THE MEETING OF COUNTESTHORPE PARISH COUNCIL WAS HELD ON THURSDAY 10th FEBRUARY 2022 WHEN THERE WERE PRESENT:

Councillors: Cllrs V Armstrong, S Burditt, A Clifford, J Jennings, S Kinvig, K McGovern, P Mount, K Pearce, W Read, M Smith, J Thacker and S Turner

Parish Council Manager: Mrs C E Samuels

Assistant Parish Council Manager: Miss J Leech

2021/22 179. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE, IF ANY – Apologies were received from Cllr M Gillespie.

2021/22 180. TO RECEIVE DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST AND TO CONSIDER ANY REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATION – There were none.

2021/22 181. TO APPROVE AND SIGN MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 13th JANUARY 2022 - Minutes of the meeting held on 13th January 2022 were circulated prior to the meeting. It was resolved to approve the minutes, which were signed by the Chairman as an accurate record.

2021/22 182. COUNCILLOR VACANCY – There were no nominations.

2021/22 183. TO APPOINT REPRESENTATIVES TO COMMITTEES, WORKING PARTIES AND OUTSIDE BODIES, AND DISCUSS TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE COMMITTEES AND WORKING PARTIES – It was resolved to elect Cllrs S Burditt and V Armstrong on to the Events Working Party.

2021/22 184. MATTERS ARISING FOR INFORMATION PURPOSES ONLY – .

2021/22 185. REPORTS AND QUESTIONS FROM REPRESENTATIVES, COUNTY COUNCILLOR, DISTRICT COUNCILLOR AND PARISH COUNCILLORS – There were no reports or questions*.*

2021/22 186. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION – There were no members of public in attendance.

2021/22 187. POLICE MATTERS, INCLUDING MONTHLY REPORT – A report was not available.

2021/22 188. TO APPROVE PARISH COUNCIL ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT AS VERIFIED BY THE FINANCE WORKING PARTY – It was resolved to approve the following Direct Debit and Business Card accounts for payment: £

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Payments for were not available for verification by the Finance Working Party.

2021/22 189. LEICESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL (LCC) – LOCAL CYCLING AND WALKING INFRASTRUCTURE­ –.

2021/22 190. CORRESPONDENCE

1. Leicestershire Footpath Association – AGM
2. The Local Government Boundary Commission for England – consultation re: wards, ward boundaries and ward names
3. Blaby District Council - New Building Control Service approved
4. Blaby District Council – Chairman’s curry night

2021/22 191. REQUEST FOR RECORDS STORAGE IN LIBRARY –.

2021/22 192. REPORT AND TO APPROVE THE RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE ESTATES WORKING PARTY –

1. Cemetery
2. Cemetery (a) - There were no matters to report.
3. Cemetery (b) - BDC has approved the alteration to the landscaping scheme to substitute Ornamental Pear with Upright Hornbeams. There will be 15 trees in total. Thorpe Trees will provide a quotation for the Carpinus Betulus Fastigiata later in the year, however another supplier is able to source Carpinus Betulus Lucas. It was recommended to obtain pictures of the variants for the next meeting. Two prunus trees have been purchased for requests for memorial trees. A further 500 tree whips are required for the woodland area. It was recommended to purchase 250 trees from Thorpe Trees at an estimated cost of £650 for autumn 2022, with the remaining 250 to be purchased and planted in the autumn of 2023. The cost of the trees would be taken from Earmarked Reserves.
4. Chapel - The balance from the 2021/22 budget will be transferred to Earmarked Reserves or accrued to cover the cost of the roof repairs. A budget of £7000 has been allocated in 2022/2023 for drawings for the Helibars and to monitor any movement of the chapel. Oswin Builders are to carry out the roof repair works as soon as possible.
5. Container - It was recommended to purchase a 10ft x 15ft metal shed, in eucalyptus, at a cost of £999 plus £49 each for the anchoring kits. However, if stock is not available in the eucalyptus it was recommend purchasing in silver. A concrete and hardcore base was recommended. There is budget of £6000 for the project. A planting scheme will be discussed once the shed is installed.
6. Parking restriction posters - It was recommended to install the police posters at Hofflers Close, outside the former Post Office, on Edgeley Road at the bend, around Greenfield School and on Station Road near to Poplar Avenue.
7. Hanging Baskets – Although the budget allowance is for the existing baskets, it was recommended to remove the following baskets as the positions are restricted or the lampposts require testing:

