

Kirkby Fleetham with Fencotes Parish Council

Minutes of meeting – 19 May 2022 at 7.00 pm.

Present: Parish Councillors: Mrs Herbert, Mr Jones, Mr Walker. 13 residents.

1. **Apologies:** District Councillor Phillips and County Councillor Wilkinson
2. **Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Thursday, 20 May 2021** were accepted and signature agreed upon.

Acceptance was proposed by Cllr Walker and seconded by Cllr Jones.

3. **Chairman's Report**

On May 5th this year as you know we had elections for North Yorkshire County Council and also for Parish and Town Councils in Hambleton. For our own parish, we had only 3 nominations, all for the previous councillors wishing to stand again, with the other 2 retiring. We, therefore, did not need to have an election, and myself, Gary Jones and Chris Walker are your new councillors with a 5-year term. This means that we have a quorum so can function, but to do so satisfactorily we would like 2 more people to come forward for co-option to complete our full 5-person council. So please give this some careful thought and let us know if you are interested in contributing to your local community in this way.

Now to go back to May 2021, we started the year by reviewing the council's terms of reference, standing orders, financial regulations and all the necessary policies. We also reviewed the running of the Burial Authority for our Parish Cemetery in Great Fencote – this is a subcommittee of the Parish Council. In May also, the end of year financial matters were discussed, the internal auditor's recommendations were accepted, and the annual governance and accounting statements were approved. Later in the year, the Parish Precept was increased by £400 to £7,400 for the year 2022-23 as costs are anticipated to rise.

Parish Cemetery, Great Fencote – maintenance continues with grass cutting, hedge trimming, annual tidy and regular surveillance. Planning permission has been obtained to enhance the entrance by building a Lych Gate and though this process has been prolonged by uncertainties about funding, it is hoped that construction will start soon.

St Mary's Churchyard – The grass here is cut short regularly in some areas but in others left to grow longer to promote biodiversity, increase wildflowers and benefit wildlife. Parts will be cut lower as flowers fade and all cutback and the churchyard tidied in late summer. A large compost bin has been built by councillors with donated pallets. Dog fouling in the area has been a problem, almost leading to the resignation of the grass-cutter. It is felt that a fence is needed, along the open side of the churchyard by the hall buildings, to prevent dog access and this remains under discussion.

St Andrews Church - This has been closed for worship, and the building and part of the churchyard are currently in the process of being sold for conversion to a dwelling and gardens. A planning permission application has just been made, and details are available for public viewing on the Hambleton planning website. The council will be debating our response and I encourage as many of you as possible to respond with your own views on the website.

Quiet Lane – At the request of a resident we looked into the possibility of the Kirkby Lane-Greengate Lane loop being designated as a "Quiet Lane" to benefit walkers, cyclists and horse riders. After highways conducted a speed survey we were told that the route did not meet the criteria so this idea could not proceed.

Road safety – We have had discussions with the school about increasing safety on the nearby roads and 2 new signs have been erected. There have been safety concerns also about Low Street and speeding cars. We are awaiting a date for councillors to meet with the police, our county councillor and a highways representative to look at ideas to improve the situation. A Community Speedwatch team has been set up in consultation with the police and after training, started work last summer. They continue to be out and about checking on traffic- a big thank you to all involved.

Vehicle Activated Signs (VAS) – the council are currently considering installing one of these in Great Fencote following results of a week's speed and traffic surveillance done by the police. Vehicles going more than 30mph were 2.6% of the total near the school, 7.6% near the entrance to Village Way and 32.3% in Great Fencote.

Flooding – The issue of persistent water on Fleetham Lane near Little Fencote has been raised several times with Yorkshire Water who continue to maintain that there is no leakage from their pipes.

Flagpole - This is showing some wear and tear so maintenance work is being arranged and this will give us an opportunity to check on the time capsule in its base while the pole is lowered.

Solar farm - In the summer of 2021 the Solar Farm near Kirkby Fleetham was completed, electricity started going into the grid and the farm capacity was confirmed as 49.99megawatts. The promised Community Grant from Lightsource BP has eventually recently been received by the council and distribution to applicants is under discussion. There may be some delay in this process due to uncertainty about third party funding for the Lych Gate, and the availability and cost of land needed for the development of a playground.

There have recently been 2 other proposals for Solar farms to be built locally at Fencedyke Lane and near Scruton, but fortunately for the time being these are on hold and not progressing.

