

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held in the Village Hall, Main Street, Bishopthorpe on Tuesday 23rd April 2024 at 7.00pm.

Two parishioners were present:

June Whittaker of Keble Park North and Yvonne Styran of Ramsey Avenue attended the meeting.

Parish Councillors Present:

Cllr. Harrison, Cllr. Jemison, Cllr. George, Cllr. Nicholls, Cllr. Gajewicz, and Cllr. Thornton.

The Chairman opened the meeting at 7.02 pm.

1 Apologies for Absence

Cllr. Green, Cllr. Stephen, Cllr. Astbury and Cllr. Mason.

2 Meeting of the Annual Parish Meeting Tuesday 25th April, 2023

Acceptance of the minutes was proposed by Cllr Thornton. This was seconded by Cllr Nicholls and agreed unanimously.

3 Chairman's Report

The following report was delivered by Cllr. Harrison:

Good Evening Everybody – and Happy St Georges Day!

Before looking at the work undertaken by the Parish Council over the last 12 months, I would like to thank the following:

Cayley Godfrey, our Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer, for producing the minutes of our meetings and maintaining and ensuring our financial transactions are in accordance with ever more stringent rules governing our income and expenditure.

I would also like to thank all the volunteers and residents who help us with the Village Hall, Vernon House, Sports Facilities, Play Area, Sensory Garden and generally keep our village clean and tidy along with all the local contractors who help us out at a moment's notice when we have building, electrical or plumbing issues.

And I would finally like to thank all members of the Parish Council – all unpaid volunteers who put back into the village much more than they take out, to the benefit of all residents in the village. As Councillors we attend eleven monthly meetings each year and undertake further work to ensure our assets and facilities are improved and maintained for all to enjoy. As you are aware any resident of Bishopthorpe may attend our monthly meeting, several have done so during the last 12 months and hopefully we have been able to help them with their queries.

We started our year in April 2023 with eight councillors but were quickly joined by Kim Stephen and Sarah Mason, both enthusiastic and proving an asset to the Council, to enable us to reach our full complement of ten by June 2023.

One of our Parish Councillors, Michael Nicholls, was subsequently elected as the Ward Councillor for Bishopthorpe and although the Parish Council is not a political forum, we strongly believe in the importance of working with the Ward Councillor for the benefit of the village.

During the last 12 months we have discussed the following issues:

Old School Medical Practice – Doctor’s Surgery

The Parish Council have been aware for some time of potential closure of the Old School Medical Practice Doctors surgery in Bishopthorpe and combine the facilities with the Copmanthorpe Surgery. We were informed that there were two reasons for this decision: firstly, the Integrated Care Board had reviewed the overall number and location of surgeries in the whole of the country and decided funding was no longer available to support them all to the standard now required.

Secondly the owner of the practice building on Church Lane had no wish to renew the lease on the Church Lane building after July 2024.

The Parish Council stepped in to offer a room in Vernon House where a satellite surgery could be set up. We also suggested that the Doctors may wish to investigate the Junior School Caretaker’s house on Copmanthorpe Lane to see if that is fit for purpose and available to rent.

Unfortunately, we heard in February 2024 that the Doctors have declined the offer to set up a satellite surgery at Vernon House. They state that the premises are not suitable for a variety of reasons that include security of drugs, adequate waste disposal facilities and space for a receptionist.

However, we may hear further details when a representative of the Old School Medical Practice will be attending the Ward Committee on 25 April.

Development of Land to South of Sim Balk Lane.

We have received a planning application for the erection of one hundred and fourteen dwellings with access, open space, landscaping and sustainable drainage. This application was fully debated by the Parish Council who decided to object with reference to several reasons including:

- Development of Green Belt Land.
- Under-development of Brown Field sites with full planning permission.
- Skewed traffic study results.
- Absence of community and health facilities.

Vernon House

There were rumours early in 2023 that the City Council were reviewing their property assets and that Vernon House was to be included within that review. The Parish Council therefore applied for and were successful in achieving the registration of Vernon House as a Community Asset. This means that if the City Council decides to sell the building in the future, they would have to offer the property for purchase to the Parish Council first before advertising it on the open market.

However, it was confirmed in October 2023 that the City Council have agreed to extend our lease for Vernon House for a further seven years – hopefully giving us further security of the building remaining as a valuable asset to the village.

Highway Matters

20mph speed limit in Bishopthorpe – Early in the year we heard that the City Council had put forward a proposal to instigate a 20mph speed limit on a few streets in the village. Following numerous comments on Bishopthorpe Community Facebook page and emails directly to Parish Councillors it was decided the Parish Council would support a village wide 20mph limit and this was subsequently agreed by City of York Council in September 2023. I have just been informed that work on this will commence in June 2024.

