

THE MEETING OF COUNTRESTHORPE PARISH COUNCIL WAS HELD ON THURSDAY 14th APRIL 2022 WHEN THERE WERE PRESENT:

Councillors: Cllrs V Armstrong, S Burditt, A Clifford, M Gillespie, J Jennings, S Kinvig, K Pearce, M Smith and S Turner.

Parish Council Manager: Mrs C E Samuels

Assistant Parish Council Manager: Miss J Leech

County Councillor L Phillimore was also in attendance.

2021/22 224. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE, IF ANY – Apologies were received from Cllrs K McGovern, P Mount, W Read and J Thacker.

2021/22 225. TO RECEIVE DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST AND TO CONSIDER ANY REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATION – Cllr A Clifford declared a non-disclosable pecuniary interest in Blaby District Council (BDC).

2021/22 226. TO APPROVE AND SIGN MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 10th MARCH 2022
Minutes of the meeting held on 10th March 2022 were circulated prior to the meeting. It was resolved to approve the minutes, which were signed by the Chairman as an accurate record.

2021/22 227. COUNCILLOR EVENT / VACANCY – The event is scheduled to take place on Thursday 21st April. Councillors were requested to attend. Cty Cllr L Phillimore will be attending.

2021/22 228. MATTERS ARISING FOR INFORMATION PURPOSES ONLY – There were no matters.

2021/22 229. REPORTS AND QUESTIONS FROM REPRESENTATIVES, COUNTY COUNCILLOR, DISTRICT COUNCILLOR AND PARISH COUNCILLORS – Cty Cllr L Phillimore confirmed approval for funding of £4200 for a speed activated sign on Willoughby Road, including for additional posts to enable the sign to be moved. Leicestershire County Council (LCC) will be in contact. The Parish Council will have the option to upgrade the sign at its own expense.

2021/22 230. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION – There were no members of public present.

2021/22 231. POLICE MATTERS, INCLUDING MONTHLY REPORT – A report has not been received from the Beat Team. A Councillor informed the meeting of recent incidents of theft whilst the properties were occupied and, in some cases, witnessed by the residents. It was resolved to write to the new Inspector, with copies to the Police Commissioner and Cty Cllr L Phillimore, regarding the need for the local police beat team to have a ‘presence’ in the village. Recent incidents will be highlighted.

2021/22 232. 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:

	£
Amazon - library book cover	12.97
Sync.com - iCloud storage backup	94.67
Total Energies - library electricity	77.44
Waterplus - VH/Library (£190.33 = 60% PC £114.20 / 40% VH £76.13)	114.20
Waterplus - Central Street car park water rates	73.89
Waterplus - cemetery water rates	162.92
Elemental Ltd - telephones (March)	189.01
Elemental Ltd - telephones (April)	189.01
ESPO - gas (£206.58 = 60% PC £ 123.95/40% VH £82.63)	123.95
BNP Paribas Leasing Solutions - telephones leasing	312.00

TotalEnergies - library electricity	72.66
GDPR Data Protection Act 2018 – annual fee	55.00

It was resolved to approve the following Parish Council accounts for payment:

