**Downham West Parish Council**

**Minutes of the ANNUAL PARISH meeting held Monday, 14th March 2022 at 7.00pm in The Vestry, Methodist Church, Paradise Road**

Present: Chairman Cllr R Pegg

Vice Chairman Cllr C Swaine

Councillors Cllr F Daymond

Cllr J Doyle

Cllr J Fox

County Councillor Cllr C Dawson

Parish Clerk Mrs S Porter

Member(s) of Public 0

**AP1/22 Chairman’s Welcome**

The Chairman, Cllr Pegg, welcomed everyone to the meeting.

**AP2/22 Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence had been received from Borough Cllr C Rose (Covid) and Borough Cllr V Spikings (Covid).

**AP3/22 Approval of the minutes of the Annual Parish meeting**

**Proposed – Vice Chairman, Cllr Swaine Seconded – Cllr Daymond**

**That the minutes of the Annual Parish meeting held virtually by Zoom on Monday, 19th April 2021 (Items AP1/21-AP7/21) are approved and signed as a true and accurate record.**

**All in favour**

The Chairman, Cllr Pegg, duly signed and dated the minutes of the meeting.

**AP4/22 Chairman’s Annual Report**

The Chairman, Cllr Pegg, read his 2021/2022 report as follows:

*“The Parish Council has achieved two large successful projects, including a trod from the Lady Drove junction to Downham Bridge ensuring pedestrians have a safe passage along the busy road and street light conversions to LED bulbs which has reduced the cost of electrical supply by some 75%.”*

**AP5/22 Clerk’s Finance Report 2021/2022**

The Clerk’s financial summary of the year-end accounts had been circulated as follows:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 2020/2021 £ | Receipts (net) | 2021/  2022 £ | 2020/2021 £ | Payments (net) | 2021/  2022 £ |
| 5810 | **Precept** | **6000** | 2755 | **Staff Salaries / HMRC / Expenses** | **2805** |
| 50 | **Support Grant** | **60** | 0 | **Clerk Travel Expenses** | **0** |
| 1374 | **CIL** | **0** | 0 | **Councillor Expenses** | **0** |
| 0 | **Grants & Donations** | **0** | 129 | **Stationery / Room Hire** | **36** |
| 0 | **Parish Partnership** | **8150** | 182 | **Subscriptions** | **142** |
| 30 | **Bank Transactions & Interest** | **5** | 60 | **Legal / Professional Fees** | **70** |
| 66 | **VAT** | **478** | 621 | **Insurance** (includes claims) | **467** |
|  |  |  | 0 | **Training / Travel** | **0** |
|  |  |  | 0 | **Election Costs** | **0** |
|  |  |  | 77 | **Transparency Fund** | **68** |
|  |  |  | 0 | **Parish Partnership** | **16300** |
|  |  |  | 24 | **Bank Error** | **4** |
|  |  |  | 30 | **S137 Grants & Donations** | **25** |
|  |  |  | 564 | **Street Lighting** (power, maintenance) | **1824** |
|  |  |  | 550 | **Burial Board** (precept) | **595** |
|  |  |  | 150 | **War Memorial** (maintenance) | **192** |
|  |  |  | 190 | **Bus Shelters** (maintenance) | **160** |
|  |  |  | 0 | **Street Furniture** (notice boards, dog/litter bins) | **0** |
|  |  |  | 158 | **VAT** | **412** |
| 7330 | **TOTAL RECEIPTS** | **14693** | 5490 | **TOTAL PAYMENTS** | **23100** |

**AP6/22 Downham Market & Downham West Joint Burial Board Annual Report**

Cllr Fox, in his capacity as the Joint Burial Board Chairman, read the following report to the meeting:

The representatives on the Downham Market and Downham West Joint Burial Board from this Parish Council are Cllr Daymond, Cllr Fox and Cllr Pegg.

The Board usually meets in March/April and September/October. The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, 5th April 2022.

The Board works with administrators from Mapus-Smith and Lemmon who take care of the day to day running of the Cemeteries including allocating grave spaces and cremated remains interment plots as required.

The board is responsible for looking after three cemeteries in Downham Market, namely King’s Walk, Churchside and Rouses Lane.

King’s Walk is a closed cemetery but contains three buildings. Two of these are former Chapels of Rest and the third is Cemetery House.

The North Chapel is currently vacant. The South Chapel is rented primarily as a storage facility.

The Cemetery House has not passed the required checks (Energy Performance Certificate regulations) to be suitable for letting. Quotations have been received for bringing it up to standard by damp-proofing and additional electrical work etc., but, as these are very high, a search is taking place for grant funding which is proving unsuccessful at the moment.

Churchside Cemetery is still used but very rarely. Basically, only for the use of family graves.

The current Cemetery is at Rouses Lane and is running out of burial ground. There is a piece of land to the south of the current Cemetery which is currently let to the Town Council for allotments. Five years notice was given to the Town Council in 2018 requiring the return of the land. I understand that at the moment there are still a very few allotment holders on site. The agreement with the Town Council was to return the land in a tidy condition.

DEFRA has declared that the size of a burial plot should be increased from 3 square metres/32 square feet (4 feet x 8 feet) to 5 square metres/54 square feet (6 feet x 9 feet). This is being challenged by NALC but I have not heard any update at the moment. If this is passed then we will obviously need more burial ground.

**AP7/22 Annual Reports from Representatives to Outside Bodies**

Cllr Daymond reported that the Hundred Acre Charity had met in November 2021 and payments, in the form of vouchers, had been made to worthy parishioners in Downham West.

**AP8/22 Questions from the Floor**

There were no members of public present and no questions were raised by Councillors.

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 7.13pm.