

BIRCHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Council on Wednesday 11th May 2022. The Meeting was held at 7.30 in Bircham Social Club.

Present: Cllrs G Daniels (Chairman), T Clark, D Howell, R Hutchinson, B Mele, C Morley, J Royall

Also present, Simon Bower (Clerk) and two Members of the Public (p/t).

1. Election of Officers (22/043)

- a) Cllr Gloria Daniels was unanimously elected as Chairman of Council for the 2022/23 Council Year.
- b) Cllr Daniels read and signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.
- c) Cllr Malcolm Sargent was unanimously elected as Vice-Chairman of Council for the 2022/23 Council Year.
- d) In his absence Council agreed that his Acceptance form should be deemed signed, until such time as this was done.

2. Declarations of Interest (22/044)

- a) Cllr Howell declared an interest in item 13.a

3. Apologies for Absence (22/045)

- a) There were apologies for absence from Cllrs French, Rayner and Sargent.

4. Chairman's welcome and announcements (22/046)

- a) Cllr Daniels thanked Cllrs for their support.

5. Minutes (22/047)

- a) The minutes of the meeting held on 23rd March 2022, having been previously circulated, were accepted as a true record and duly signed.
- b) There were no matters arising from the above minutes.

6. Public Participation (22/048)

- a) A Member of the Public asked why Council was not organising any Jubilee events – the actions of Council in this regard were gone through, including attempts to form a steering group. Businesses and other groups were doing things but independently, e.g. to co-incide with the Social Club Anniversary. It was also observed that Council was paying for tree planting and a plaque, and that the new entrance to the Playing Field was in place.

7. Governance (22/049)

- a) Clerk noted that Policies etc. needed formally reviewing, and there were some legal changes required. Cllr Morley noted that nothing had arisen to suggest any policies were "derelict". It was noted that Policies were available on the

Signed:

(Chairman) Date: 27/7/22

website, and Cllrs were asked to take their time looking them through, and request changes/additions. The Project Group was mentioned, and it was agreed to discuss groups at the next meeting.

8. Reports (22/050)

- a) Bircham in Bloom – Cllr Daniels noted that the silver birch trees would be planted soon, and that other planting was about to begin in earnest.
- b) County Councillor – no report.
- c) Borough Councillor – Cllr Morley noted the new Borough Mayor (Lesley Bambridge) to be appointed the following day. He added he was still on several Council panels, but was not Chair of Audit. He referred to problems at the Borough. Asked about the Council Tax rebates, he noted that this would be automatic for those on Bands A-D, but only if paid by Direct Debit, and would inquire the position for those who did not use this method.
- d) Clerk – no report.

9. Planning (22/051)

- a) There were no planning matters to report or discuss.

10. Finance (22/052)

- a) Financial Report 2021/22 – The Clerk noted that the end of year balance was £15,494.77, which, counting unrepresented cheques, matched the bank statement. A list of all income and expenditure was presented.
- b) The Clerk presented the proposed figures for the AGAR (Audit) form. Explanations were given for the apparent discrepancies, which were all due to required accounting procedures for that form. Councillors were happy with these figures.
- c) Cllrs were given the opportunity to view payments made to confirm proper procedures had been followed. Cllr Clark asked about specific payments, including the largest item and a salary payment. Cllrs were satisfied.
- d) A proposed list of reserves, with ring-fenced funds and CIL was presented. *This was left without changes though to be reconsidered at the time of budget-setting for 2023/24.*
- e) *As income and expenditure were less than £25,000 it was agreed that the Certificate of Exemption should be signed.*
- f) *A revised Asset List was presented and agreed.* It was noted that items valued at £0 had been removed, and that these should be marked with a strikethrough. The Clerk was requested to seek a valuation for the War Memorial.

On completion of the items above it was noted that figures would now be sent to the Internal Auditor, and that his report would inform the final approval of the accounts at the next meeting¹.

- g) The Clerk presented the current bank summary. Balance was £32,647.88 with the arrival of the precept. Spending against budget figures were given – Clerk

¹ Required information will be available on the website.

was asked to amend a typo with dates, and provide actual spend figures for previous year, rather than budgets².

