

Carlton Town Village Meeting

Members of the Parish Council

| | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Peter Dinsdale, Chairman | Town Foot (☎ 640480) |
| Raymond Brown, Vice Chairman | Park View (☎ 640409) |
| Howard Thomas | Littleside (☎ 640689) |
| David Suttill | Lane House (☎ 640380) |
| Dinah Alonso-Wilkes | High Barn (☎ 640566) |
| Carol Brown, Clerk | Park View (☎ 640409) |

Minutes of Meeting held on 7th November 2024 at 7.30pm

The purpose of the meeting was to inform the residents of Carlton of the current situation with the water supply and outline the options for replacing the existing plant.

Those present

Councillors Peter Dinsdale, Raymond Brown, Howard Thomas, Dinah Alonso-Wilkes and David Suttill and the Clerk, along with around 35 members of the community. 2 apologies from residents had also been received.

1. Welcome and Introduction

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and outlined the purpose and format of the meeting. A PowerPoint slideshow would be presented followed by the opportunity to ask questions. He also expressed his thanks to everyone involved in the water supply especially Jenny Walker for all her hard work, David Llewellyn and the Yorkshire Water Funding Committee.

2. Report from David Llewellyn – Yorkshire Water Funding Committee (YWFC)

David Llewellyn explained the role of the YWFC to look for possible funding opportunities to facilitate the Yorkshire Water option. The YWFC had engaged with North Yorkshire Council (NYC), DEFRA and Yorkshire Water (YW) during their investigations and explained that the scheme did not meet a lot of the criteria required for funding opportunities. He also stated that Yorkshire Water would not reduce the quote received. The YWFC posted regular updates to the Parish Council and on the Parish Website of their progress but were unfortunately unable to find any funding. The YWFC were therefore dissolved but a list of questions had been handed over to the Parish Council to communicate to NYC for answers. David Llewellyn thanked all involved in the YWFC for all their hard work, with a special thanks to Marina Briggs.

3. Parish Council Position

Councillor Dinsdale then started the PowerPoint presentation with the opportunity for members of the community to ask questions at the end. Councillor Dinsdale explained that as no funding is available for the Yorkshire Water option, the Parish Council feel it is unable to facilitate this option and therefore the community water supply would be the best option for the village.

Councillor Dinsdale explained that the water charter was written in 1891, and Carlton Parish has provided spring water to residents since then, providing a legal obligation and are thus responsible for the water provision to 107 connections in Carlton. The operation of the supply is run by volunteers and the current plant requires daily visits and emergency repairs, the costs of which is acquired through the village precept by residents and donations from businesses. The Parish Council has approximately £50000 - £58076 in reserve and Councillor Brown explained that the current water plant is on its last legs and needs replacing. Jenny Walker also explained that she is cajoling the plant at present until a new plant is installed. She also explained that parts are becoming obsolete due to the age of the plant and therefore becoming difficult to service by Culligans. The next scheduled service is due in April 2025.

4. Replacement Water Plant and Supply

Councillor Dinsdale explained that the Parish Councils agenda is to continue to provide safe potable water whilst meeting regulations. The aim is also to improve the quality of the water, less colourisation and to implement UV treatment, to utilise modern technology as an early warning system to reduce the need for daily checks and to safeguard the future provision of the water supply.

Councillor Dinsdale thanked the Suttill family for their generosity for allowing the Parish Council to utilise the supply from there field. Tests of this supply has indicated the same high iron levels as the existing supply but with the increased clarity of the water this will allow the chlorine to work more efficiently and the use of UV filters to be utilised. The village should be using approximately 35-40m³ daily but at present is using approximately 70-80m³ daily due to leaks. Tests have

indicated that even in the driest periods the new spring will supply 50m³ daily and has been tapped into a small collection tank for observation and connection to the new plant. Although the new supply is cleaner and more reliable the volume produced is considerably less than the existing source and will need pumping through the new plant but will be supplemented by the bore hole and 'u bend' supply. A new water extraction licence would need to be gained along with the purchase of a 20000ltr storage tank to feed the new plant at a cost of approximately £20000, which would need to be positioned above the water hut and installed prior to the contractors installing the new plant.

The Parish Council has acquired two quotes for a new water treatment plant, H & H Water Services in Ripon and Culligans (our existing contractor). Both quotes came in at approximately £60000 - £65000 including filters and UV, on top of the cost for a storage tank of £20,000. Councillor Dinsdale explained that both contractors would be looked at by the Community Working Water Committee with consideration not only on cost but also plant specifications and service contracts and forward their justifications to the Parish Council for a final decision. It is estimated that with maintenance the new plant should have a lifespan of approximately 30 years.

Question raised by a member of the community:

Had the Parish Council investigated funding for the Yorkshire Water option and are there other places in the country in a similar situation?