Leicester Road lamppost – 12, 13

Main Street lamppost - 3

Central Street lamppost - 3

Winchester Road - 1, 5, 23, 24

Station Road – baskets outside 21 and 35

Prior to placing the order, it was recommended to contact Whetstone Parish Council to ask the name of the company who supply and maintain its display.

Additional posts will be considered prior to the next lamppost structural tests in 2023.

Whetstone say: *Our own groundstaff produce our plant stock and then fill the baskets. They always receive good feedback, but alas he only has greenhouse space enough for the village requirements. They erect and take down, and we also water the baskets of which we now have 60.*

If we go with Plantscape do we want a three year contract.

1. Maintenance Issues - Central Street car park barrier has been replaced. Some slabs at The Square have been relayed and levelled. The sceptic tank at Willoughby Road Playing Fields has been emptied. The planters around the village require weeding. It was recommended to accept a quote from Wickstead Leisure of £140 to repair the wobble board at Leysland Play Area. The cemetery car park has been re-gravelled, and the pathways repaired where necessary. Replacement Xmas lights for the churchyard have been purchased as the existing lights were damaged. The zip wire platform has been repaired. St Andrew’s Church has carried out repair works to the flooring in the bell tower, highlighted by the clock servicing company. The Parish Council’s van has been hit by a car, causing minor damage, however an insurance claim has been submitted. A resident has complained that trees on Green Lane need pruning. Leicestershire County Council (LCC) has advised that it has no record of ownership, however they would check for any safety impact on the highway. It was recommended to respond to LCC to express the Parish Council’s dissatisfaction in their response and to reiterate that they must own the trees. The resident has stated that he will tidy the hedgerow if the Parish Council agree to shredding and clearing the debris. A decision will be made once a response from LCC is received. It was recommended to contact Severn Trent Water to ask them to investigate water leaking into Willoughby Road Playing Fields. The gates to the churchyard from Station Road require painting.
2. Tree work -The report from Beddows Tree Care on the high-risk trees has been received. It was recommended to proceed with the Priority 1 works at an estimated cost of £4620. It was recommended for the Priority 2 works to be discussed by the Finance Working Party. The estimated cost of the works is £5058. The Head Groundsman will advise on works which can be completed in-house, which will reduce costs. The removal of the trees on the Centenary Paddock, necessary under Priority 1 works, will be detailed on the Parish Council’s Facebook page. The neighbouring property would be notified of the works. After the removal of the trees, replacement trees would be considered.
3. Height Barrier at Willoughby Road Playing Field - It was recommended to obtain advice from Secure-a-field as to whether the overhead barrier at Willoughby Road Playing Fields could be repaired. It was recommended to obtain a quotation for height restriction signs for the Willoughby Road and the Village Hall barriers. Secure-a-field do not carry out repairs. We have a quote from Secure-a-Field for replacement at £3365.67 plus VAT. Broxap will supply only. We will need more time to get other quotes if available
4. Willoughby Road Playing Fields Changing Facilities - The portacabin is currently out of use due to safety concerns with the structure. The Parish Council own the portacabin, however the football club is responsible for maintenance. Initial enquiries have been made to BDC regarding s106 funding for a replacement due to the condition of the cabin and its foundations. BDC has requested more information which has been forwarded to the football club. It was recommended to chase the football club for its response.
5. Correspondence
	* + - 1. Larchwood - A complaint from the owner of a property backing onto the Larchwood Open Space regarding works undertaken to reduce the hedgerow, was responded to as per the Parish Council resolution in January. Further comments received were noted.
				2. Boundary Hedge at Leysland open space – A request has been received from a property adjoining the Leysland open space for the hedge at their boundary to be reduced in height, however, other properties along the length of the hedgerow prefer it to be kept taller. The current height of the hedge is around 9ft. It was recommended for the hedge to be reduced to around 4 - 5ft next to the resident’s property and to take the top out on the rest of the hedge. The sensitivity of this recommendation will be expressed to the Parish Council prior to resolution. We are not sure what the height of the hedge would be when the top is taken out? – Peter on holiday so can’t check.
6. EV Chargepoints - To obtain funding to install EV Chargepoints at Central Street car park, the works need to be completed by 31st March 2023. It was recommended not to proceed with the project; however, the decision would be highlighted to the Parish Council meeting for its resolution.
7. Centenary Paddock -The following requests have been received from hirers for a variation to the conditions of use for the Centenary Paddock:
	* + - 1. Countesthorpe Scout Group – for use of a small, amplified PA system to play music, to finish no later than 4pm, for dance sessions at their summer fete on 2nd July 2022.
				2. Countesthorpe Guides - to run occasional bushfire classes.
				3. Boot Run – to have sandpits for children to dig for fossils or dinosaurs at their event on 18th September 2022.

