**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD IN THE COMMUNITY CENTRE ON MONDAY 23RD MAY 2022**

PRESENT: Cllr. J. Metcalfe (Chairman) Cllr. J. Emsley

Cllr. C. Lis OBE Cllr. D McGonnigal

Cllr. J. Walker Cllr. S. Brash

Cllr M. Howson Cllr. J. Mckenzie

Cllr. J. Brown Cllr. A. Weller

ATTENDANCE: Catherine Sharpe (Clerk) and three members of the public

APLOGIES: None

1. **Matters arising from last year’s Annual Parish Meeting – None**
2. **Police Report – In the absence of a police representative there was no report.**
3. **Chairman’s report – Cllr. Metcalfe made the following report:**

May I first of all welcome everyone to Ingleton Parish Council’s Annual Meeting last held in June 2019.I would also like to take this opportunity to thank my fellow Parish Councillors for their support, hard work and dedication to our community.

The preceding three years have seen dramatic changes to the world, to our environment and to our way of life. It is so reassuring to see the way our community has managed the changes and has thrived on the challenges posed by the issues raised by Brexit, the Pandemic and more recently the war in Ukraine.

It is testament to the dedication of so many people in our own Parish that Ingleton continues to thrive. The work of our community volunteers never ceases to amaze me and it was a credit to our Covid vaccine volunteers that they won two awards from Craven District Council. Our community and this Parish are indebted to our volunteers. From the floral displays in the Village to the Library, Swimming Pool, Tourist Information Centre and the many events which are run annually, on behalf of the Parish I would like to record our thanks.

Despite all the restrictions, the work of the Parish Council has continued and we hope that there has been no noticeable deterioration in the level of services provided. Ingleton Parish Council provides significantly more services than almost any other Parish Council in North Yorkshire. From street lighting to grass cutting, to the provision of play equipment and the pump track, the Parish also provides two sets of public toilets and with the considerable help of the IRCA, provides a Community Centre that we can all be justly proud of. As a Parish Council, we are working to ensure that our Parish meets high environmental standards, from the management of woodland and the park to the use of solar panels on the Community Centre. More recently, the Parish has adopted a policy of only supporting new build construction that strives to meet net zero carbon standards.

Over the past three years we have continued to campaign for a reduction in the speed limit on the A65 and now we have vehicle activated speed signs, we hope these will provide the evidence to justify a reduction. We also hope that with the help of North Yorkshire, we may finally secure the provision of a safe crossing point on this busy main road. We have co-ordinated a project to have new signs erected around the Village and more recently, with the help of a local resident, new village maps have been produced and will go on display this week.

As a Parish Council, we struggle with the age-old issues of Village parking, litter and dog fouling. One area where there has been considerable support from our Community and the District Council has been our ambitious plans for the park and play area. ‘The Riverside Project’ as it is called, is an ambitious plan to upgrade and transform the play area, create a park we can all enjoy and open up an area of woodland alongside the river for visitors to enjoy. We have received considerable help from the Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust and their Design Team (New Ground) and I would like to record our thanks for their help. This ambitious project, costing in excess of £400,000, may take a little time to complete, but planning permission is being sought and following that, the Parish will be looking for Grant assistance. Alongside this project, the Parish is in the process of acquiring the public toilets and parking area currently owned by Craven. As a Parish, we have often struggled to work with North Yorkshire County Council, but have always have a good working relationship with Craven District Council and we will be sad to see the demise of this Local Authority next year.

Ingleton Parish Council has run like clockwork for years, not because of our Councillors’ dedication, but because of the hard work of our former Parish Clerk. Alison Hack served as our clerk for almost 20 years and guided us through some difficult times. Alison retired in July 2021 and her dedication to the job cannot be overstated. Alison’s role as Parish Clerk was always going to be a hard act to follow and so it proved for Nola Jackson who served briefly as our Clerk from August until the end of 2021. Nola saw us through a difficult transition period and I would like to record our thanks to her for her help. With the appointment of our new Clerk, Catherine Sharpe, in January of this year, I believe the Parish Council has found someone who is more than capable of taking on this tough job. Catherine has already settled into the role and her skills and dedication are clear to see. I would like to thank her for taking on the position and wish her well for the months and years to come.

