

BARSHAM AND SHIPMEADOW PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the **Annual General Meeting** held on 11th May 2022

At 7.30pm at the Barsham Village Hall.

Members Present : Zane Blanchard (ZB) Peter Holmes (PH) Pauline Midwinter (PM) David Adcroft (DA)

Apologies for Absense : None

Election of Chairperson : PM proposed ZB as Chairman , this was seconded by PH .
Motion was carried

Election of Vice Chairperson : ZB proposed PM as Vice Chair, PH seconded , motion was carried

Receiving the Declarations of Acceptance of Office from the Chairperson and Vice Chairperson.

To sign as a correct record the minutes of the AGM held on Wednesday 11th May 2021 : Minutes were signed by ZB

Audit of Parish Council Accounts 2021/22: Annual Governance and Accountability Return Minute 28-0422 ZB signed and dated application for certificate of exemption.
Notice of public rights: to be posted on website .

Financial Report for Year ending 31st March 2022 :
As per Aprils meeting Minute 27-0422 . Approved . Spreadsheet to be prepared by ZB & PH

Chairmans Report:

During the past year, Barsham & Shipmeadow Parish Council has managed its business once again via face-to-face meetings. This change has been greeted with relief and satisfaction. However, one less welcome element of our work during the past year is the fact that we are now a group of only 4 Councillors, rather than the 8 who should represent the two parishes of the benefit, which has added even more considerably to the responsibilities and workload of each individual member of the Parish Council. As stated in 2021, service as a Parish Councillor is a work of community support without reward and I again thank and commend these Councillors for their dedication and commitment to the task they have undertaken on behalf of the population of the two parishes.

An unfortunate and ominous side-effect of this under-representation is the possibility that we may be 'swallowed' by another nearby PC and so be lost as an independent and dedicated democratic voice within East Suffolk. If we do not recruit some additional councillors soon, this may well be our fate. The possibility that our voice may be effectively silenced is not a pleasant prospect and would represent a loss of local democratic representation

As in 2021, the absence of a salaried Parish Clerk results in the administration of the council by the same three individuals who continue to share the various finance, reporting, administration, and correspondence roles between them. My sincere thanks are expressed to Cllrs. Adcroft, Holmes and Midwinter for taking on these roles. The need for a new Clerk remains acute but the associated costs would have to be met by a large increase in the precept; this is not a course of action which the Parish Council wish to take during the present cost of living crisis. However, we are mindful that, without some additions to our number, our future may be taken out of our own hands as part of the local government review process., no matter how dedicated and hardworking we may be.

We again carried out the various formalities for the 2020-2021 Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) and completed the Internal Audit to the satisfaction of the Auditor, Mr Jeremy Davis FCCA (Retd). The 2021-2022 AGAR and the required AGAR Part 2 Certificate of Exemption from a Limited Assurance Review form will be agreed at this meeting, well within the 30th June 2022 deadline set by PKF Littlejohn, the External Auditors.

As yet, the PC has heard nothing further about the disputed paddock footpath referral from the National Ramblers Association and we await their decision. The Defibrillator project is close to completion; all the required elements have been purchased and are ready for installation. The remaining elements of the Red Telephone Box project have been completed, ready to house the defibrillator equipment. The box looks splendid in its reconditioned glory.

The overdue repairs to the Barsham War Memorial will be undertaken as soon as possible, The Council has retained the finance required to complete this task but will need to obtain a new set of estimates for the work. The process had been hindered by the Coronavirus pandemic but we may now proceed with more confidence. However, the cost of this work has no doubt increased due to the present economic climate. As reported last year, there exists a dedicated War Memorial Account held by Barclays Bank in Beccles. However, the former PC Chair who was signatory to this account has now died and the matter of the present PC Chair accessing the account has passed to his executor. We await developments.

The PC notes with some alarm and concern that some village hall users show great disrespect by parking their cars on the War Memorial. This is not acceptable and such actions dishonour the memory of those local and overseas servicemen who died in the two World Wars. The sooner this behaviour is prevented by installing the required oak posts and metal chains, the better. People should know better.

Once again, the PC observed its solemn duty on the 11th November 2021 in a socially distanced and respectful Remembrance ceremony at the War Memorial. This was attended by a small number of parishioners and a recording of the two bugle calls was played at the appropriate moments. Thanks, as ever, to Mr and Mrs Smith for their maintenance of the War Memorial and for organizing the two Remembrance wreaths via the Beccles RBL.

Regarding the information received concerning the crash of a second American plane in Shipmeadow during World War II, the request that a plaque be added to the War Memorial in honour of those who were killed has yet to be actioned. A proposed memorial plaque was designed but the PC awaits details concerning the cost. As the Memorial is Parish Council property, a formal Planning Application will have to be made before any decision may be reached. Again, if any parishioners have knowledge or information concerning this event, the PC would be very glad to receive this.

The matter of the three highway grit/salt bins has now been actioned and the bins are in place at the requested locations. The PC hope that these will help to make local road conditions safer during the coming winter.

The PC also engaged with the Quiet Lanes Suffolk and Slow Ways schemes and the QLS signs will soon be evident on their poles on Low Road, Church Road and Hall Road.

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In conclusion, I again thank your councillors for their commitment and hard work as they fulfil their various and varied duties as members of the Parish Council. Their work continues to be much appreciated by this Chairman and by our local District Councillor.

Zane Blanchard
Chairman
Barsham & Shipmeadow Parish Council
11th May 2022

PH proposed a vote of thanks to ZB for all his hard work, PM seconded

There being no more issues , the Annual General Meeting was closed at 7.55 pm

Signed:

Dated: