

Thirlwall Parish Council

Minutes of the Annual Parish Council Meeting held on the 10th May 2023

Present: Cllr Sue Seymour (Chair), Cllr Emma Guerrero (EG), Cllr Paul Jameson, Cllr Alan Sharp (NCC) Sue Hatt (Clerk)

Apologies: Cllr Judith Armstrong and Cllr Mark Barwick (MB)

Various members of the public were in attendance.

Meeting commenced at 7.00pm

1. Chairperson's welcome and report:

Cllr Sue Seymour welcomed everyone to the Annual Parish Meeting and presented her report. She thanked the following people:

- Charles Whittle for defibrillator checks in Longbyre
- Andi Keen for defibrillator checks in Gilsland.
- John Armstrong for strimming and keeping Longbyre tidy.
- Amanda Drago and everyone who volunteered to make the Queen's jubilee and HW1900 Saturnalia celebrations so successful. The quality of the offer and the number of people who participated in and enjoyed these events was remarkable and says a lot for the strength of community in this little village.
- Alan Sharp, our long-standing county councillor, always ready to help and harry NCC on our behalf. Alan used his members allowance to fund solar lights for the play area. Alan previously funded research into 'Low bridge' signage on approach roads to the village. As a result of this improved signs should soon be in place.
- John Dixon for maintenance work carried out to a high standard for a modest fee.
- Sue Hatt for cheerful, efficient, and effective clerking

Issues & activity

- At the village meeting attended by councillors from the three PCs joint it was decided to investigate drawing up a Neighbourhood plan for Gilsland.
- Public transport continues to be an issue with several changes to bus times and routes. Information was inevitably last minute or completely lacking. Opening Gilsland station is in NCC's 10-year transport plan.
- The bust stop now boasts a wonderful mosaic and, for some time sported a grazing sheep on the roof. It's definitely the best bus stop in the County and the Youth Club are continuing to work on the area prior to entering the Northumberland in Bloom awards in the coming summer.
- Broadband connectivity speeds and mobile phone coverage continue to be a problem. Gill Cowell (NCC) spoke to the council on this issue – no easy solution!
- The closure and potential sale of the Samson Inn prompted the PC, at the request of a group of residents, to register the pub as an Asset of Community value. The Parish Council continues to

support the group, now constituted as Gilsland Community Benefit Society Ltd, in their endeavours to purchase the property.

- The work towards 'Village Green status for the play area in Gilsland and the green in Longbyre continues.

2. Financial Report 2022-2023:

Sue Hatt reported that the ending balance at 31st March 2023 was £9069.62 and the council kept the precept value the same as the previous year at £6300.

Although there is a healthy balance, major work to the playground is planned for 2023 and there will also be additional costs for both the website and Save our Samson campaign.

There are requests for funding from the Village Hall and for the maintenance of the bus shelter which will be entered in the Northumbria in Bloom "It's Your Neighbourhood Awards".

The solar lights for the Play Area have been delivered and will be installed before the summer. The quote for the work on the Play Area has yet to be received.

Main expenditure:

- | | |
|---------------------------------|-------|
| • Grass cutting and maintenance | £660 |
| • Bus shelter windows | £200 |
| • Signs for the village | £110 |
| • Defibrillator supplies | £120 |
| • Open Space membership | £67 |
| • Solar Lights for playground | £1522 |
| • Save our Samson | £50 |
| • Clerk salary | £1136 |
| • Clerk expenses | £265 |

Main income:

- | | |
|--|-------|
| • Grant for Solar Lights | £2000 |
| • Northern PowerGrid | £40 |
| • Village Hall – bus shelter cupboards | £157 |
| • Precept | £6300 |

3. The minutes for the 2022 APM meeting were approved unanimously.

4. Matters arising from the floor:

5. Any Other Business

There was none.

The AGM closed at 7.20pm.