**LOVERSALL PARISH COUNCIL**

**Minutes of Ordinary Meeting**

**06 September 2017, 7.30pm at the WI Hut, Loversall**

**In Attendance:** Councillors Nicola Harris, Spencer Morris, Nigel Tomlinson, Keith Wilson (Chair), Colin Wright, DMBC Councillors Nigel Cannings and Martin Greenhalgh

**Clerk to the Council:** Lindsay Wilson

**Loversall Residents:** Mrs S Lee, Mr G Revill, Mr S Rose

**Apologies:** None received

1. **Declaration of interest in items on agenda:** It was acknowledged that all those present had an interest in how they personally and the village would be affected by the planning application on the agenda.
2. **Minutes of the meeting** held on 05.07.17 (previously circulated) were accepted as a true record of that meeting and signed.

**Proposed: Cllr Morris Seconded: Cllr Tomlinson**

1. **Matters arising:**
   1. **Broadband connection in Loversall.** Cllr Wilson thanked Cllrs Cannings and Greenhalgh for their investigations into the situation and reported that Openreach declare that ‘final safety checks’ are being undertaken prior to service providers being notified of the availability of improved Broadband speeds in the vicinity
   2. **Fly-tipping on Hall Balk Lane.** Cllrs Cannings and Greenhalgh reported back on communication with the relevant department to facilitate installation of the new anti-fly-tipping sign.
   3. **Doncaster Local Plan.** An extra meeting to invite a representative from the Planning Doncaster Local Plan had been arranged for Wednesday 26 July 2017, 7.30pm at the WI Hut, Loversall. However, this had to be postponed at the last moment at the Planning Department’s request. Contact will be made when they are able to continue with the consultation process.
   4. **Road Safety through Loversall village.** A Rakes Lane resident was disturbed late at night by an IPort driver trying to reach the IPort with a very large vehicle via the unmade farm road. The resident had to call the police as the (foreign) driver could not/would not leave. Cllr Wilson has followed this up with DMBC, who have declared the yellow Iport signs at the entrances to the village and Hall Balk Lane to be ‘unofficial’. Cllr Wilson is continuing to pursue this problem with DMBC.
   5. **Loversall Parish Council Audit, year ending 31 March 2017.** The annual return has been approved by the external auditor – both this and the certificate of approval were presented to the Councillors. The notice displaying the conclusion of the audit will be displayed on the Parish Council for a period of 14 days.

1. **Planning Application 17/02094/FUL – Retention of use of function room for weddings, tea room, events and meetings (sui generis) following the granting of temporary planning permission under planning application 15/01006/COU including change to red line boundary, hours of opening and for a permanent permission.**

The Chairman set the context of the application, reminding the meeting that the original planning application made in 2015 was discussed at length at a Parish Council meeting (25th March 2015) and again at a well-attended Annual Parish Meeting on May 12th 2015. Views of local residents were polarised with some very strong views opposing the application. The Parish Council made a response in the form of a detailed report and analysis, which attempted to reflect the mixed feelings of the Annual Parish Meeting and offered recommendations to DMBC from a local perspective. The Chairman commented that it was unclear whether any of the recommendations were noted by DMBC at that time or by the officers who have so far responded to the consultation on the current application. In particular the Parish Council had recommended that in determining the original application DMBC (a) carry out an assessment of the noise from the proposed event venue by sampling noise levels across the entire village and not solely close by the venue (b) carry out an impact assessment of increased traffic along the entire length of Bubup Hill (c) place a condition on the applicants to make safer the junction of the farm road with Bubup Hill (d) investigate claims that that sewerage system serving the barn (along with Loversall Nursery) had sufficient capacity to avoid problems that had already been reported. In the event, the original planning application had been granted on a temporary basis (15/1006/COU). The temporary permission granted opening hours 0900- 23.00 hrs on Saturdays, 0900-1600 hrs on Sunday and 0900-1700 hrs Monday to Friday for a period of two years.

The current application proposed: retention of the Barn as a function room for weddings, tea room, events and meetings including a change to the red line boundary, hours of opening and for a permanent permission. The hours of opening proposed were 0900-2300 hrs on every day of the week.

The Clerk reported that to date, one resident (Mr J. Finn) had responded online to the proposal and had firmly objected. The full text of the objection was read out to the meeting. A non- resident but interested party (Parish Priest, Alun Price) supported the application indicating that in his view the proposal would further support the viability of St Katherines Church. The Clerk read out the full text of the letter.

Regarding the red line boundary: The applicant (Mrs S Lee), present at the meeting, explained that the red line boundary extension was to accommodate use of a marquee and confirmed that there would be no music played in the marquee. Mrs Lee said that this fact had also been confirmed to DMBC in writing. None of the Councillors raised queries or concerns about the extension of the red line boundary.

Regarding the extended opening hours and noise: Cllr Morris raised serious concerns about the noise levels coming from events as experienced by residents of Pear Tree Mews. He commented that if the environmental health officer had found that the complaint about noise was unsubstantiated then it begged the question of how the noise assessment was carried out because the noise levels experienced in the Mews, at least, were not acceptable to residents and he had had occasion to ring the DMBC night time noise patrol. The Chairman said that he would attempt to ascertain whether the environmental health department had sampled noise at sites across the village, including Pear Tree Mews, as the parish council had originally requested. No other Councillors reported complaints made to them about noise.

