

The Minutes of the **Annual Parish Meeting of the Parish of Acaster Malbis**

held on Monday, 14 March 2022

Present: Councillors W G Taylor (Chairman), J Redfearn, D Walker, J Galvin (Ward Councillor)

Public: A Asquith, C Asquith, J Beck, J Chappell, M Chappell, D Ellis, J Cooper, J Hall, M Hall, W Hoynes, V Joughin, P Nixon, R Raimes, P Walker, C Wharton-Smith, D Wharton-Smith

Clerk: -

(Note – C Booth (clerk) was unable to attend due to illness, J Redfearn took notes at the meeting. The minutes have been compiled from notes provided by the contributors and J Redfearn.)

1. Welcome and Introductions

The Chairman opened the meeting at 7:30 pm by welcoming everybody and introduced the members of the Parish Council and John Galvin the Ward Councillor for Bishopthorpe. The Chairman asked that questions other than those to the guest speakers be asked at the end of the meeting (under Agenda item 10).

2. Minutes of the last Annual Parish Meeting held on 15 March 2021

The draft minutes were agreed unanimously as a true and correct record on the proposal of J Hall and seconded by V Joughin. The minute book was therefore duly signed by the Chairman.

3. Acaster Malbis Parish Council: Chairman's Report

Sadly, the beginning of the council year was marked with sudden passing of the clerk M G Davies. Matt was appointed clerk to the council in April 2015 and died in service in May 2021 leaving behind a professionally managed council of which he was very proud. Matt's funeral cortege passed through the village allowing many villagers to pay their respects to a well-liked man. At one point during the Covid lockdown restrictions, Matt assumed full responsibility for all council decisions at a time when the council was not able to meet or hold virtual meetings.

In June, an extraordinary meeting was held to rescind the emergency powers that Matt held, and to appoint Craig Booth as Interim Clerk to help the council recover from the shock of Matt's death and establish normal council functions. Craig assumed the required roles of Proper Officer and Responsible Financial Officer but had to rescind the role of Internal Bank Control. Initial tasks included acquiring control of the bank account, getting access to the many electronic accounts and recovery of the council's paper records. Since that time the council has implemented asset labelling for council equipment and introduced a Records Management Policy to reduce retained paperwork.

During this recovery process it was noted that a dual book-keeping system was being maintained. A single system has been adopted based upon the Scribe financial package. Also, the system of password maintenance has moved to a cloud-based system with dual account access (just in case).

We must thank Craig for the hard work and time put in on our behalf. At least 2 members of the parish have remarked approvingly on the new style of minutes from the council meetings.

In October, Judith Smith, our only female councillor, announced her resignation. Judith served from May 2011 and became Planning Co-ordinator, and we would like to thank Judith for her long service to the community and parish over this period.

The vacancy left by Judith was finally filled in March 2022 by Jane Redfearn from Mill Lane, who has only attended a single council meeting to date, and was drafted to take notes of this meeting.

Fortune favoured the council in that we had 2 applicants for a single vacancy which has meant that Craig Booth was able to resign as councillor and take up the position as clerk on a full-time basis. After the appropriate legal procedures have been followed, we hope a councillor will be confirmed at the next council meeting.

Since the last Annual Meeting of the Parish, the council has held 11 meetings: 2 of these being virtual, and the rest back in the Memorial Hall.

The Planning Committee was not required over the year and all applications were considered in full council. No applications were received for new build properties; the applications comprised:

- 5 extensions
- 2 crown lifts on TPO trees

- 1 change of use – dog park at Whinney Hills
- 1 conversion of a toilet block to residential use

On 2 June it is the Queen's Platinum Jubilee, and the council had registered for the Queen's Jubilee Beacons. At 21:45 on 2 June the beacon in the village will be lit as will beacons up and down the country. The Memorial Hall will be open to watch the beacon lighting and for refreshments.

The council is investigating options for planting tree(s) in the village to commemorate the occasion and install a commemorative plaque.

