

MINUTES OF
ANNUAL PARISH MEETING
FOR LITTLE OUSEBURN, KIRBY HALL & THORPE
UNDERWOOD

held in the Village Hall on Thursday 20th May 2021 at 7.30pm.

1. Present: Cllrs. Doug Smith, Nicholas Orr, Caroline Bligh. Amanda Kennerley (clerk), County Cllr. Andy Paraskos.
2. Apologies: Russ Harrison, District Cllr. Ann Myatt
3. Minutes of the previous Annual Parish Meeting to approve as a correct record for signature by the Chairman. Approved
4. To receive the annual report of the Parish Council by the Chairman:

We were unable to hold the Annual Meeting last year, in view of the lockdown restrictions and this year we are still unable to meet face to face for the time being. It's still unsafe to hold a Parish Council meeting in the village hall, but hopefully this will soon be possible.

The village seems to have avoided the worst of the Covid outbreak, thankfully. I would like to give a special mention to the volunteers of the "resilience group" who offered help in all kinds of different ways to those most in need. Special thanks must go to Hazel Smyth, Sarah Lees and the rest of the Village Hall Committee for all their efforts.

There is the prospect of a major re-organisation of local government in North Yorkshire in 2022. It is likely that local government will be undertaken by a single authority in future, instead of the current split of functions between Harrogate BC and North Yorkshire County Council.

It is hoped that moving to a single authority will improve services generally, for example road maintenance. NYCC has brought highways maintenance back in house, which is most welcome as the standard of repairs, when they are actually undertaken, have been of poor quality recently.

I look forward to a return to more normal living over the next few months and face-to-face meetings of the Parish Council. Doug Smith

5. To receive the report from Andy Paraskos, the County Councillor of Ainsty Division of NYCC: The following issues were raised and discussed
 - a) Road surfaces – Why was money spent on resurfacing Back Lane instead of Main Street? Back Lane was from a different pot of money. Potholes on Main Street are to be repaired late summer and the road top dressed 2022. The PC thought resurfacing Main Street was more urgent. Moss Hill Lane had been top dressed last year and already the road surface was back to how it was previously. County Cllr. Paraskos hoped that bringing the highways work back in house 1st June would improve the quality of the works done.
 - b) Bin collections – Why couldn't the refuse bin empty the village bins? This was because the village bins had to be emptied by hand as are lined with bin bags.

Discussions underway to change the type of bin to be more like a wheelie bin so could potentially hold more waste.

- c) LOPC wished to object to the bollards remaining on the High Streets of neighbouring towns installed due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Villagers in Little Ouseburn have to use their cars to shop in these towns and now there is less parking. They don't appear to have any use for social distancing.
- d) House building within the Harrogate District, apart from being too much, is not the accommodation needed; that being bungalows and affordable housing.

6. To receive the report from Ann Myatt, Harrogate Borough Councillor Ouseburn Ward:

The effects of the Covid pandemic and national lockdown have dominated the work of HBC. These challenges have affected everyone in our community. Given this, your Council has done well overall. HBC went into the crisis with adequate reserves for contingencies and has had to draw on these, but remains solvent unlike other councils nationally.

It was initially challenged by huge demands on services at the same time as having to close the Civic Centre and redeploy staff to work from home or in different ways. It had to continue delivering services such as waste disposal at a time of huge demand. It had to find homes for the homeless extremely quickly and bring in safety measures for the facilities which remained open such as shopping centres and markets.

HBC has also administered the national grant schemes giving financial support to local businesses and local residents. This has been very difficult and highly contentious in that there are always applicants, particularly the self-employed, who 'fall through the cracks.'

On top of this, last autumn the National Government decided to start work on combining the district councils of North Yorkshire (HBC being one of seven) with the County Council (NYCC) to form a single tier of local government (Unitary Authority). This work is continuing, together with a review of Parliamentary Boundaries. Elections to the new authority are likely to take place next year, initially shadowing NYCC before the new Unitary Authority is finally formulated. It is not yet clear whether there will be one Unitary Authority (essentially covering North Yorkshire) or two (splitting the county on East-West lines)

The main issues for villagers remain, as ever:

- Bins, waste and recycling
- Antisocial behaviour (dog poo)
- Parking
- Planning, particularly enforcement issues
- Speeding (NYCC responsibility)

· Rural crime (NYCC)

I know how well Parish Councillors undertake their responsibilities and I want to thank you for the time and effort you put in to serve your community

7. Open discussion from members of the public in attendance. None
8. To agree the date and time for the next meeting. May 2022