With the demise of Craven District Council, this Parish looks forward to working more closely with the new North Yorkshire Authority, but we sincerely hope that, as a Parish, we will not be obliged to take on more responsibilities. Our precept of £98,000 is one of the highest for any Parish Council in Craven, but this is due to the many additional services which we provide.

I would like to thank once again my fellow Councillors and our new Parish Clerk for the dedication to the job and for tolerating my chairmanship.

1. **County Councillor’s Report – Cllr. Lis read out Cllr Ireton’s report below:**

**MAY ELECTIONS**

As you are aware, May elections were held for the new Unitary Authority. The establishment of which should reduce confusion, halt inefficiency, duplication and above all, cut costs.

Value for money, quality of service and high standards of delivery for all residents are of primary concern.

Our determined aim is to continue to strive to make North Yorkshire a better place for all our residents, communities and businesses. In the present geo-political climate, this will be a challenge for all of us elected to public service.

Elected Councillors will serve as County Councillors for one final year, then as Unitary Councillors for 4 years.

This year’s Parish elections were not charged for and it is my hope, and also the aspiration of many in the new Council, that Parish Councils should not be charged for an election as this is often a large percentage of cost to the precept.

**SCHOOLS**

We can be proud of the fact that our schools provide a high standard of education and safeguarding.

They give every child an excellent start in life so they can fulfil their potential and be equipped to face the challenges of the future with confidence.

We continue to be dedicated to supporting all our schools to the best of our ability. We only agree to the process of closing small village schools at the request of the relevant school governing body and where every other option has failed.

**SOCIAL CARE**

Almost half of the County Council annual spending goes into Adult Social care and looking after vulnerable children. Both nationally and regionally here in North Yorkshire we are facing unprecedented pressure in the adult care sector. There has been a major change in recruiting people to work in this sector since the economy opened up and are now in fierce competition for labour with other employers. Much of the usual available workforce has simply evaporated and the acute need for more people to work in Social Care is becoming ever more critical.

Across North Yorkshire, 20 thousand people are working in the Care Sector. On any given day, there are at least one thousand jobs available and no applications. Because of this labour shortage North Yorkshire have launched their own major Social Care Recruitment Campaign.

**COVID**

Working together we have come through another year of the Covid Pandemic, which remains an ever-present threat to us all. Fortunately, cases seem to be decreasing in severity and to be less life-threatening, but as our hospitals are fully committed to treating cases of this disease increased pressure is put on other essential and elective procedures and treatments.

We must hope that the vaccination programme continues to mitigate the impact as we try to learn to live with Covid. Although things seem less severe now, we should never forget the 1499 people in the County who have Covid 19 on their death certificates. This is a source of great sadness to all of us, for lives cut short and families grieving in such times of crisis, the courage and generosity of the human spirit shines through. I should like to add my own heartfelt thanks and admiration and the gratitude of our communities to our amazing volunteers. They have risen to the challenge of serving the local communities and beyond, by organizing an army of goodwill and compassion to deliver and administer Covid vaccines. They also ensured that vulnerable members of the community had someone to turn to for help in their hour of need.

It was, indeed, truly heart- warming when their efforts were recognised when they won two Community champions Awards.

**Finally**

There is much to be done and many challenges lie ahead. We can face these together with confidence knowing that we have the dedication and the shared experience and determination to do the best we can for all who live in North Yorkshire.

1. **District Councillor’s Report – Cllr. Lis made the following report:**

As all of you will be aware CDC will cease to exist at the end of March 2023, so this will be the last CDC Local Members Report to the Parish Council.

Quite a slice of CDC officers time is now being spent attempting to ensure that the changeover to the new Unitary Authority is as unproblematic as possible.

Most of the services that CDC provide including waste collection have continued to perform very well despite the associated problems that the Covid Pandemic has generated. Indeed, the Council performed exceptionally well in providing the grants associated with the pandemic and provided timely support when it was most needed.

Unfortunately, the Planning system is still underperforming although there has been some improvement recently mainly due to the fact that our staffing levels have returned to somewhere near normal.