£

TJC Agricultural Engineering - deposit for Beacon	720.00
R E Bowers & Freeman Ltd - wall plaque	132.96
Morgan's (Locksmith) - keys and garage door holder	290.55
Blaby District Council - non-domestic rates (Hall & Premises)	6112.75
Blaby District Council - non-domestic rates (Central Street car park)	1571.85
Blaby District Council - non-domestic rates (Cemetery)	2644.70
EH Smith Builders Merchants Ltd - paint / stock	124.80
Coltman Bros Ltd - stock	140.61
Palmers Garen Centres - herbaceous bed in cemetery	349.50
James Coles & Sons (Nurseries) Ltd - hawthorn whips cemetery	60.00
DOC Event Medical Specialists Ltd - first aid cover	250.00
ESPO - H&S/cleaning/stationery/chair	210.90
BIG Business Services Ltd t/a Guardian Support - H&S contract	780.90
A T Houghton Agricultural Engineers - stock	44.60
Zoom Print & Display banner - Jubilee banners (x 3)	162.00
Ellis Whittam - HR package	1764.00
Ellis Whittam - insurance/admin fee for HR package	321.00
LRALC Ltd membership - membership	906.85
Fenland Leisure Products Ltd - Rota Roka repair	335.40
SNJ Cleaning Services - window cleaning	30.00
ICCM - membership	95.00
FuelGenie - vehicle fuel	317.69
Chandlers (Farm Equipment) Ltd - PPE/stock	108.86
Open Spaces Society - membership	45.00
K Tee Tyres Ltd - vehicle supplies	43.99
Blaby Building Supplies - maintenance cemetery	60.78
Petty cash - April 22	100.00
Wages	10363.15
HMRC - tax / NI	3026.80
LCC - pension	4170.78
Blaby District Council - (PC waste £2775.24 VH recycling £356.81)	2775.24
Coltman Bros Ltd - hinge/nail plate	32.16
EH Smith Builders Merchants Ltd - stock	118.80
ESPO - gas (£179.86 = PC 60% £107.92 VH 40% £71.94)	107.92
Allstar Paintworks Ltd - excess for paint work repair to van	100.00
Blaby District Council - DBS admin fee for volunteer	10.00

Payments for Coltman Bros Ltd, EH Smith Builders Merchants Ltd, ESPO, Allstar Paintworks Ltd, Blaby District Council were not available for verification by the Finance Working Party.

2021/22 233. CODE OF CONDUCT AND REVIEW OF GIFTS & HOSPITALITY GUIDANCE – A new Code of Conduct has been adopted by BDC, which would normally be adopted by the Parish Council. However, some items in BDC's Code of Conduct are not applicable to Parish Councils. The Leicestershire & Rutland Association of Local Councils (LRALC) has suggested representatives attend training, at BDC's offices, prior to the Parish Council adopting an amended Code of Conduct.

2021/22 234. ARRIVA BUS SERVICE – A response has not been received from Arriva regarding concerns raised by a resident on the proposed amendments to the service. Correspondence has been

received from LCC advising that the off-peak service is reducing from 20 to 30 minutes, some off-peak journeys will be removed, and giving details of an Enhanced Partnership Plan and Scheme. The Enhanced Partnership Plan and Scheme is an agreement that enables Local Authorities and Operators to set shared aims with regards to improving bus services. A second resident has raised concerns regarding the reduction of the 85 service. It was resolved to write to Arriva seeking assurance that the service will not be reduced further and request evidence as to why the service is reducing from 20 to 30 minutes. A list of passenger numbers over the past 3 years will be requested to identify a 3-year trend.

2021/22 235. CORRESPONDENCE

- a. Open Spaces – the Spring 2022 magazine was noted.
- b. Leicestershire Footpath Association – the programme of walks for summer 2022, was noted.
- c. Blaby District Council – the Annual Report 2021 was circulated.
- d. Blaby District Council – tourism map and guide launch details were circulated.
- e. Blaby District Council – the Countryside Code has been placed on the website.
- f. Open Spaces Society Membership – it was resolved to renew the membership.
- g. Leicestershire County Council – details of the Annual Parish Conference will be circulated.
- h. Chairman’s Charity Quiz Night – details of the quiz night were noted.
- i. Blaby District Council Parish Liaison Event – key points and actions were circulated.

2021/22 236. HIGHWAYS FUNDING PROJECTS 2021/22 AND 2022/23 – Cty Cllr L Phillimore spoke regarding this item earlier in the proceedings.

2021/22 237. REQUEST FOR RECORDS STORAGE IN LIBRARY – It was resolved that if Councillors or the Parish Council office are contacted, a letter would be issued advising that the Parish Council will not take the records as per the resolution made at the March meeting, the minutes of which have now been published, and any correspondence or communications must be made through the Parish Office. It was resolved to remove this item from future agendas as the matter is closed.