Councillor Dinsdale asked David Llewelyn (YWFC) to answer this question. David explained that funding had been sought but the project did not meet the criteria required and no funding was therefore available. However, there was possible funding for water meters and the Parish Council could follow this up. He explained that there was a similar scheme in Herefordshire, but they would not provide the committee with any information. Councillor Alonso-Wilkes stated that there were over 200 private water supplies in North Yorkshire alone. David also stated that a letter had been sent to Yorkshire Water asking them to lower the costs of the Yorkshire Water option but stated that their reply was not favourable. Councillor Brown stated that Yorkshire Water will not provide a firm quotation for this option and the quote given could change. He also stated that a video had been put together by Ray Russell highlighting the community spirit of Coverdale and sent to North Yorkshire Council for the Mayor of North Yorkshire, but no response had been received from this.

Question raised by a member of the community:

What would happen if the Parish Council walked away?

Councillor Dinsdale explained that the Parish Council had a meeting with Carl Les and North Yorkshire Council and explained that North Yorkshire Council would then take over the running of the community water supply if the Parish Council walked away from the project. Councillor Brown stated that as the Parish Council operates the water supply it is classed as a contract and the Parish Council could enforce the community water supply option on the community, however he expressed his wishes for the community to work with the Council on this project to enable it to move forward. He also stated that in the future Yorkshire Water could possibly go back into public ownership and the Yorkshire Water option could be looked at again if that were to happen.

5. Infrastructure/Mains

Councillor Dinsdale explained that to replace the mains could cost in the region of £650,000 and cause significant disruption to the village. He also stated that decisions need to be made on how to finance this in the future and asked for help from the community to organise an investment structure.

At present there are two significant bursts which Councillor Brown stated were between the Foresters Arms and Melbecks Studio and Melbecks Studio to Littleaside. Councillor Brown stated that contractors were coming out next week to investigate the leaks along with a further possible leak at Butchers Bridge. Councillor Brown and Mathew Wilkes (Community Working Water Committee) would investigate Butchers Bridge before the contractors arrive. Councillor Dinsdale stated that even with the mains being nearly 140 years old, previous contractors had found the actual mains pipe in good condition and that most problems arose from the offshoots to individual premises. Councillor Brown stated that having looked at the Parish Council accounts the cost of maintaining the mains over the last 10 years was £2.80 per household per year and the previous 10 years was £10.90 per household per year but this figure was not as accurate as the former 10 years as the records were not as detailed and were unable to differentiate what was reimbursed by insurances, etc.

6. Finance

Councillor Dinsdale explained that the new plant would cost approximately £80,000 - £90,000 plus unknown legal costs and infrastructure costs. The Parish Council has a reserve fund of approximately £50,000 towards the costs which would leave a shortfall of £30,000. Councillor Dinsdale asked for members of the community to help look at possible funding options and form a group to help facilitate this. He explained that North Yorkshire Council had tentatively offered help to gain funding for legal/professional fees and a possibility of a loan which would be repayable through the precept. A member of the community who had been on the YWFC stated that small funding options were available.

7. Legal Structure/Water Charter – Long Term Funding

Councillor Dinsdale stated the legal position of the water supply needs updating and asked for volunteers to come forward. Councillor Alonso-Wilkes stated that possibly selling Parish land could also be an option for funding of the water supply. A member of the community expressed they're thanks to the Parish Council and all the volunteers helping to run the water supply but stated they were concerned about legal issues. Councillor Brown stated that years ago Yorkshire Water were responsible for the day-to-day monitoring and legal requirements of the plant, but this was taken back by the Parish Council approximately 20 years ago.

Question raised by a member of the community:

What is the Parish Council looking for from the community?

Councillor Dinsdale explained that the Parish Council would like volunteers to help form a sub-committee to help find options for funding and management of the water supply. Whether this be continuing to operate the water supply by the Parish Council or possibly a separate entity, eg, charity or limited company. Possibly a new charging method or one-off payment to fund ongoing costs. He also stated that considerations need to be made that are fair and equitable and value for money. Protocols need to be established along with liability and security especially for volunteers. Future infrastructure costs and a decision-making mechanism put in place.

Councillor Dinsdale gave examples of the following groups which would possibly be helpful to the Parish Council:

Technical Group – to facilitate to new plant.

Governance and Legal Group – Water Charter, legal responsibilities.

Finance and Management Group – Funding, Charity, Limited Co, Community Ownership, Parish Council.

A member of the community explained that they had spoken to Vicky Flowers at North Yorkshire Council and had discussed a Community Ownership Company. This would ask each household for a one-off payment for a share in the water supply. They explained that the benefits of this would alleviate a lot of legal issues and provide funding for the new plant.

8. Any other business

Councillor Dinsdale asked for volunteers to approach himself or the Parish Clerk to put their names forward to help form a sub-committee. He also stated that the process is going to take to time. Councillor Brown asked members of the community if they would provide the Parish Clerk with updated email addresses for ease of communication.

Councillor Dinsdale expressed his thanks to the community for attending the meeting.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.50pm.