It was recommended to circulate the details of the requests, along with the existing Terms and Conditions for the hire of Centenary Paddock, to the Working Group for consideration at the next meeting.

1. Improvements to The Square -A further meeting of the Sub-Working Party is to be scheduled.
2. Matters arising for information purposes - The Elm Tree had been purchased for the Scouts to plant in September 2022. The seeds have been ordered for the summer displays.

It was resolved to approve the recommendations of the working party.

2021/22 193. REPORT AND TO APPROVE THE RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE EVENTS WORKING PARTY – QUEEN’S PLATINUM JUBILEE – .

It was resolved to approve the recommendations of the working party.

2021/22 194. VILLAGE HALL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

1. Report – A report was given to the meeting.
2. To approve accounts for payment as verified by the Finance Working Party – It was resolved to approve the following Direct Debit and Business Card accounts for payment: £

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2021/22 195. REPORT FROM THE PLANNING COMMITTEE – .

2021/22 196. HINCKLEY NATIONAL RAIL FREIGHT INTERCHANGE – .

2021/22 197. LEICESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL –.

2021/22 198. YOUTH WORKERS – The Youth Workers resumed their sessions last week.

2021/22 199. MATTERS THE PARISH COUNCIL MANAGER MAY WISH TO RAISE FOR INFORMATION PURPOSES ONLY – .

2021/22 200. REPORT AND TO APPROVE THE RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE FINANCE WORKING PARTY

1. **Review Budget and Expenditure**

The budget as at 31st January 2022 was reviewed and all was in order.

It was noted that the hand dryer in the library toilet had now been repaired at a cost of £449.64.

It was noted that the Estates Working Party has recommended for the Priority 1 and 2 tree works to be carried arising from the high-risk tree survey. The Finance Working Party recommended that the Priority 1 works be arranged for payment from the current financial year and that the order for the Priority 2 works is placed in the next financial year. An order would be placed with Beddows Tree Care for Priority 1, works which cannot be undertaken by the grounds staff.

1. **To review Bank Reconciliations and Bank Statements**

The Bank Reconciliations and Bank Statements had been reviewed by Councillor K McGovern in January and all was in order.

1. **The Queens Platinum Jubilee**
2. Staffing for the Platinum Jubilee Events - The advice from Ellis Whittam and the Green Book with regard to pay arrangements for employees required to work over the Jubilee Bank Holiday weekend was noted. It was recommended to invite the Parish Council’s staff if they wish to be involved in the Jubilee weekend’s events and remuneration plus time off in lieu would be as per the advice from Ellis Whittam, in line with the Green Book.
3. Bank holiday entitlement - It was recommended that all employees be allowed the extra day’s bank holiday allowance for 3rd June 2022.
4. **Review of Village Hall Hire Fees**

The Village Hall Hire Agreement form was noted with minor amendments to the deposit and cancellation fees. It was recommended to refer the Hire Agreement Form to the Village Hall Committee with reference to the wording of item 20 in the Conditions of Use in respect of hirers bringing alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks onto the premises.

