. Mr Stanley thought that Muker Village Hall was capable of accommodating a generator, and likewise Keld was also considered suitable. Because of BT moving to digital lines making telephone calls impossible during a power cut, Muker has already been allocated a satellite phone. Mr Stanley said that the satellite phone may be better suited to Keld which supports a larger, wider community.

The Councillors decided that this was not a matter for the Parish Council to progress, but a matter for the Committees of Muker and Keld Village Hall's to submit grant applications to equip both village halls as Community Hubs in the event of emergencies and to seek the necessary equipment to fulfil and equip the premises. The Councillors did not feel that the comprehensive Melbeck Emergency Plan was suitable for Muker Parish as the community is closely knit and everyone knows each other, and, as in the past, in such events, the community have worked together to deal with an emergency. It did feel that industrial type generators should be installed at both village halls to provide heat, light, drinks and communications as required. Mr Stanley will progress matters for Muker Village Hall. The Clerk is to contact the committee for Keld Village Hall and to ensure that liaison takes place between the two village halls, utilising the skills and knowledge of Mr Wainwright (NYC) to progress and submit the grant applications.

Community Buy Out - Farmers Arms Muker: Mr Richard Miles outlined the latest situation. Two meetings have taken place at Keld and Muker Village Halls. A total of 148 people expressed an interest in buying a share or making a donation. Around 40% of these were second-home owners and non-residents in the Parish. A Community Benefits Society would be created. At this time the group is currently seeking £2000 to progress the matter. Cllr Peacock indicated that some funding may be available from the Locality Fund, which would probably be match funded, advising that a bank account would be required and that the Parish Council may

permit the interim use of its bank account. The Councillors decided that the buyout should create its own bank account, as the Parish Council account is only for income and expenditure for the Parish Council. A number of groups including a Community Benefit Society and Steering Committee will be formed to progress the buyout of The Farmers Arms. There will be a further public meeting to explain current and future progress.

Defibrillators – the Clerk stated that the defibrillator at Tan Hill had been repaired and the loan returned. A new battery had been purchased for the defibrillator at Muker and new batteries will soon be required for Thwaite and Keld. New pads will be required for all 4 defibrillators in the next 3 months.

Keld War Memorial – there is a reminder that The War Memorial is the responsibility of the Parish Council, and is currently maintained by local people and at some point, a request for financial support may be made.

5. **Finance** – Setting of the Precept for 2024-2025. The Clerk outlined that the expenditure for the current year will exceed the Precept set for last year and the projection for the following year suggests it will be exceeded. The majority of annual commitments for the Parish Council have all increased. It was decided to raise the Precept to £2200. Orders to pay were raised for replenishing of salt bins and heaps, a new battery for Muker's defibrillator, a total cost of £426.

## 6. Highways

- a. Scarr House Bridge & Retaining Wall repairs, these works should be completed before Christmas 2023, and Usha Gap repairs to the erosion have now been completed.
- b. Arkengarthdale Parish have contacted Muker Parish about their experiences during the recent cold spell. Notably, the detrimental changes to NYC's Winter Highways Maintenance Policy. They have experienced dangerous road conditions preventing the delivery of services, all caused by the reduction in gritting and maintenance of the roads, outlining that they had reported these matters to NYC and copied in Mr Rishi Sunak MP. Muker Parish has had gritting removed from Silver Hill to West Stonesdale. Cllr Rukin reported that the road was treacherous at times, but had been gritted for 3 days at the start of the cold spell, and then stopped! The Clerk had spoken to Cllr Peacock who said she was aware of all the issues in the area and she was having difficulty convincing Highways to reinstate gritting in a number of areas, including Silver Hill. The policy for Priority Routes 3, i.e. Silver Hill, Cllr Rukin said the temperature in West Stonesdale was below zero in excess of three days, so should have been gritted. Also, the school bus driver was unaware that gritting had been stopped, and at times the road was impassable. Cllr Rukin reported that some vehicles had left the road and caused damage to a wall. Residents have been gritting the road themselves, where possible. The Councillors decided that in line with Arkengarthdale Parish Council, the Clerk should submit a complaint to NYC identifying the problems in the Parish, and to seek reinstatement of the gritting on Silver Hill. Mr Rishi Sunak MP to be copied in.

On a positive note. Cllr Calvert reported that the 2 potholes at Smithy Holme had been repaired today. Cllr Reynoldson reported that trees were growing into the bank and wall above Thwaite Chapel and if not attended to. it will create a similar situation to the Usha Gap erosion. The Clerk to report this to Highways.

7. **NYC** – nothing specific to report

## 8. YDNPA

Planning Ref R/06/180A/LB – Listed Building consent to retain the works undertaken in respect of cladding of the single storey outshot using Yorkshire stone masonry and artificial roof slates at Rash Grange, Muker. The Councillors viewed the photographs of the application and considered it was in keeping with the local area and supported the application. Clerk to notify Planning Dept.

**YLCA:-** nothing to report

**9. Correspondence/AOB:** nothing to report

**10. Date and Time of Next Meeting:** 7.30pm Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2024 at Muker Village Hall.

The meeting closed at 9.30 pm.