Double Yellow Lines on Acaster Lane near Junction of Main Street – It was also reported in September 2023 that it had been agreed to extend the double yellow lines on both sides of Acaster Lane from Main Street towards the Bus Stop. However, I have also been just informed that these double lines have not been agreed as the proposal received two objections which will be included in the Annual Review to be undertaken this month – we await a final decision.

Public Right of Way – Chantry Lane along the riverbank to Ferry Lane

The Parish Council has been petitioning for this pathway to be recognised as a Public Right of Way (PROW) since 1994. Thirty years later the matter is still ongoing:

Following a decision by City of York Council to disallow the footpath to be designated a PROW due to an incorrect assumption that a PROW may not cross consecrated ground the Parish Council objected to the Government Planning Inspectorate in late 2022. We submitted a multitude of documents and were informed an Inspector would undertake a site visit in February 2023.

The February site visit did not take place but was rescheduled for June 2023.

The June visit was postponed and rescheduled for August 2023.

In October we were informed the Inspector agreed it should be a PROW but needed to propose this decision to allow any objections to be raised by 6 January 2024.

Following further correspondence in January and February 2024 the Government Planning Inspectorate, when asked, informed the PC that although there were objections, they would not be made public until the Inspector had made his final decision – and no date was given for the final decision. So, the saga goes on!

However, other Items discussed during the year included:

Agreement to fund new windows in the Library.

Work to upgrade the Village Hall roof and a proposal to install solar panels.

Agreement to financially support Bishopthorpe Cricket Club for one season.

Price agreed with Brunswick Nursery to supply and plant new “half barrels” in the village.

Continued inspection by Parish Councillors of Keble Park Play Area and compliance with all recommendations of the Annual Inspection by a qualified ROSPA Inspector. We also recognise we will have to fund major expenditure over the next couple of years to maintain this valuable asset.

Full fire and electrical tests have been undertaken successfully on Parish Council properties.

Asbestos checks have been undertaken on both allotment sites and several sheds will be removed to ensure there is no risk from broken asbestos material.

Finally - Finance

We have fully monitored our income and expenditure over that previous 12 months and are fully aware of potential increased costs in the future but have agreed our precept (the amount of money we collect via your Council Tax) will remain at £35,000 for the fiscal year 2024/25.

Thank you for your support during the year – are there any questions?

No questions were raised.

3i Financial Report**Report for the Financial Year ending 31st March 2024**

The Parish Council’s accounts are prepared subject to the approval of the District Auditor (PKF Littlejohn LLP) and comprise of an income and expenditure account along with a balance sheet and supporting statements and bank reconciliation. The accounts, which are presented tonight, are draft accounts.

Income and Expenditure Account**Income**

The main source of income to the Parish Council is the Precept of £35,000. The precept is received in two instalments from the City Council: a grant of £1,050 plus a precept amount

of £33,950. The other two main income streams this year were from the Village Hall (£14,123) and the Sports Pavilion (£6,340). Other notable income was recorded from Riverside rents (£4,600) which is made up from The Boatyard York Ltd £2,850 and £1,750 mooring rent.

The amount of VAT recovered this financial year increased from £2,577 to £4,483.

Expenditure

Expenditure was tightly controlled during the year:

Refurbishment and upkeep of Parish Council owned assets was as follows:

£15,378 was spent to maintain facilities at the Sports Pavilion on Ferry Lane.

Expenditure on the Village Hall increased from £21,624 to £23,937

Expenditure at Vernon House increased from £5,695 to £10,0048. This increase was mainly due to increases in the electricity costs which rose from £359 for the year end to March 23 to £5,122 for the year end to March 24.

Insurances of the Village Hall and the Local Council Insurance which covers the Sports Pavilion cost increased by £656 to £5,944

The Parish Council spent £4,778 to upkeep the assets at Keble Park Play Area.

Balance Sheet

This is a representation of the Parish Council's financial statement for the year ending March 31st 2024. The Total Assets owned by the Council amount to £81,196.69. The Parish Council has no liabilities.

Bank / Investment Accounts

At the year-end (31st March 2024) there was a balance of £400 in the Current Account and £80,796.69 in the Deposit Account.

4 Report from the Community Constable

No report received.

5 Any Other Business

None

Cllr. Harrison closed the meeting at 7.13 pm.

Next Annual Parish Meeting will be held on Tuesday 22nd April 2025 at the Village Hall, Main Street.