

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held in the Village Hall, Main Street, Bishopthorpe on Tuesday 22nd April 2025 at 7.00pm.

No parishioners were present.

Parish Councillors Present:

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

The Chairman opened the meeting at 7.00 pm.

1 Apologies for Absence

Cllr. Stephen and Cllr. Gajewicz.

2 Meeting of the Annual Parish Meeting Tuesday 24th April, 2024

Acceptance of the minutes was proposed by Cllr. Jemison. This was seconded by Cllr. George and agreed unanimously.

3 Chairman's Report

The following report was delivered by Cllr. Harrison:

Annual Parish Meeting 22 April 2025

Good Evening Everybody

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 2024 with a full complement of 10 councillors but during the year Cllr. Sarah Mason tendered her resignation due to changes in work conditions but continued with her environmental work by planting wildflowers in the grassed area in front of Vernon House.

However, we are now back to full complement when joined by Rob Johnson who has already proved to be an enthusiastic and committed member of the council taking on extra work outside of our routine monthly meetings.

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

Public Right of Way across the Old St Andrew's Church grounds

The request to make the path across the old St Andrew's church grounds a PROW was first made in 1994 to the City Council by the Parish Council. This was before the formation of St Andrew's Trust, the body who now strongly objects to the proposal. Despite numerous years of chasing a decision, the City Council remained uncooperative and silent on the matter until twenty-four years later when in 2018 the Parish Council was notified the request would be considered. The request was turned down at that stage stating the ground was consecrated and therefore a PROW was not allowed to cross it. This statement was challenged by the Parish Council despite objections from the City Council and St Andrew's Trust.

Eventually the only recourse to the Parish Council was to forward objections to the Government Planning Inspectorate. Following this the City of York Council made a further objection to the pathway being made a Public Right of Way (PROW), suggesting the pathway during the relevant period i.e. between 1974 and 1994 changed during the period 1978 and 1982 therefore one path was not used exclusively for the required 20 years. The Parish Council subsequently discussed this issue with residents who used the path during this period to rebut this suggestion.

Finally the Government Planning Inspector visited the site on the 14th January 2025 along with two members of the Parish Council, one representative from York City Council and one representative from St Andrew's Trust.

However, despite over 50 people recording that they have used a path over the Old St Andrew's Churchyard without restriction for over 20 years the Government Planning Inspector refused the application to record a PROW from Chantry Lane to Ferry Lane in the Final Order dated 12th February 2025. The principal reason given for his decision was that there was no concrete evidence that the same footpath had been used for the whole 20 years.

The Inspector therefore concluded that the path had changed over time but did comment that ***'Whilst it is apparent that there is some support for this path being designated as a public footpath, I am unable to reach my decision on the basis of what may be a desirable outcome'***.

Following further information from the Definitive Map officer of City of York Council the Parish Council are now investigating a further application to confirm a Public Right of Way from Chantry Lane, via St Andrew's old churchyard to Ferry Lane.

Introduction of 20mph speed limit in Bishopthorpe

York City Council introduced a village wide 20mph speed limit in Bishopthorpe in June 2024. The City Council are expected to undertake statistical measurements to see how effective the scheme is operating followed by a public consultation at the end of the trial. However, initial information appears to suggest that the majority of residents are in favour of the scheme although there may be tweaks necessary to satisfy the majority of residents.

No. 11 Bus Service

City of York Council are reviewing various options to improve the efficiency and reliability of the No. 11 Bus Service. The City Council recognises that major congestion in the city centre causes most of the delays and are reviewing the possibility of terminating the bus service in York city centre rather than continuing to Ashley Park. However, the introduction of Bus Priority Corridor in the City Centre during 2026 should improve the reliability of the current timetable.

