

MINUTES OF FAIRBURN ANNUAL PARISH ASSEMBLY
Wednesday 24th May 2023, 6.30pm at Fairburn Community Centre,
North Road, Fairburn, North Yorkshire, WF11 9LA

The meeting opened at 6.30pm

Present: Cllr Edwards (Chairman), Cllr Kos, Cllr Wigglesworth, Cllr Baker, Cllr Robinson and 6 members of the public.

MINUTES

APM23/01 Welcome

Cllr Edwards welcomed everyone to the Annual Parish Assembly

APM23/02 Chairmans Report

Fairburn Parish Council
Chairman's Report 2022/2023

Parish Councillors at the start of the municipal year (May 2022)

District Councillor Georgina Ashton

District Councillor John Mackman

County Councillor Tim Grogan

Staff: Mr R Farman, Clerk

Changes to the Parish Council during the municipal year

We had a difficult start to the year when only one parish councillor submitting their nomination papers for re-election and then subsequently withdrew. This led to Selby District Council having to recruit the District Councillor (Georgina Ashton) and two other local District/County Councillors (John Mackman and Tim Grogan) to enable to council to continue to function and be quorate until the 7 vacant seats were filled.

This process of filling the vacant seats started well with Councillor Tim Baker being co-opted in June 2022, Councillors John Kos and Jill Edwards in July 2022. Councillors Jonathan Wigglesworth and Andrew Emery were co-opted in November 2022 and Councillor Derrick Robinson in February 2023. We still have one vacant position on the Council.

Councillor Georgina Ashton was elected as interim Chairman in May 2022, with Councillor Jill Edwards being elected as Chairman for the remainder of the municipal year in July 2022.

In order that we could co-opt new Councillors the District and County Councillors resigned, Tim Grogan in July 2022, John Mackman in October 2022 and Georgina Ashton in January 2023. The clerk resigned in October 2022, therefore, in the absence of a paid clerk Councillor Ashton was appointed as the Proper Officer in October 2022. When Georgina resigned in January 2023, Councillor John Kos appointed to the role until the clerk was appointed in April 2023. Jessica Bedford was appointed as Clerk, Responsible Finance Officer and Proper Officer in April 2023 after a successful recruitment process. We thank the District and County Councillors for their input into Fairburn during their time on the Parish Council. In particular Councillor Georgina Ashton, who has helped, guided and motivated us throughout her time on the Parish Council and without who we wouldn't be in the position we are today and we certainly wouldn't have the knowledge we all have.

A Personnel Committee was formed in August 2022, with Councillor Ashton being appointed as Chair, other members are Councillor Tim Baker, Councillor Jill Edwards and Councillor John Kos, Councillor Emery joined in March 2023 and was appointed as Chair. This was created as some anomalies were

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Email: fairburnparishcouncil@outlook.com

Proper Officer: Jessica Bedford

discovered in relation to hours of work, pay scale and job description of the role of Clerk, Responsible Finance Officer and Proper Officer. As a result we instructed Yorkshire Local Councils Associations (YLCA) to undertake a salary evaluation of the role which was then used in the recent recruitment process for the role. This committee also agreed the process and details for recruitment to make sure we got the right person.

Sixteen meetings have taken place during the year, 10 ordinary meetings, 2 extra ordinary meetings and 4 personnel meetings. The agendas are published on the notice boards and website at least 3 clear days before the meeting for ordinary meetings. The draft minutes from the previous meeting are published at the same time, although we are looking to publish these approximately one week after the meeting going forward.

Councillors have taken on the following key responsibilities:

Councillor Baker - visual inspections of green gym and Christmas lights

Councillor Edwards - checking the defibrillator each month, updating the website, putting notices in the noticeboards

Councillor Kos - putting notices in notice boards

Councillor Emery – inspection of the Skate Park

In March 2023 a decision was taken to cease formal reporting of heavy vehicles through the village as it's difficult to collect the amount of evidence needed to effectively report and it's difficult to report to Trading Standards.

There have been 12 planning applications in the parish during this municipal year; 2 applications refused and 4 approved, 2 approved with conditions. The remainder remain undetermined or withdrawn. The vast majority of granted applications are for change of use, house extensions and/or conversions of existing structures. The two that was refused both relate to the same site, being the application for 11 dwellings off Silver Street.

Achievements

The grass was cut along the A1246, this was the first thing that the new Councillors addressed as there had been a lot of comments that the village looked untidy.

Plaque to Rita Stephenson on the bench in memorial garden.

Purchased a Remembrance Wreath for the War Memorial.

Attended the Remembrance Service on Armistice Day, led by the Vicar, Cannon Chris Wilton.