An intervention asking about the Social Club Car Park led to a lengthy and involved discussion. It was noted that no formal application had been made to Council for assistance, that this should go via the Clerk from the Social Club, and that Council funding had previously been returned. Legal restrictions relating to s.137 of the 1972 LGA were explained.

- h) Expenditure, as listed in the public pack³, was agreed – with VAT added to one payment where the invoice had been unclear.
- i) Insurance quotes had been received from two of the three companies approached. It was agreed to insure with BHIB (Aviva) on a three-year deal, costing £557.89pa.

11. Highways (22/053)

- a) There were no reports or updates on Highway related issues.

12. Delegated decisions (22/054)

- a) No decisions had been taken under scheme of delegation.

13. Other items for consideration (22/055)

- a) The latest position relating to proposals from the Cricket Club for nets and pitch changes, with costs and benefits, was explained. [It was noted that informal agreement had been given for the nets.] The pitch was a priority. It was agreed that the Clerk should write to Sandringham, expressing the previous "enthusiastic support" with reasons, attaching the detailed proposals from the Cricket Club, subject to there being a written guarantee of reinstatement provision for the pitch.
- b) The Clerk presented a possible design for a sign for the Playing Field entrance to commemorate the Platinum Jubilee. It was agreed to allow a spend of up to £400 for a Jubilee Commemorative sign. He asked Councillors if they would prefer "dogs should be on leads" or "dogs should be under control" for new signs at the Playing Field – the former was preferred, with a "please keep..." wording.

14. Other items for discussion (22/056)

- a) It was noted that the Memorial case for the WWI Remembrance Book and Poppy had not been pursued. Clerk requested comments on possible design to enable him to pursue quotes. Likely similar to a notice board, inscribed "In Memoriam 1914-18". Shape was discussed – related to possible position in the Church. Cllr Royall asked why it did not include WWII, but this was due to the book itself and that it had been a WWI Centenary project.

² Noting that some budgets had been combined/deleted, with new ones in place.

³ See below, including all payments made since the last meeting, and the VAT correction referred to.

15. Correspondence (22/057)

- a) A request had been received for funding for a Jubilee Tea Party at the Church. Council agreed that they should be pointed to the Borough Councillor Members Fund for this⁴, with an agreement to underwrite £200, on presentation of accounts after the event, if that were not forthcoming.
- b) It was agreed to allow a Wedding reception to take place in a marquee on the Playing Field at an unspecified date in 2024, subject to all licensing applications being properly made.

16. Next Meeting (22/058)

- a) The next meeting was confirmed as 7.30pm on Wednesday, 29th June 2022 at the Social Club.
- b) Dates for meetings for 2022/23 were confirmed as: June 29th, July 27th, September 7th, October 12th, November 30th 2022, January 11th, March 1st, April 26th 2023.

It was assumed the election date would be 4/5/23, with the first meeting of the new Council, the Annual Parish Council Meeting, therefore being on May 17th 2023.

The Meeting ended at 9.55pm

Expenditure:

Date	To	For	Amount	of which VAT	budget
15/4/22	nPower - Jan	street lighting	£136.40	£6.50	SLP
15/4/22	nPower - Feb	street lighting	£117.43	£5.59	SLP
15/4/22	nPower - Mar	street lighting	£123.44	£5.88	SLP
11/5/22	Matt Curtis	dog bin	£52.20	£0.00	DOG
11/5/22	DM Payroll	PAYE admin	£120.00	£0.00	HMR
11/5/22	BCKLWN	dog bin emptying	£296.40	£49.40	DOG
11/5/22	D Pattinson (expenses)	plants/trees	£399.48	£66.58	BIB
11/5/22	ECS	Computer contract	£280.80	£46.80	EXP
11/5/22	Salaries - collated - Apr	Salary - Apr	£542.75	£0.00	CKS
21/5/22	nPower - Apr	street lighting	£107.01	£5.10	SLP
31/5/22	Salaries - collated - May	Salary - May	£517.78	£0.00	CKS

Income:

7/4/22	BCKLWN	precept	£16,800.00
20/4/22	NCC	PPS - 2021/22	£3,000.00

⁴ Via BCKLWN website.

Signed:

(Chairman) Date: 27/7/22