

BLAXTON PARISH COUNCIL

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 17 APRIL 2024
AT 19:00 IN BLAXTON VILLAGE HALL**

PRESENT: Councillors R Johnson (Chair), P Raybould, J Hill, J Steventon and I Collett

APOLOGIES: None

IN ATTENDANCE: P Reeves Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC: None

1) APOLOGIES – None

2) MINUTES OF ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD ON 19 APRIL 2023

The minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 19 April 2023 were agreed at the Parish Council meeting on 17 May 2023 – **Noted**

3) MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES – None

4) CHAIR'S REPORT FOR 2023/24

The Chair read his report which was received and noted and is appended to these minutes.

5) BUDGET AND PRECEPT 2024/25 – Noted

The Clerk confirmed copies are available upon request by members of the public.

6) ISSUES RAISED BY RESIDENTS OF THE PARISH – None

Meeting closed at 19:06

Chair: _____

Date: _____

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING APRIL 2024

CHAIRS REPORT

The year has presented some challenges, not least the difficulties we have experienced in trying to resolve issues relating to the Joint Playing Field with our neighbours Finningley Parish Council.

For over 20 years the Joint Playing Field has been managed by the Playing Fields Association (PFA); made up of 2 members from each Parish Council, members of the community and representatives for Cricket, Football and Tennis. In September 2023, at a vote taken at a meeting at which no Blaxton Parish Council representatives were present the PFA was disbanded. There were four members of Finningley Parish Council present and two others, one of who abstained, but the vote was carried. Blaxton Parish Council has continually questioned the decision and tried repeatedly to engage with Finningley PC to discuss arrangements for the future management of the Joint Playing Field, but without success. In the meantime, Finningley Parish Council has assumed control of the facility, particularly all of the assets that rest on its land and of the bank account.

We are still working to try and ensure that the facility is, in the future, managed for the benefit of both of our communities and for its designated purpose of sport and recreation.

Still a challenge, but one in which we are happy to engage, is the use of some 106 money on the Blaxton Playing Field. We conducted a survey in January which told us your preferred improvements would be a nature trail and soft surfacing under the play equipment. We have already obtained some quotations for both and will be reviewing the options over the next month or so. My thanks to Cllr Jacob Hill and our Joint Clerks who are leading on this project.

It is unlikely that we will be able to achieve all of the improvements without additional funding. We have already started to look at that too.

I regret to say that after three years of excellent service, Pamela Reeves has decided to step down as Clerk, and after many years as a Clerk and the past eight years with Blaxton Council, latterly as our Joint Clerk, Philip Dennis has decided to retire. We are sad to lose them both. I would personally like to thank them for their hard work, advice and diligence over the past years. With their help we are currently in the process of recruiting a replacement.

Janet Steventon was co-opted onto the Council in May 2023 following the resignation of Norma McCarron; mentioned in my 2023 Report. Janet has proved a valuable addition to the Council and we look forward to her continued involvement over the next year.

Sadly, John Scutt, who had been a Councillor for more than five years, resigned in December 2023. John was a great asset to the Council, actively engaged in a number of projects and we will miss his energy and commitment. We advertised the vacancy, and I am pleased to welcome Ian Collett to the Council; co-opted at our February meeting. Ian is a former Chair of the Playing Fields Association and was its Tennis Representative.

In addition to Pamela, and Philip Dennis our current Joint Clerks, our team now comprises of Councillors Jacob Hill, Paul Raybould, Janet Steventon, Ian Collett and myself. Together we represent the Council on a number of committees and fulfil the functions of the Parish Council. My thanks to

them all for their efforts during the past year, which, as always, has presented its challenges and opportunities. I believe we have dealt with them all with good sense. Our aim is always to do our best for the village and its residents.

I cannot conclude the report without mentioning the Precept. The Council sets a budget each year to cover the expenses incurred in delivering its services to our community. Based on that budget we set a Precept; the amount of money we ask the City of Doncaster Council to collect from residents via their Council Tax and pay to us to fund our budget. The amounts may, or may not, be the same.

This year, considering the financial difficulties some households have, the Council set a precept that resulted in a zero-percentage increase in the Parish Council element of your Council Tax, deciding to fund the additional amount in its budget from its reserves.

If you want to know what we are doing on your behalf you are welcome to attend our meetings, check up on our website, notice board, or on our social media pages. You can raise issues or ask questions by contacting our Clerk; we will do our best to get a resolution to your problem or an answer to your question.

Richard Johnson.
17th April 2024.