Defibrillator - The registration has been changed from the North Yorkshire Ambulance to a new national database called The Circuit. The machine is checked regularly By Kath Burgin and reported to The Circuit by our clerk. Many thanks to Kath for her great help with this.

The Queen's Platinum Jubilee – Planning is in progress for the Queens Platinum Jubilee Beacons event on the green at Kirkby Fleetham on Thursday evening June 2nd, starting with food at 7 pm. Our beacon will be lit at about 8.45 pm.

The church will hold their Jubilee coffee morning on Saturday the 4th and on Sunday the 5th there will be picnics on the green as we join in with the national Street Party for the Jubilee.

Thank you to my fellow councillors Gary and Chris for their hard work and support over the past year.

Finally, I would like to say a very big thank you to our 2 retiring councillors, Chris Coop after 3 years of service and Alison Booth after an amazing 20 years in the job. We will miss your experience, wisdom, diplomacy and hard work. Well done and happy retirement.

4. Financial Report

Parish Council Account

The starting balance at the beginning of the financial year 2021/22 was £7,983. During the year £8,371 was spent on the Parish, £6,829 on maintenance costs which included grass cutting, hedge cutting, wages, room rental and insurances etc, £1,361 on loan repayments on the Burial Ground and £179 on election expenses.

The Parish received a Precept of £7,000 and received a further £958 of income. The Parish also accepted £49,990 for the Solar Farm Community Fund.

At the end of 2021/22, £7,070 (excluding the Solar Farm Community Fund) was carried forward in the Parish Council Account.

Burial Authority Account

The starting balance at the beginning of the financial year 2021/22 was £16,808.

The Burial Authority didn't receive any income and during the year spent £1,156.00. At the end of 2021/22, £15,652 was carried forward in the Burial Authority Account.

That leaves a total surplus in both accounts of £22,722. In 2012 councillors agreed to hold a contingency fund of £3,000 for unforeseen expenditures. This leaves a balance of £19,791 between the two accounts available for future developments or improvements.

5. Review of Time Capsule

Currently, the capsule contains information on the Village Hall, Parish Council, Women's Institute, Guides and Brownies, Kirkby Fleetham Primary School and Mr R Barker's Book. Information is either on paper or memory sticks.

A plaque indicating the position and contents is displayed on the Village Hall wall in front of the flagpole. It was agreed that the seal and contents should be reviewed every 5 years, the next date for review will be in 2022 when the flagpole receives maintenance.

6. Open Discussion

Sale of St Andrews

The Parish has just been made aware of the sale of St. Andrews church and the planning application that has followed. Primary concerns raised were two-fold; road safety and the treatment of the graves and headstones.

The planned site entrance is at the road junction of Fleetham Lane and Todd Lane. This position is on a 90-degree bend of Fleetham Lane and the transition point from 60 mph to 30 mph. It is felt that visibility splays looking West on Todd Lane would be insufficient to provide safe site entrance and exit manoeuvres from / onto the public roads. Off road parking would mean that parked vehicles on the roadside verges would be dangerous to other road users, pedestrians etc.

When discussing the fate of the headstones, the community would like Planning, Hambleton District Council and the Diocese to consider that the headstones and graves are not just anonymous residents who died many years ago, but in some cases, ancestors of families still in the parish, and whose descendants will in all likelihood remain connected to the parish for generations to come.

The preference of the residents would be for none of the gravestones to be moved and reminded that it is important that these headstones are preserved with the respect they are due and that they remain openly accessible for future generations. If unregulated access is not possible, very regular and frequent periods when the headstones are accessible at published times must be a minimum, and not just at the discretion of the new residents of the church development. The Parish residents would also like to see cast-iron guarantees that any further development of the cemetery will be prohibited. Some of the remaining headstones mark family members that have died within living memory as well as the war grave. All the headstones are a lasting record of the social history of the parish which is essential to preserve and allow visitors to freely and easily study them without limitation.

In the absence of physical 'green' planning notices, it was requested that the Parish Council create an information note, to be distributed by residents in order to inform the wider community on how best to provide their own comments on the proposed planning application.

The Community requested that Planning, Hambleton District Council delay the decision of the planning application until after the Diocese of Leeds conducts its consultation on the sale and plans for St Andrews church with the Community; specifically, in regards to the removal of headstones / memorials. Better allowing residents to make a more informed decision. The Parish Council is to write to Planning, Hambleton District Council asking that they consider this request.

The meeting closed at 7.40 pm.