Set up a Warm Bank facility in conjunction with the Three Horse Shoes over the winter months, thankfully this wasn't needed.

Purchased additional Christmas lights and had these installed by a qualified electrician.

Replaced the crest on the village sign as it was badly faded

Produced 2 newsletters, in December and March to keep residents up to date with Parish Council developments.

Created a Facebook page to get information out to residents quicker.

Posted information onto the website, noticeboards and Facebook page to enable residents to report issues direct to North Yorkshire Council and the Police.

9 planters have been installed around the village, volunteers and the school have agreed to look after these.

Organised 'The Big Help Out', despite the terrible weather approximately 20 people of all ages came out and did 'jobs' around the village to improve the look. Unfortunately we couldn't have the planned picnic due to the rain, but thanks to everyone who turned up and helped.

Finances

At the start of the financial year, the Council held £21,635.72 on account. Due to the financial pressures people are under, the Council resolved in the November meeting to decrease the precept requirement to £13,556.47, which is back to the level it was in 2021/22. The average Band D for properties in Fairburn is now £39.50. We have drawn down CIL Funding of £7,913.70 to be used towards the Vehicle Activated Signs (VAS). Funds remain buoyant with £31,458.05 held on account at the end of the financial year 31 March 2023. We have also been allocated a grant of £1500 from County Councillor Grogan's Locality Budget, again to be used towards the VAS signs although this has been received in the new financial year.

Going forward

We are reviewing the grass cutting contract and it has been suggested that some grass is left to go wild to encourage the bees. We are in the process of compiling a new contract to go out to tender taking this suggestion and the previous complaints about the lack of cutting into consideration and hope to come up with a solution which partly addresses both of these requests.

A report on the Public Rights of Way (PROW) in the parish has been submitted to NYC and we are awaiting an update.

The VAS signs have been ordered and are being manufactured at the end of May, once complete we will then be given an installation date.

We are looking at options for an illuminated Poppy to install on the lamp post close to the war memorial and Tommy statues in the same area.

Some of the historical signs near the well trough are damaged and we are looking at how these can be repaired and / or refurbished.

We arranged a meeting with Highways meeting at the end of April to discuss footpaths, kerbs, street lighting, one way system, etc. However, they cancelled earlier on the day, we are awaiting further dates.

The land adjacent to the skate park is currently publicly owned and we are looking the feasibility of adopting this land to be used as a community resource by the council for both leisure and educational purposes.

Banking is currently done by using cheques for payment of goods and services and we hope to move to an online account with authorisation in this next year.

Building relationships

We have made great progress over this year to build relationships with organisations and residents in the village, as this seemed to be lacking over the last few years. A number of us have made visits to the school and got involved in events they have planned. We have attended the community café to give updates and done Questions and Answers sessions. We also have a regular number of residents who attend the monthly meetings. All the suggestions and opinions from all these sources have been really valuable and we thank you for your input. This is something that we think is really important as the Parish Council may have 6 representatives making decisions, but it's run for the benefit of all residents in the village. We do still have one vacancy if anyone would like to join us.

Finally, I would like to thank all the Councillors for their contributions this year. I may have the Chairman's title, but this is very much a team effort and without each and every one of you the progress we have made would not have been possible. In particular Councillors Ashton, Baker and Kos for your unwavering support, at the start of this year, it was tough, very tough at times, but we've stuck together, supported each other and got to where we are today. To Councillor Kos for taking on the role of Proper Officer when Councillor Ashton resigned. To Councillors Wigglesworth, Emery and Robinson for joining us during the year and for hitting the ground running and becoming part of our very effective team.

APM23/03 Resident comments about the report

Residents asked if there were plans to publish the Chairmans report. Cllr Edwards advised that it would be included in the minutes, a copy will be provided to the school and on the 7th June, she will read it out at the community café.

District Councillor Georgina Ashton praised the Parish Council for the amount achieved within the last year.

APM23/04 Public Forum

Residents raised the following areas:

- Pebbles in the area at the front of the school and back of the art gallery. An edging is required to stop the pebbles moving over the path.
- The yellow markings around the footpath, completed in February, have already faded.
- Street signs, broken or not fixed in place.
- Public footpath access
- Grass cutting within the Parish was discussed and the current condition of the grassed areas.
- Future pollination plans were discussed. Concerns were raised that the grass could not just be left to grow longer, that proper planting is required for bees etc.
- A resident asked if people could hand in their free bag from the garden centre if they do not plan to use it. Other areas of the village could then utilise it, for example the school.
- A resident commented that It was pleasing to see that people joined in the Big Help Out.

APM23/05 Closure of Annual Parish Assembly

The meeting closed at 6.54pm