

Thornton Le Dale Annual Parish Meeting

DRAFT

**Held on Tuesday 7th May at 7.00 pm at the Hill Memorial Institute, Maltongate,
Thornton le Dale, YO18 7LF**

PRESENT:

- Cllr Sandra Bell – Chairperson
- Emma Douglas-Smith (Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer TLD PC) – note taking
- Members of the public

1. The Chair opened the meeting by welcoming everyone present to the Parish Meeting
2. **The Chair-person's Annual Report for the Parish Council:**

The Chair read out her Annual Report for the Annual Parish Meeting, as per the below:

Chair's report for the 2019 Annual Parish Meeting

Sandra Bell Chair

Over the past year, many issues have arisen. Some of these feel a bit like 'Groundhog Day' in that they seem to have gone on for ever. This can be one of the frustrations experienced within the Parish Council as we must progress within our limited scope

Traffic lights

These continue to be a sore point and a source of concern vis a vis the difficulty of motorists coming down Whitbygate seemingly not registering them and many near misses occurring. Part of the issue is the setting on lights being set to respond at a gap in traffic which is also what the motorists on Whitbygate are waiting for. When we had input from Tim Coyne from Highways to speak to the Traffic Management Review, it was indicated that this could be changed but concern was expressed that this would result in too much disruption to through traffic. Although there remained dissatisfaction with the outcome and feedback, I hope the visit left those present with a clearer idea of the factors involved outwith our own immediate control.

Speeding

VAS have again been considered but the cost was significant and it was felt little benefit would result.

Security

CCTV monitoring has been considered and a visit from Martin Dale gave us some indication of how this might be a useful addition both for general security within the village centre area but also possibly for monitoring of events at the traffic lights. We have to get further information regarding costings and this may be revisited over the next year.

Railings

These have appeared on the agenda on and off and pursuing insurance claims has been time consuming. This is an area where the PC have found their hands somewhat tied as the appropriate steps have to be taken in turn and frustration has understandably been expressed by villagers who have to suffer the unsightliness and inconvenience in the meantime. It may be that these things progress more rapidly in the future.

Grit bins

There has been some rationalisation of the positioning and numbers of bins and it is hoped we are moving in the right direction in this area.

Caretaker/s

There have been some unforeseen changes here following the illness of our selected main contractor but the feedback within the village regarding the current arrangements has been positive which is pleasing. The maintenance of the benches has been progressing well and the ones I have seen are looking good.

Churchyard

Again, the current arrangement seems to be working well and positive reports have been received about the condition of the churchyard

Allotments

There was a bit of uncertainty at the time of the changeover as the documentation proved difficult to locate but this has now been resolved and these continue to be a valued element of the village.

Cemetery

General maintenance of the cemetery is again commented on favourably but it has to be said that the presence of a large, bare chunk of concrete close to the entrance is not an inviting greeting. It is to be hoped that the refurbishment of this unit progresses more rapidly and this may be something the PC will need to investigate and promote action.

Planning

There have been continued applications and have put in objections as seen fit.

Car Park

Theoretically there are new signs and new charges but I have not found these easy to ascertain. There still also seems to be a need for better signage within the village both in terms of information about the car park and to emphasise its proximity to the village.

Hub

This group has started encouragingly and its efforts on litter picking, bulb planting and with the upkeep of the pond are of benefit. It is always encouraging to see such a clear demonstration of community spirit in action – positive constructive actions producing benefits wider than the specific tasks undertaken.

Dog Fouling

This has not been such a concern of late and it is to be hoped this will continue to be the case over the summer with the influx of visitors.

Appointment of new clerk and financial officer

With the appointment of Emma Douglas- Smith as our new clerk I am hopeful that the issues there have been about cheque signatories and other outstanding issues will now be swiftly resolved.

As a consequence of the timing of the changeover, it has proved necessary to agree additional hours for the new clerk in the first month or so. I am grateful that she has been able to put in these extra hours so readily. This proved additionally necessary because of the lack of detail regarding some of the accounts and funding streams. These hours were approved by the chair and vice-chair and we have also been working with the new clerk over the changeover period. The majority of this work has been with the vice chair Cllr John Garbutt to whom I also express my gratitude on behalf of myself and the PC for being willing and able to do so.

Training

I attended a GPDR seminar last June and this is one I would recommend others to attend. There has been limited other training undertaken but there will be training offered by YLCA and other bodies in the course of the year that I would hope that fellow councillors and the new clerk will be keen to access.

It is good to get feedback on efforts and issues within the parish bounds and I remain encouraged by the interest that people have in our Parish. There are some misconceptions about what the PC can actually do although it can have influence beyond this at times by making specific contact with bodies or by input to or representation at planning committee meetings.

Chair Concluded her Report

3. Chair Invited Member's of the Public to bring up items they feel the PC should be considered for future meetings – and asked for questions:

A member of the public asked about Street-lighting – the Chair acknowledged she had overlooked mentioning this, but it was in her report so read out that section as per below :

Streetlights

The updating of these has been progressing quickly and the PC taking over their maintenance is very current. This should give the opportunity for more speedy resolution of problems and it is to be hoped that the financial aspects will not prove to detract from other elements of village maintenance and upkeep. We had a reserve held to cover this capital expense – that is ongoing.

The PC Caretaker asked for some clarification in regard to the grass cutting for the Play Park & the Cemetery. It was agreed that the cutting contract for these 2 areas should be reviewed. Caretaker to submit something in writing to the Clerk, for consideration on a future PC Meeting Agenda.

Meeting Closed at 7.15 p.m.