The council now has an official Facebook page that presents information such as meeting notices, flood updates, police notices etc. The website has had some minor recent changes, and a larger change is currently being worked upon that will give the website a greater depth. Thanks to Pat Harlington and Craig Booth for work in this area.

There is small army of volunteers who deserve our thanks for doing jobs such as:

- Cutting and clearing weeds along paths and hedgerows.
- Litter picking throughout the year
- Leaf collection and disposal
- Cleaning the bus shelter on Intake Lane
- Cleaning and check the defibrillator kiosk on Mill Lane
- Watering, weeding and deadheading the flower tower

Thanks to our internal auditor David Walkden for keeping us on the straight and narrow and ensuring we comply with our accountability and transparency obligations.

With respect to City of York Council, and we thank John Galvin for his continued assistance:

1. A new bench supplied by Bishopthorpe Ward Committee has been installed near to the pinfold.
2. The culverting of Dimple Ditch by Lakeside has been delayed due to signs of water vole activity – water voles are a protecting species and cannot be disturbed.
3. Work is in the system to add a new dropped kerb where Hauling Lane meets Mill Lane. This need was identified after a mobility scooter experienced great difficulty at the junction.
4. Dog waste bins have been upgraded or relocated with larger bins at the pinfold and at Lakeside. A new bin has been located at the entrance to the airfield after requests from local farmers. COYC cannot empty this bin and so emptying has been arranged by AMPC.

Other topics that have been covered in recent meeting include, consideration of a hydro-electric power plant at the weir in Naburn, considering Assets of Community Value including the Ship Inn and the Memorial Hall.

Finally, the sad news of the passing of Gordon Hall just before Christmas must be reported. Gordon served on the council for over 30 years and was the chairman for a while.

4. The Knowles Educational Foundation: Chair's Report

The charity's income from investments provided a total of £3,036 of which £784 were required for management expenses, a sum very similar to the previous year.

The grants awarded totalled £2050.

Our Statement of Assets and Liabilities show that our cash Funds stood at £3,539 and the total value of investments showed a good increase on the previous year at £103,432.

Once again, I would like to extend my thanks to Mr David Walkden for providing an independent examination of the year's accounts, for which the Trustees are very appreciative.

5. The John Knowles and John Kettlewell Charity: Secretary/Treasurer's Report

The charity's investment was valued at £3,625.95 on 31 December 2021 which is an increase of £427.86 v the end of 2020. We received a total of £172.43 in dividends in 2021, which was an increase of £16.32 v prior year. The trustees agreed to award £300 in grants in December, which were gratefully received by the beneficiaries. As the balance sheet shows there is £101.84 carried forward to 2022. Our thanks go to Bob Nicholls for auditing the accounts again.

In accordance with the charity constitution, 2 meetings of the trustees were held in 2020 and a chairman was elected at each meeting.

The trustees continue to implement the data privacy policy agreed in 2019, and the annual audit will take place in June 2022.

All trustees have agreed to remain in post in 2022.

6. Flooding and Emergency Planning: Mrs Pam Walker

Emergency Planning

The Covid volunteers have not been required but are happy to remain on the list for any future emergencies. Some are still assisting neighbours, and this is greatly appreciated.

A core group of more active volunteers has been formed to cover all areas of the parish as part of the Emergency Plan. They will report back on flooding or any other issues in their areas and be aware of residents who may need assistance.

The Emergency Plan is currently being updated and there is a vacancy for a deputy as back up for the Team Lead. Please contact Pam Walker if interested.

Flooding

In 2021 there were 9 floods, this is above our average, with the most severe flood on 22 January with a Viking Recorder Peak of **4.64m**.

The only flood in 2022 (so far) was 22 February with a Viking Recorder Peak of **4.59m** which resulted in levels in the village 1" lower than the previous year.

The usual riverside properties were affected. Mill Lane at the Slipway and near Southmoor was covered and access to Mill Garth Park restricted.