In relation to traffic and road safety: The applicant pointed out that people attending events, by and large, used taxis and these were told to pick up guests in the car park area then directed to access the A60 down Bubup Hill. The Clerk reported that in the consultation on the application the Highways Development Control Officer confirmed that she had no objections to the application. At the request of the Chairman the Clerk said she had enquired what in fact would constitute a cause for concern, given that the Parish Council has, consistently and recently, raised concerns about road safety in the village and an increase in the volume of traffic could only worsen the situation. The officer in response pointed out that her interest was road safety and utility of the existing street. Only one complaint had been received and accident data showed no increase in incidents since the wedding venue opened. Regarding the volume of traffic on Bubup Hill, the Highways Development Control Officer pointed out that wider concerns regarding noise and nuisance because of traffic volumes would be for the environmental health team to investigate. Councillors living along Bubup Hill acknowledged that anecdotally there was evidence of increased traffic but this referred primarily to heavy goods vehicles, an issue which the Parish Council could consider separately.

A discussion took place as to whether the applicant could take steps to mitigate the risk of accident at the junction of the farm road and Bubup Hill, a subject of concern expressed by the council over a period of years and a request made by the Parish Council in its response to the original planning application in 2015. The applicant pointed out that the junction was used by the Loversall Farm Nursery during the day and felt that much of the risk came from parents using the nursery. The Council nonetheless suggested that action taken by “Unique Occasions” to make the junction safer would be appreciated by residents.

Regarding litter and nuisance issues: several councillors said that they noted an increase of litter in the village. After further discussion, it was agreed that if there had been an increase this could not directly be attributed to the wedding venue. Cllr Wilson said he had received reports from one resident of drunken behaviour and wedding guests wandering along Bubup Hill. The applicant responded that she did all possible to restrict the movement of guests within the perimeter of the wedding venue. She also pointed out that the empty beer cans reportedly found on Bubup Hill were unlikely to have come from wedding guests, as alcohol in cans was not available at the Barn venue. Cllr Wilson reminded Councillors that one of concerns expressed by the Parish Council regarding the original application was that the good intentions of the applicants did not mean that they could guarantee that intoxicated guests would not wander into the village and create a nuisance.

A member of the public through the Chair, asked the applicant if with the proposed extended hours there was a possibility that the Barn venue could become a pub. The applicant replied that there was a possibility that the venue could become a pub. Asked to clarify the current alcohol licensing arrangements the applicant confirmed that a licence has to be applied for in relation to each event. Councillor Greenhalgh advised the meeting that the process to obtain a pub licence was separate from the planning process and the Parish Council would do well to appraise itself of the process and the role that a parish council might play in commenting on applications.

Summing up, the Chairman said that as far as the status quo was concerned, Parish Councillors collectively had received few complaints about the wedding venue to date, none of them made formally. Regarding the current planning application: DMBC had received only one objection to the current application to date; neither DMBC environmental health nor Highways consultees opposed the application though environmental health had commented upon the lateness of opening hours during the week. On the other hand, there were concerns expressed anecdotally by a relatively small number of residents particularly about noise and nuisance and it was unclear whether the DMBC noise assessment had taken place at sites across the village as requested previously by the Parish Council. Taking account of the above the Chairman suggested that Councillors might find it helpful to first consider whether it was reasonable to object to the temporary application being made permanent on its current terms/opening hours. Next, Councillors could consider the extension of opening hours during the week. The applicant had explained quite reasonably that an extension until 7pm on Sundays would help with christening arrangements and that an extension on Fridays until 11pm would assist with wedding arrangements. However, the impact, purpose and implications of opening until 11 pm Monday to Thursday were less clear and had not been tested on a temporary basis.

The Chairman then expressed a view that although the Council could carry an objection or acceptance of the application by a majority vote he would prefer to achieve a consensus, given the strength of feeling expressed by some residents and councillors about the events venue. No dissent was expressed in relation to this approach. On asking individual councillors for their views it was apparent that there would not be unanimous support for or objection to the application. The Chairman asked if any councillor was prepared to propose an alternative to a straightforward objection or acceptance of the planning application. None were proposed.

**The Chairman then proposed that Council accept the temporary arrangements being made permanent with an extension of hours to 11pm on Fridays and 7pm on Sundays and object to the proposed extension of hours until 11pm on Monday to Thursday and on Sunday.** **This proposal; seconded by Councillor Morris and was unanimously accepted and agreed by Councillors Tomlinson, Wright and Harris.**

In addition to notifying the DMBC of the Council’s decision the Chairman asked the Clerk to attempt to arrange a meeting with Environmental Health to discuss the assessment of noise nuisance that had been carried out by DMBC.

**The next ordinary meeting of Loversall Parish Council will be held on Wednesday 25 October 2017, 7.30pm at the WI Hut**

The meeting closed at 20.50hrs

Signed ………………………………………… Date ………………………………………

Chair