I recently gave our annual update on progress towards achieving a Carbon Neutral Craven where I was able to inform our Members of the good progress being made on addressing our emissions as a Council. Despite the challenges of the pandemic and Local Government Reorganisation, our CDC are more than halfway through our ‘Zero Carbon Craven’ project to retrofit our estate. This will result in achieving our target of reducing energy use in buildings by 30% by the end of 2023.

We have started to make some progress on using less fuel, buying more efficient vehicles that will allow us to design more efficient refuse collection rounds. And we have worked well with partners on some ther areas in the plan. For example, working together with the National Park Authority, the development of a good public electric vehicle charging network across the District is well underway and all towns and larger villages should have a public Electric-Vehicle charging point by mid-2022.

However, unfortunately, the evidence suggests that we are currently not making the progress that we would need to make to achieve our 2030 target across the District.

We continue to see the development of new housing in the District that does not include the highest levels of insulation, nor renewable energy. This is particularly frustrating for me as a member of our Planning Committee where our continual protestations I am afraid fall on barren legislative ground.

The changes that we need to see to meet our ambitious targets require changes in direction for national funding policy and legislation, particularly for Housing and Transport. We must continue to raise the need for these changes. If we do not, our ability to reach our ambitious, but essential, targets for carbon neutrality will become beyond our reach. It is promising that this will be an area of priority for the new North Yorkshire Council. I hope that the new administration will continue to make funding for greener housing, community climate action and better public transport a fundamental part of any devolution deal.

1. **Financial Report for the current year**

The clerk reported that the precept for 2021/22 had been set at £94000, remaining unchanged for the fourth year running. £52000 (down £7000) of this was put into the general fund which covers grass cutting of verges and the park, maintenance of flowerbeds at Laundry Lane and Central Gardens, tree works and grass cutting on the Brow, general maintenance and administration costs including the Clerk’s salary. It also covers the cost of cleaning and maintaining the two sets of public toilets in the village. £15000 (up £5000) went into the lighting fund to cover the cost of new lights as well as the existing streetlights and their electricity supply. £27000 (up £2000) went into the community fund for community-based projects in Ingleton as well as providing an annual contribution to the Community Centre. Public donations towards the cost of running both sets of public conveniences were £2536 over £1000 higher than the previous year, but that would be anticipated as they were open for the whole period. Over £15000 was spent on dealing with the Ash Die Back around the Park. Costs overall were higher than the previous year, due to catching up on maintenance etc following the pandemic. The Parish Council continues to fund the floodlighting for St Mary’s Church.

Bank balances at the year-end were £52901 for the Parish Council and £25416 for the Community Centre.

Final accounts for the last two financial years are available from the Clerk. The current year’s accounts have not yet been passed by the internal auditor but are scheduled to be complete by early June, after which the Annual Return will be forwarded to the external auditor together with the copies of the relevant documents. The clerk confirmed that she was satisfied that the statement of accounts presents a true and fair view of the parish council’s financial transactions for the years to which they relate. The notice advertising the exercise of electors’ rights to inspect the accounts will be posted with a copy of the internal auditor’s report on the parish council noticeboard and website on 13th June for the required period ending on 22nd July. The Annual Return will also be posted up for this period. All these documents will be posted on the Parish Council’s website.

1. **Report and Accounts from the Bull Land Committee – Dick Chalmers**

The Trustees had two applications in 2021. These were further support for the Pop-Up Pantry provided as cash payments and reimbursed by cheque due to the problem of requiring two signatures and face-to-face meetings disallowed during the lockdown. An application from an Ingleton ladies’ afternoon craft group was also met in full.

One emergency payment was made to allow a homeless person to be accommodated overnight at the Youth Hostel. The trustees agreed that a small reserve should be left in future to allow for any repetition of such support.

The accounts below will show, once payment is received and a bank statement confirms the amounts, £200 from Ingleton Parish Council for the Allotment lease and £360 for the Bull Land rents. This will give the trustees a total of £1443.70 available for the calendar year. To date there are two applications for funding.

1. **Any Questions/Items for Discussion – None**

There being no further business the Chairman thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting.