

ALNE PARISH

**MINUTES OF THE PARISH ASSEMBLY HELD IN ST MARY'S CHURCH
IN ALNE ON THURSDAY 19 MAY 2022 AT 8.00PM**

PRESENT: Dr Robert Brech (Chairman)
Clerk: Nigel Knapton.

11 members of the public were present.

22/1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were apologies from Mr Eddie Edwards.

22/2 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 10 MAY 2019

Minutes were circulated and these were accepted and signed as a correct record.

22/3 CHAIRMAN OF THE PARISH COUNCIL'S REPORT

I am Robert Brech and I welcome you to the Annual Parish Meeting.

The Annual Parish meeting is held each year as required by the Local Government Act 1972. Under the law, the Annual Parish Meeting consists of "the local government electors for the parish" who meet for the purpose of "discussing parish affairs".

Contrary to a recent Facebook post which has been drawn to my attention, this is NOT a question-and-answer session and it is NOT a forum for somehow holding the Parish Council to account. The electors do that– and have just done that – in the local elections.

To be clear:

The law requires me to preside over this Annual Parish Meeting because I am the current Chairman of the Parish Council, which is an entirely separate body;

The Parish Council as a separate body is not a "local government elector" and therefore does NOT attend the Annual Parish Meeting. This means that any other parish councillors who may be attending the Annual Parish Meeting are here only in their capacity as electors.

On that basis, this Annual Parish Meeting will follow the traditionally established format. I will give a review of Parish Council activities over the past year, and then any elector who wishes to raise any wider parish affairs is free to do so. To ensure that the meeting runs in an efficient and timely manner, the standard rules applicable to Parish Council meetings will also apply to the Annual Parish Meeting, including that the total contribution of any individual elector shall be for no more than three minutes.

It seems a long time ago now but we have to recall that we started the current parish year with Covid restrictions and meetings held by Zoom and it wasn't until October that we met in person. Despite this, and the shortening of our term of office by one year to bring us into line with the new unitary North Yorkshire authority, we have made good progress in a number of areas:

Approved Chairman

While responsibility for footpaths rests with North Yorkshire County Council, we have started a new initiative on footpaths and are working with local landowners and North Yorkshire to ensure that all existing footpaths are clear and safe. The re-establishment of the Kyle footbridge is an important part of this and it still remains on track for this financial year. Our thanks to Councillor Fletcher who has taken the lead on both the bridge and footpaths in general.

We have agreement in principle to establish a defibrillator in the Alne Station area and are just awaiting confirmation of funding. A training session was held last October and another one will be organised once the new defibrillator is in place. Our thanks to Councillor Edwards who has taken the lead on this.

Thanks to Councillor Newton and his waders, we have installed a depth gauge in the River Kyle so that we can have a record of floods as the years go by. It is maybe no coincidence that it has been generally very dry since this was installed!

We have considered the possibility of erecting bus shelters within the village but we have decided that they are out-of-character in a rural village and would detract from the conservation area. Despite disagreement from one individual elector, this subject is closed.

A number of speed surveys were carried out during the year. Liaison with North Yorkshire Police indicated that we do not have a problem compared to many other villages but we will continue to keep an eye on this. It remains the intention to carry out a survey of early morning commuter traffic as this has not yet been done. As always, and for reasons which will be self-evident, details of dates, times and location will not be disclosed in advance.

We have completed the repayment of the 5-year loan for the re-establishment of the village verges and we have reduced the parish precept accordingly.

We have kept pressure on the relevant authorities for replacement and repair of lamp posts. Two lights in Hallgarth have been repaired and all three have been converted to LED from Sodium. The light at the end of Monk Green remains outstanding despite pressure on the authority.

The proposed resurrection of the Community Plan fell victim to the shortened term of office of the Parish Council. It is intended that this will be taken forward by the new Council, which will also investigate whether the new "Neighbourhood Plan" might be a better way forward. This is all, of course, subject to there being sufficient interest and will among the wider community to form the necessary working group and take forward the creation of any such Plan.

It is the intention that the question as to whether Alne has scope and room and the necessary services for additional affordable housing, and its pros and cons, will be considered as part of the new Community or Neighbourhood Plan.

Approved Chairman

We have pressed hard for on-site meetings with Yorkshire Water regarding the ongoing problems throughout the village and also with NYCC Highways regarding the state of Monk Green. We have not yet been able to make these happen.

We have facilitated the renovation of the telephone box library, The interior is already being overhauled and a new stock of books on new shelves is expected shortly. Funding for repainting and reglazing is now also being considered.

All the Parish Council policies have been updated and brought into line with current legislation and practice. Our thanks to Councillor Walker who has master-minded this.

A very successful litterpick was organised at the end of March. Some 20 volunteers, accompanied by our MP, Kevin Hollinrake, cleared the village and the approach verges and a substantial amount of debris was removed.

My thanks are due to all the councillors and also to our hard-working clerk, Nigel Knapton. We congratulate him on his elevation as a councillor to the new North Yorkshire unitary authority.

Before we move to opinions from the floor, I have been given advance notice of fourteen matters that an individual elector wished me to address. Nine of these have already been addressed in this report, and one is on the agenda of the following meeting. Regarding the remainder:

Allegations of road closure information not being put on the website. The Parish Council has no responsibility for this and while planned closures are indeed notified on the website, the Parish Council gets no more notice of emergency closures than any member of the public. Please see 10-March, 17-April, 05-August and 17-August last year and 22- February this year for examples of notification of planned road closures on the website.

Allegations of slow responses and not following up planning matters. The Parish Council does not accept these criticisms.

Allegations of the Parish Council not following Nolan principles. This is irrelevant as Nolan principles are aimed at individuals and not at councils. Parish Councils are regulated by various Acts of Parliament.

We will now move to opinions from the floor. If you wish to speak, please give your name and confirm that you are an elector of the Parish of Alne.

22/4 CONTRIBUTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

Matters discussed were Nolan Principles, minutes on noticeboards and the Linton-on-Ouse asylum centre.

22/5 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

22/6

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday 9 May 2023 at 8.00pm.

The meeting closed at 8.16pm

Approved Chairman