**Borwick Parish Meeting**

Minutes of a meeting held on 26 August 2020 (outside the village hall with appropriate social distancing and hygiene measures in place, due to government restrictions in place due to the coronavirus pandemic)

**In attendance:**

David Smith (Chairman); David Scott (Clerk); Joyce Tombs (Treasurer); Maureen Thomas; Sue Dowdall: Bryan Fell; Dorothy Fell; Claire Helme: Richard Mellor; Philippa Williamson (LCC)

**Apologies**: Steve and Michelle Thorns; Colin and Jane Taylor, Lynne Cook, Peter and Sally Sharp, Graham and Hazel Turner

2020/12 a. The Chair welcomed those attending. He explained that the minutes of the previous meeting as emailed yesterday will be approved and followed up at the next full meeting of the Borwick Parish Meeting.

b. The clerk explained that, due to government imposed Coronavirus restrictions, the officers had not been able to convene a physical meeting since the one held on 9 January 2020 and that Parish Meetings (unlike Parish Councils) had been specifically denied the right to hold virtual meetings over the Internet.

c. That said, Parish Meetings are required to approve their accounts and related documentation before a deadline of 1 September 2020 and hence the need for this physical meeting. Due to the difficult physical conditions (ie having to meet outside as neither the village hall nor Borwick Hall is open yet) the agenda has been **restricted to purely these financial matters** as they cannot be deferred.

2020/13 Joyce Tombs made the following report as Treasurer before seeking approval of the related documents.

a. She presented the receipts and payments account for the 12 months ended 31 March 2020 and explained the variances from the previous year. Notably that:

(i) Income rose to £1,105 due to a compensation payment of £100 received from NatWest following difficulties experienced in notifying the bank of changes to the mandate, etc.

(ii) Expenditure fell by just over £200 due to no donation being made to the Village Hall, a one off donation being made to the Blood Bikers and the effect of some timing differences.

(iii) Net result was a surplus of £366 leaving us with bank and building society balances of £854 and £827 respectively as at 31 March 2020.

(iv) The Meeting then voted to approve the accounts as presented.

b. She explained that since the year end the account with the Skipton Building Society had been closed and the balance together with accumulated interest of £4.36 had been transferred into the NatWest current account. This was for administrative ease and was of no financial detriment to the Parish Meeting as the rate of interest had been reduced from 0.5% to 0.05%.

c. Joyce explained that as a Parish Meeting with neither income nor expenditure in excess of £25,000, we are required to complete what’s known as the “Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2019/2020 Part 2PM” (or the “AGAR”) but are not required to file this with an external auditor. We are, however, required to have this approved by the meeting and to have our accounts reviewed by our Internal Auditor.

(i) She presented the Certificate of Exemption, being page 3 of 6 of the AGAR, explaining the relevant declaration. It was agreed that this can and will be signed by the Chairman and sent to the external auditors as required.

(ii) Joyce drew the meeting’s attention to the Internal Audit Report that had been kindly prepared by Phil Horsfield which was received and noted. She expressed the Meeting’s gratitude for Phil’s undertaking this task.

(iii) She then explained the Annual Governance Statements on page 5 of 6 of the AGAR and the Meeting voted to approve it. The 2020 Risk Assessment was reviewed by the Meeting in this connection.

(iv) She explained the Accounting Statements on page 6 (which had been certified by the Chairman ahead of the meeting) and how these reported the information shown in the annual accounts as explained at the beginning of her report. The Meeting voted to approve the Accounting Statements.

(v) Joyce explained that the Parish Meeting is required to display the Certificate of Exemption, the Annual Governance Statement 2019/20, and the Accounting Statements 2019/20 either on its website or on a notice board for 14 days. She invited the Chairman to set a date for the commencement of a 30 working day period for the exercise of public rights under which anyone wishing to do so can physically inspect the Meeting’s accounting records. This has to commence before 1 September 2020 and so a date of 27 August 2020 was agreed. It was also agreed that these would be available at The Green, Borwick and a notice advertising this fact would be posted with the other information noted above.

2020/14 Donation to village hall

The clerk reminded the Meeting that at its January Meeting the Budget for 2020/21 had been set and that this included the making of a £500 donation to the Village Hall subject to the receipt of a suitable request from them. He reported that a request had been received from Ken Dunn on behalf of the Hall for a contribution to the cost of a replacement wet boiler. The Meeting was asked to approve the payment which it duly voted to do. The Treasurer was instructed to arrange the payment.

2020/15 AOB

1. For information the Treasurer presented the approved 2020/21 budget and the Parish Meeting accounts for the year to date including details of expenditure on the removal of the tree on the village green.
2. Neighbourhood Watch - Dorothy Fell reported that there had been some burglaries and suspicious activities over the summer. Philippa Williamson added that the Rural Crime Team was being strengthened by the recruitment of 3 further police officers to double in size and that tackling rural crime was a priority.
3. Claire Helme (CH) raised concerns about the nature and position of any required replacement of the dangerous tree that had been felled on the village green in July. The Chairman said this would be an agenda item for discussion at the next meeting.
4. CH also reported that the Food Bank initiative had been a great success with many food items being donated via the box on her drive.
5. The Chairman reported there was some concern regarding old items being left on the village bench and it was agreed that he would remove the old books subject to CH’s first checking whether anyone wanted to reclaim these via the village WhatsApp group.
6. Poors Land Charity - Bryan Fell (BF) expressed his thanks to those who had helped tidying up the trees on the Poors Land earlier this year as this had avoided possible problems during subsequent heavy rain. CH questioned how a grant made from the charity had been computed and it was confirmed that this was done at the discretion of the Trustees, there being no formula for such payments.
7. Thanks were expressed by the Chairman and echoed by the Meeting to those who had cut communal areas of grass during the summer when, exceptionally, this was not being done by the Council due to Coronavirus restrictions. Dave and Christine Thompson and the Sharp family were thanked.
8. BF expressed concern about ragwort being allowed to grow unabated in Borwick Hall car park. Philippa Williamson explained that the contract for weed killing had been awarded by the County Council to the District Council but that the latter had voted to ban the use of RoundUp weed killer without the County Council’s knowledge. As a result, areas of Lancaster and Morecambe and the surrounding areas were very over grown with weeds, including ragwort. The contract has now reverted to the County Council and weed killing is due to commence from 14 September 2020.

2020/16 Date of next meeting

It was agreed that a full business meeting would be held later this year. The agreed date was 15 October 2020. [On enquiry of the booking clerk a time of 20.00 was set as there is a class beforehand that has not yet been included on the calendar.]

There being no further business the meeting was closed by the Chairman.

Approved by the Parish Meeting and signed on its behalf by

Date ……………………………….