

Crofton Parish Council

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting

Held on the 16th May 2023.

Present: Councillors; Trevor Chalkley (Chair), Simon Bennett, Bob Hewitt, Esme Slater, Dwayne Walkington,

Apologies: Sylvia Walker, John Barnsley,

Clerk to the Council: Rebecca Maindonald

In attendance: 3 members of the public, District Cllr Ali, District Cllr Cummings.

2023/01	1. Welcome and apologies for absence
2023/02	2. Accept the minutes of the 2022 Annual Parish meeting It was resolved that the Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting dated the 10 th May 2022 would be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.
2023/03	3. Receive the Annual Report of the Chairman This was the first year where we were able to throw off the shackles of COVID 19, we are now able to hold all meetings face to face without restrictions Councillors.. This past year we saw several changes in Parish Council members. We welcomed Dwayne Walkinson and Esme Slater whilst we were pleased to see Jayne Wilby and Glenda Towns re-join as co-opted members. Unfortunately, Martyn Hampshire stepped down from his position as Deputy Chairman this was taken up by Helena Stennent who then later also had to step down due to her noble commitment to the Fostering Services. This year saw all Parish Councillors having to stand for re-election where seven were re-elected uncontested, sadly Jayne Wilby, Kelly DeMello and Glenda Towns left the Parish Council without re-election. We shall be looking forward to asking permission to co-opt future members. Clerk Change Last November saw to departure after 16 years of Barry Riley as Parish Clerk. Dist Cllr Cummins immediately helped out as Clerk whilst we are grateful to Cllr Bennett to assume the temporary position as Acting Responsible Financial Officer. We are pleased to welcome Rebecca Maindonald as our new clerk and wish her well in working with us. Crofton Safe Scheme. The Parish Council continued its commitment to the scheme however, members questioned the value of the scheme due to the absence of officers attending Parish Meetings and the exponential increase in Anti-Social Crime which led to myself writing to the Office of the West Yorkshire Mayor, In response a meeting with Dep Crime Commissioner Alison Lowe OBE and Insp Glen Costello took place to discuss our issues and allow the police to explain

their intended reactions. The Parish Council had committed funds to the scheme for 2023/24 which initially would continue until June 23 where the value of the scheme would depend upon improved commitments from West Yorkshire Police, this should be discussed by members as part of the May meeting.

District Councillors This past year we welcomed Dist Cllr Usman Ali, we are grateful to Cllr Ali who was instrumental in facilitating a police meeting with the West Yorkshire Mayors office in response to the ASB problems in the village. The Parish Council would wish special thanks to Dist Cllr Maureen Cummins who stepped in to act as Parish Clerk whilst facilitating a smooth hand over to our new Clerk, again we also extend our thanks to Cllr Bennett who temporarily stepped in to act as our Financial Officer. My personal thanks goes out to Maureen for helping facilitate last years village 'Family Fun Day'. I wish to record the Parish Councils congratulations to Maureen for being re-elected as District Councillor for our parish.

Developments and Traffic Issues. WMDC have now officially notified us that Harron Homes wish to develop the second stage of the Bedford Farm site and build 166 new homes. This development has met some resistance from residents due to traffic and infrastructure issues. Apparently, the rail companies who fear flooding of the London to Edinburgh line have also lodged some objections. Trying to get through our village at school times has now proved to be a worsening problem.

WMDC Highways had promised to resurface Harrison Road by the end of the 22/23 year, we are disappointed that this has not yet happened however we note that there are several sections of our highways in need of resurfacing.

The caravan Storage off Shay Lane has lost out again to its latest petition to retrospective planning permission. We believe they are now trying to work with Crofton Juniors Football by offering additional parking in order to woo their current objection appeal.

Parish Web-site We wish to thank resident Martin Walker for his time and expertise in revamping our web-site, Cllr Slater will be working with Martin to finalise the improvements.

Changes in Parish Boundaries Walton PC petitioned that Crofton's half of the Walton Colliery Park should become part of their parish whilst Charlston PC put a claim in for our section of the Birkwood Estate. We robustly protested not only the claims made but how the District Council initially upheld their claims, we understand that our section of the country park will remain as part of our boundary whilst we will still continue to object to realigning our boarder with Charlston.

Allotments Hare Park, Oak Street and Pontefract Road allotments continue to be popular and generally well used and maintained. An access gate at the Hare Park Allotments been replaced.

Parish Cemetery This year we commissioned the new Casket area of the cemetery. We have also completed the work to stabilise the remaining 'wobbly' headstones.

New Parish Centre and Library Having failed to attempt to secure funding from lotteries etc we will now peruse a Public Works Loan. We are confident that this will not impact the Parish Tax Levy.

Sidings Facility The building is well used by Men's and Ladies Football, Cricket and even Rugby. It's pleasing to see the village Scouting and Brownies Groups using the building. The building is well maintained and cleaned regularly. Cllr Simon Bennett stood down as Chairman and Treasurer of the Croton Village Association well after 30years of service, the village is very grateful for his work. The CVA has now appointed a new Chair, Secretary and Treasurer. Unfortunately, the building was forcibly broken into (with nothing taken) sadly the roof and some newly installed Shutters were damaged as part of the break-in. The large increase in energy bills have asked the CVA how they can become more efficient and reduce costs.

Precept The Parish Council agreed a precept (parish budget) for 2023/24. We shall maintain our core commitments including provision of the Sidings, Parish Centre and Safe Scheme. We will once again be providing funding for the 'Family Fun Day', Community Café, Christmas Lights and Floral Displays. This year we have managed to set a budget without increasing the parish precept, although there is a very slight increase due changes in WMDC Tax base figure.

Floral Displays We have now agreed with the contractor to install these summers floral display. The number of sponsored displays has increased thus offsetting the costs.

The Parish would like to thank our anonymous resident who had carried out repairs to some of the parish benches. The Parish Council has also approved to purchase a Coronation Bench which will be placed somewhere in the village at a later date.

Christmas and Remembrance Events Last years events were again a success, it is planned to go ahead and repeat the same events this year.

The Parish Council has always encouraged and welcomed members of the public to contact and attend our meetings.

Cllr Trevor Chalkley **Chairman**

2023/04

4. Receive report from other organisations attending

The Chair reported on the CVA. A Committee had been established with a Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer now in post. Cllr Bennett had resigned as Secretary. They were all keen to move forward. A meeting was scheduled for the following week, then a quarterly meeting. They had made a formal request for a Gala to take place on the weekend of the 26th August 2023, August Summer Bank holiday weekend.

There was no representative from Constable and Pinders present. Cllr Barnsley having given his apologies.

It was confirmed that Cllr Bennett had stepped down from some Library positions, however he was still Treasurer. They had secured two grants for refurbishment in the sum of £5,000 and £250 for specific elements of the library. They were in a positive position being financially in a credit situation at the beginning of year, with an increase in membership. There had been discussion about reviewing opening times in the future.

The Chair reported that the Family fun day had been approved at the Sidings. Audi had approached the organisers to sponsor the whole event, which was very positive news. It was agreed to review funds that will be required for the day.

The Chair declared the Meeting closed at 6.42pm.

DRAFT

Signed.....Date.....
Chairman Crofton Parish Council

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