HGV's Travelling through Bishopthorpe

The Copmanthorpe Ward Councillor, Cllr. Chris Steward attended our August meeting to discuss the issue whereby Celkom Haulage Limited controlled HGVs were currently travelling through Copmanthorpe and Appleton Roebuck due to the closure of the Appleton Road bridge in Bishopthorpe. Once the bridge re-opened it was expected that the HGV's would once again travel through Bishopthorpe – and this could only get worse with increased movements being planned by Celkom. In the short term, once the bridge is re-opened, Cllr. Steward was asked whether other Parish Councils would be willing to share the volume of lorries equally but Cllr. Steward confirmed Copmanthorpe would not be willing to take any share of the lorries in the future.

However, it was unanimously agreed that the Parish Councils should speak as one collective voice and ground rules for traffic management must be set. The volume of lorries may rise even further if Celkom is granted a renewed licence to expand the size of their premises and it was agreed the village roads are not suitable for large lorries. The business should be located next to a major road network - not in a quiet village location.

Bishopthorpe will join with neighbouring Parish Councils to object to the licence renewal application via contact with the respective Traffic Commissioner.

Other Items discussed during the year included:

- The Parish Council provided financial assistance to St Andrew's Trust to remove a fallen tree and replace fencing to allow the footpath around the Old St Andrew's Church to be re-opened.
- We have completed a full overhall of the Village Hall roof and main hall floor.
- We are continuing to try to get Yorkshire Water to review the installation of a sump pump on Chantry Lane to prevent flooding in Main Street.
- The re-fit and upgrade of work on the Sports Pavilion has been an ongoing project for some time but is now nearing completion.
- Following the financial input from the Parish Council we fully endorse and support the aims of the Bishopthorpe Cricket Club as detailed in their Development Plan
- The Parish Council has agreed to the Coop placing a cabin in the Village Hall car park whilst their main shop is refurbished. This is to provide the village with necessary items during the closure period.

Finally - Finance

We have two main sources of income the primary one being our Parish Council Precept of £35,000 - our second main source of income is the income we receive from letting out our assets and this realised £34,000 for the for the year ended March 2025.

However, due to increased costs our precept was increased to £36,000 for the current year and we will be reviewing rental costs for other assets going forward.

During the last financial year, we have spent a considerable amount on one-off costs improving our assets but at the same time also had to fund increased routine costs.

Expenditure on refurbishment and upkeep of assets included:

- £28,000 on Ferry Lane Sports Pavilion and Field.
- £38,000 on the Village Hall.
- £9,000 on Keble Park Play Area.
- £7,000 on Insurance for our assets.
- £6,000 on Allotments.
- £5,000 on Vernon House.

After spending a considerable amount of money recently on improving our assets we are hopeful of quieter times and still have a reserve of £40,000 – this is in line with our policy of maintaining a reserve of at least one year's precept.

Thank you for your support during the year.

3i Financial Report**Report for the Financial Year ending 31st March 2025**

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 £884 plus a precept amount of £34,116. The other two main income streams this year were from the Village Hall (£16,137) and the Sports Pavilion (£7,192). 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 £4,483 to £4,816

Expenditure

Expenditure during the year:

1. Refurbishment and upkeep of Parish Council owned assets was as follows:
 - i. £28,187 was spent to maintain facilities at the Sports Pavilion on Ferry Lane an increase from last year when £15,378 was spent.
 - ii. Expenditure on the Village Hall increased from £23,937 to £38,565.
 - iii. Expenditure at Vernon House was £4,579.
2. Insurances of the Village Hall and the Local Council Insurance which covers the Sports Pavilion cost increased from £5,944 to £6,973.
3. The Parish Council increased expenditure to upkeep the assets at Keble Park Play Area from £4,778 to £9,014.

Balance Sheet

This is a representation of the Parish Council's financial statement for the year ending March 31st 2025. The Total Assets owned by the Council amount to £40,146. The Parish Council has no liabilities.

Bank / Investment Accounts

At the year-end (31st March 2025) there was a balance of £400 in the Current Account and £39,746 in the Deposit Account.

4 Report from the Community Constable

No report received.

5 Any Other Business

None

Cllr. Harrison closed the meeting at 7.03 pm. Next Annual Parish Meeting will be held on Tuesday 28th April, 2026 at the Village Hall, Main Street.