2021/22 238. COUNTSTHORPE VILLAGE HALL CHARITY – A letter has been received from the trustees of Countesthorpe Village Hall, requesting that the Parish Council becomes the trustee of the charity when the existing trustees resign. This was resolved, together with the assurance that the conditions of the original indenture will be met and that the Parish Council will maintain control of the land for the continuing benefit of the parishioners and will not sell off any part of the land.

2021/22 239. REPORT AND TO APPROVE THE RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE ESTATES WORKING PARTY

- a. Cemetery
 - i. Cemetery (a) and (b) – The approved variety of Hornbeam is ‘Fastigate’ i.e. upright in habit. It was recommended to diary for August to obtain quotes for 15 trees.
 - ii. Chapel – Oswin Builders are carrying out the roof repair works.
- b. Improvements to the Square - It was recommended to obtain quotations for the project, with a view to ascertaining whether the project would be eligible for s106 funding. A Platinum Jubilee plaque has been ordered at a cost of £159.98, including VAT and packaging. Following a request from an adjoining property it was recommended to remove the shrubbery from the boundary wall.
- c. Container – It was recommended to maintain the hedging around the container to 4 ft in height.
- d. Maintenance Issues – It was recommended to replace the cradle swings on Dale Acre. Welding is required to the Air Walker at Dale Acre; this would be monitored. It was recommended to obtain a quotation to replace the ropes on the multi-play equipment at Dale Acre. Concerns, raised by a resident on Green Lane, in respect of the boundary were noted. It was recommended to replace the timber on the Village Hall gates. LCC has confirmed that the workman truck will not be permitted to park the truck on the yellow lines on Main Street, to undertake maintenance work on the closed churchyard. Cllr M Gillespie will liaise with St Andrew’s Church regarding the matter.

- e. Tree work – The contractors will undertake Priority 1 and 2 works w/c 25th April. Works on a tree at Willoughby Road Playing Fields (WRPF) will need to be postponed due to birds nesting. An article will put on Facebook regarding the removal of the trees on Centenary Paddock.
- f. Centenary Paddock - It was recommended for permission to be required to install a banner on Centenary Paddock fencing and, if approved, permission will be granted for one week, with the banner positioned towards the church end of the fence. Consideration would be given to each application.
- g. Willoughby Road Playing Fields Changing Facilities - Blaby and Whetstone Football Club has provided costings for repair work. It was recommended to undertake further investigations.
- h. Larchwood - A site visit has been postponed until May.
- i. Correspondence - Correspondence with a resident regarding the removal of the Horse Chestnut at Centenary Paddock was noted.
- j. Matters arising for information purposes - The licence for the Hanging Baskets has now been received from LCC. The overhead barrier at WRPF is expected to be replaced on 25th April. BDC will be contacted for an update on the removal of the damaged bus shelter on Station Road.

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

2021/22 240. REPORT AND TO APPROVE THE RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE EVENTS WORKING PARTY – QUEEN’S PLATINUM JUBILEE

– The draft Risk Assessment, Fire Risk Assessment and layout plans for the weekend’s events were recommended for approval. The timetable and programme for the Beacon Lighting event has been finalized. Two to three more marshals are required for the event. Rainbows Shop will be open for refreshments. Greenfield School pupils will undertake lantern making. Tickets are available for the Quiz Night on 3rd June. It was recommended to budget £250 to buy food for the Saturday afternoon event. The programme for the Big Lunch on 5th June has been agreed. It was recommended for the Accordion Player to attend both the Saturday and Sunday event at a cost of £100. The roles and responsibilities of the marshals for the Big Lunch will be confirmed at the next meeting. BBC Midlands are interested in the preparation work for the Beacon Lighting event.

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

2021/22 241. VILLAGE HALL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

- a. Report of the meeting – A report was given.
- b. 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:

	£
Total Engeries - electricity	321.32
ESPO - gas (£179.86 = PC 60% £107.92 VH 40% £71.94)	71.94

It was resolved to approve the following accounts for payment:

	£
Refunds	200.00
PPL PRS - music licence	804.86
Wages	780.06
HMRC - tax	77.00
LCC - pension	226.24
Refunds	234.00
Blaby District Council - (PC waste £2775.24 VH recycling £356.81)	356.81
Libra Drinks - bar purchase	510.40

Payments for ESPO and Libra Drinks were not available for verification by the Finance Working Party

- c. Change of brewer for bar – the changeover date is awaited.