Flooding on Cowper Lane at the rear of Chestnut and Poplar Farm caused access issues.

Hauling Lane route to Bishopthorpe was subject to a road closure and this made emergency services aware of the diversion thereby preventing delays if they needed to enter the village.

No cars were damaged trying to use a flooded route, but several parked cars were damaged at the slipway.

The Environment Agency computer modelling struggled with this flood initially showing a peak likely to be higher than 5m. The Flood Warden Duty Officer was contacted and gave a more accurate prediction that helped with residents' preparations.

The Acaster Malbis Flood Warning was issued later than expected and this has been raised with the Environment Agency.

7. Acaster Malbis Community Events: Councillor Rob Jones

Due to illness Cllr Jones was unable to attend, and Mrs V Joughin kindly agreed to present the information.

The original VE Celebration was scheduled for 8 May 2020, and now the event is finally going ahead as the May Festival on 21 May 2022 (being cancelled in May 2021 too). The intention is that this will become an annual event and will also be able to support smaller events in the parish.

It is planned to register Acaster Malbis Community Events as a charity once a turnover of £5,000 has been achieved.

The May Festival will be in the large field off Hauling Lane and thanks go to Cllr Taylor for generously allowing the use of this venue. Thanks also go to the parish council for the grants given to support this festival.

The festival will have many attractions such as local food and drink, craft stalls, a fun dog show, and music acts throughout the day.

Some of the proceeds will be donated to St Leonards Hospice and the remainder will stay with AMCE.

Many people in the village have put a lot of effort into making this event happen, so please support it.

8. City of York Council Ward Member: Councillor J C Galvin

Cllr Galvin indicated that more thanks should go to Cllr Taylor (than himself) for the work done in providing a new secure plinth for bench to be installed upon.

The most reported issue in the parish remains potholes on Intake Lane and unfortunately it is not possible for Ward funds to be used for these repairs.

The parish council is still holding the funds for culverting Dimple Ditch at Lakeside, however, if the water voles are still preventing works later in the year the funding would need to be returned to the ward committee for other projects.

The flower tower near to the pinfold has been gifted to the parish council and is now logged as an AMPC asset.

9. Matters arising

There were none.

10. Open Forum

Road Closure at Acaster Lane

A resident asked if the road closure of Acaster Lane near Bishopthorpe was connected to flooding?

P Walker advised that this was not connected to flooding but believed to be improvements to a property in Bishopthorpe.

Moor End Sewage Pumps

A resident remarked that as the river levels fall after a flood there is bubbling in their downstairs toilet which they believe happens if the sewage pumps are turned back on too early when there is water in the sewage pipes.

P Walker noted that the pumps were checked and did not appear to be running when the bubbling was reported. It was also noted that the level at which the pumps were turned back on had been reduced from 4m at the Viking recorder to 3.9m in order to prevent any such issues.

Dimple Ditch at Moor End

Pam Walker stated that Dimple Ditch at Moor End is in poor condition, is there anything that can be done?

Cllr Galvin advised that this is an Ainsty IDB drain and asked for Pam Walker to send any photographs of the problem which will then be followed up.

Boundary wall at Mount Pleasant Park

A resident of Mount Pleasant asked why the boundary wall to the site must be taken down given that most of the residents of the park do not want the wall to be removed?

Cllr Galvin advised that whilst he sympathised with the residents of the park, the process has been through the full planning process including various appeals against the decision and enforcement.

Whilst the enforcement process has been slow, there are now 4 new enforcement officers in place who are dealing with existing enforcement action. Cllr Galvin pointed out that it is a criminal offence not to act in accordance with enforcement, and that until the wall is removed another planning application cannot be submitted.

Condition of Cobbler's Trod

A resident observed that at times Cobbler's Trod becomes a quagmire by Riverside, is there anything that can be done?

Cllr Taylor suggested that the parish council could write to the property owners to ask if the council can assist.

Minutes approved at the Annual Meeting of the Parish and duly signed by:

Chairman _____

Date _____