It was recommended for the Village Hall Committee to review the hire fees with a recommendation from the Parish Council for it to consider a 2-3% increase for 22/23. Details of hire fees from comparable Village Halls in the area were noted.

1. **To consider purchasing battery operated machinery 2022/23**

Consideration was given to whether the machinery should be replaced with a battery-operated machine when needed. A hedge cutter needs replacing for next season. It was recommended for further information relating to costs, practicalities of using an electrical machine, etc to be brought back to the next meeting.

1. **To consider purchasing a replacement truck**

It was noted that the truck has a water leak and other maintenance items will be forthcoming due to the age of the truck. Following discussion about the potential repair costs to the existing truck and on receipt of quotations for a replacement vehicle, it was recommended that it would be more economically viable to proceed with purchasing a replacement vehicle. It was noted that the reserves built up since 2017 covered the cost of the new vehicle. It was recommended therefore to proceed with purchasing a replacement truck as follows:-

Isuzu N35.125 Twin Wheel tipper priced at £25,995 plus £330 Road Fund Licence and 1st registration fee; with addition of a towbar at £450, roof beacon at £250 and £200 for roof and front and rear flashing lights. The fitting of the logo would be around £250.

It was recommended to advise residents via Facebook and the website.

1. **Insurance**

It was noted that a claim had been put through the insurers as the van had been damaged by another vehicle whilst it was parked on Main Street.

1. **Training**

It was recommended to put an item on the April meeting agenda to assess the usefulness of the on-line training package provided by Ellis Whitham.

1. **Audit**

It was recommended to accept Ireland & Co’s quotation of £620 to carry out the End of Year internal audit.

1. **Grant Aid**

Having declared a pecuniary interest, Cllr M Gillespie here left the meeting.

It was recommended to award a grant of £1000 to St Andrew’s Church as a contribution towards its fundraising initiative to help towards the emergency repair works to the wall and roof.

Cllr M Gillespie returned to the meeting.

A letter from the Fun & Friendship Group thanking the Parish Council for the grant towards its Christmas meal, was noted.

A request from the Allotment Society for support towards making good the surface to Glebe Drive was noted. It was recommended to refer the matter to Cllr A Clifford to see if Blaby District Council would be able to assist and also to Leicestershire County Council. The Allotment Society would be provided with the relevant contact details at Leicestershire County Council / Blaby District Council and asked whether his details could be forwarded.

1. **S106 Payments**
2. BDC has confirmed that an application for s106 funding for The Square enhancement project may be submitted. A design for the layout is being created by the Estates Sub-Working Party.
3. An initial query had been raised with Blaby District Council with regard to the eligibility of a replacement portacabin for Willoughby Road Playing Fields for s106 funding. Blaby & Whetstone Football Club would be contacted re: the foundations.

**15. Matters Arising for Information Purposes**

a. It was recommended to return to using Alexandra for purchasing T-shirts for the ground staff. A supply would be purchased as required.

b. It was recommended to obtain a quotation for a replacement overhead barrier for the Willoughby Road Playing Fields’ entrance.

c. It was noted that the Estates Working Party had made the recommended to purchase a 10ft by 15ft metal shed for the new Cemetery area.

d. An update was received on the distribution of highway funding, allocated to Leicestershire County Councillor L Phillimore. The Parish Council would need to identify the four locations to position the posts for a Speed Activated Sign. The Highways department would then need to carry out a feasibility study.

1.

It was resolved to approve the recommendations of the working party.

2021/22 178. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING – Thursday 10th February 2022.

 Signed.................................................................... Chairman

 Dated................................................................ 2022