2021/22 242. REPORT FROM THE PLANNING COMMITTEE – The report was given.

2021/22 243. YOUTH WORKERS – Cllr A Clifford advised that there is a good level of engagement.

2021/22 244. MATTERS THE PARISH COUNCIL MANAGER MAY WISH TO RAISE FOR INFORMATION PURPOSES ONLY – A weekend cleaner has been engaged. Correspondence from BDC regarding Hinckley National Rail Freight Interchange has been circulated. It was resolved to allow a resident to take some of the tree cuttings resulting from the tree works on Centenary Paddock for wood carving, provided the contractors are agreeable. Correspondence from the Cty Cllr L Phillimore regarding Homes for Ukraine would be circulated.

2021/22 245. REPORT AND TO APPROVE THE RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE FINANCE WORKING PARTY

- a. Review Budget and Expenditure - The budget to 31st March 2022 is all in order. Based on usage, it is anticipated that the John Deere machine will need replacing in approximately four years. It was recommended to accept an interim invoice from Oswin Builders for the works to the Chapel. Blaby & Whetstone Football Club has submitted an estimate of costs to repair the changing facility at WRPF. It was recommended to respond that further investigations would be carried out.
- b. To review Bank Reconciliations and Bank Statements - The Bank Reconciliations and Bank Statements will be carried out after Year-End is completed.
- c. Insurance – It was recommended to pay the insurance excess of £100 for the repair to the van.
- d. Memorial Course – To enable the on-site element of the training to be completed an Exit Strategy must be put in place. The following Exit strategy was recommended: The Head Groundsman will make safe, by cordoning off or laying down, any unsafe headstone not exceeding 2ft 6 inches, excluding the plinth. A stonemason will be employed to make safe any headstone over 2ft 6 inches, excluding the plinth. The Head Groundsman will cordon off and/or support the larger headstones in the first instance. If the owner of the stone can be identified, they will be informed. All Headstones over 2ft 6 inches, excluding the plinth, will be tested by a stonemason.
- e. Training - The training course facility has finished.
- f. Review Cemetery Fees - It was recommended to increase all Cemetery fees by 5%.
- g. Staff Vacancy - Interviews for the Grounds Person will take place on 19th April. It was recommended to re-advertise the position of Parish Council Manager, including advertising on SLCC under its gold package for two weeks. The LRALC would be contacted on the availability of a locum, to cover the position on a temporary basis.
- h. To review the Following:
 - i. Financial Regulations – It was recommended to approve the Financial Regulations.
 - ii. The Effectiveness of Internal Control of Financial Systems – The Financial Risk Assessment, Financial Regulations and Standing Orders are reviewed annually and are in accordance with proper practices. The Parish Manager, as the RFO, prepares payments which are verified by the Working Party for recommendation to the Parish Council. The budgetary expenditure and income are analysed by the Working Party monthly and a report given to the Parish Council. A summary of Income and Expenditure is circulated quarterly together with the budget summary. An internal audit of the accounts is undertaken on a six-monthly basis. The Parish Council has effective insurance to mitigate all insurable risks, including Ill Health Insurance. The 2022 Practitioners Guide has been published for the 2022/23 accounts. A copy has been forwarded to the internal auditors and put on the members area of the website.
- i. Building Valuation – It was recommended to obtain quotations to undertake a valuation of the Chapel and Village Hall, including the library and garage.
- j. Grant Aid - There were no applications received.
- k. S106 Payments - There were no matters to discuss.
- l. Correspondence - There was no correspondence received.
- m. Matters Arising - It was noted that the Village Hall Management Committee had deferred reviewing the hire fees until further information has been received on the energy price increases.

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

2021/22 246. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING – The Annual Parish Council Meeting is scheduled for Thursday 12th May 2022.

Signed..... Chairman

Dated..... 2022