

BURNHAM THORPE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on Thursday 18th May 2023 at 6.00 pm at The Nelson Memorial Hall, Burnham Thorpe

Present:

Councillors: William James (Chair), Chris Yardley (Vice-Chair), Mima Garland, Sarah Greenall, Barbara Linsley, Clerk: Sarah Raven

Members of the Public: 2

1. Minutes of the last council meeting held on the 9th May 2022.
Minutes were circulated before the meeting, it was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED to be signed as a true record with no amendments by the Chair, W James.
2. Chairman's Annual Report:
Report Attached.
3. Clerks Financial Report: -
Report Attached.
4. Report from Borough Councillor:
Report Attached.
5. Report from County Councillor:
Report Attached.
6. Report from Friends of Burnham Thorpe:
There is £86 still in the account for the Friends of Burnham Thorpe. The email list is still being used to circulate news and all residents and friends can subscribe to it.
7. Report from Playing Field Committee:
Report Attached
8. Report from Nelson Memorial Hall:
Report Attached
9. Report from Church:
Cllr S Greenall and Cllr M Garland explained that the parish is without a vicar. There is a new Treasurer in place and a Fabric Officer.
10. Report from Holkham Estate:
None
11. Norfolk Constabulary:
None.
12. Questions and Statements from Parishioners:
Cllr M Garland thanked everyone for the reports. Clerk thanked Holly Smith for her help with CGM grass cutting.

..... Chair

Dated:

REPORTS:

Chairman's Report:

It has been another busy year in the Parish and as with most things we have achieved more than we expected although not quite as much as we might have liked. We have lost the services of two long-standing councillors and our heartfelt thanks to them for their service. We need more people to become involved and would welcome anyone who would like to be co-opted on to the council to help us out.

Looking at the things that were discussed at the Annual Meeting on 9th May 2022 there are some familiar topics and some useful indicators of the year to come:

- Speed limits through the village
- The Millennium Piece
- The Ukraine and refugees
- The defibrillator and Benches
- The perennial favourite of pot holes
- Flooding

We have made progress through the year and there has been active participation in Council meetings and a lively debate on certain topics. Business as usual has seen active discussion around buildings in and around the village and we continue to ensure that any developments are sympathetic and take account of lighting parking and overall suitability for the area.

Key matters that have been worked though this year have included:

- the installation by the Playing Fields committee of the defibrillator and training
- we have continued the dialogue with Egmore Energy and it may be just me but the prevalence of lorries thundering through the village seemed to diminish a bit last year
- we started to assess the fallout from COVID and the pandemic and the impact this had had on the community
- the position in relation to the Millennium Piece remains a bit up-in-the-air - we are still awaiting a proposal from Holkham on what we might do with this going forward and how we can maintain the amenity but at a more sensible cost
- we are also endeavouring to sort out the allotments and create a more sustainable and village friendly management of this valuable resource
- a more active dialogue with Holkham which means we are now more aware of how they see their role in the village and maintaining our environment\
- following the flooding we have been actively monitoring how this will be dealt with in the future and also the impact on water quality
- Street Lighting proved to be a contentious topic and the brief trial of a dark sky was ended after a number of concerns expressed around safety - we are actively looking at timers and more efficient lights to try and get the best of both worlds
- given the severity of the winter months the arbitrary announcement that we were no longer on the primary gritting route came as a surprise and not a welcome one - we have made strong representations in the regard, and we are now reinstated

We approach the new year with the usual measure of confidence and trepidation and look forward to welcoming you all in the village hall when you want to come along and have a chat about our village and what is going on.

Will James

Clerk's Report:

Opening Balance as at 1st April 2022 £11694.98

Receipts for the Year £9840.79

Payments for the Year £8294.01

Interest £21.56

Closing Balance as at 31st March £13,263.32

Burnham Thorpe Playing Field:

The Playing Field Committee are in the process of registering to become a charity. This will enable us to claim gift aid and apply for funding for projects.

We completed the tree works over winter and although we had a £500 grant, we had to pay the remaining £1,800 from our funds. We continue to be active, and hope to be able to create a wildflower meadow on the site of the old bowling square. Funding has been made available for this.

We are still working towards the completion of the play area project. We rely on an active committee of volunteers who give their time to help with odd jobs and up keep of the field in general. Our committee also spend much time actively fundraising, running last year's platinum jubilee celebration, having a stall on Burnham Market Flower Show, organising the Trafalgar Support and the Coronation event.

Our next event is a summer family disco in the Hall.

The Nelson Memorial Hall:

In the last year we installed the village defibrillator and provided a community training session. Enough funds were raised to provide 5 years of maintenance for the unit. We thank local benefactors, fundraising efforts and our Borough Councillor for assisting in making this happen.

After consultation with the conservation officer, we are focussing on upgrading the hall windows. We have obtained a BCKLWN grant to cover £5,200 of the cost of installation of aluminium framed windows to replace the Crittall windows in the 1950s extension. Unfortunately, since we started planning the project the cost of installing these has more than doubled from £3,480 to £7,178. The additional costs will have to be covered from hall funds.

The hall has struggled since Covid, now only just covering its running costs. The loss of regular weekly user groups in the last 5 years has had a significant impact on finances. The hall continues to be a popular venue for summer parties and unlike other local halls does not currently let to art exhibitions and businesses.

We have been lucky that our energy prices have been fixed rate, meaning the we did not have to suffer price rises last winter. The forthcoming winter will be a challenge as our contract has now just expired and we will now have to deal directly with rising energy costs.

This means it will cost us more to heat the hall than we obtain in hire fees if heating is used. At a recent hall managers meeting, we considered a fee rise, but we are already in line with hire fees of other local halls. Our projection for energy prices is that based on the new rates and hall usage, energy bills for the hall will rise 127% from £550 per year to £1,240. This will be a huge challenge for us.

Additional challenges are that we have fewer trustees, now with only 6 remaining and we are in need of energetic new blood to share the workload and cope with the challenges of change going forwards.