**Borwick Parish Meeting (draft subject to approval)**

Minutes of a meeting held on 19 May 2021 (at the village hall with appropriate social distancing and hygiene measures in place, due to current government coronavirus restrictions)

**In attendance:**

David Smith (Chairman); David Scott (Clerk); Joyce Tombs (Treasurer); Lynne Cook; Richard Mellor, Bryan Fell, Jane Taylor

2021/01 Introduction and apologies for absence

The officers welcomed those attending and explained that the AGM originally scheduled for January 2021 had been postponed due to the National Lockdown under the coronavirus restrictions. Hence this meeting was both the annual Accounts meeting and the AGM. Apologies for absence had been received from Tony Collinson, Maureen Thomas, Claire Helme, Sue Dowdall, Colin Taylor, Peter and Sally Sharp, Mark and Jenny Thewlis.

The Chairman mentioned that any necessary minor changes to the Standing Orders under which our meetings are conducted will be made at next year’s AGM after the necessary consultation period.

2021/02 Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the last meeting held on 15 October 2020 had been circulated with this meeting’s agenda and were approved as a true record of that meeting and signed by the Chairman. These will now be posted on the village website.

2021/03 Matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting

The Chairman mentioned that the broken stile had been repaired and that this, and all other matters arising were covered in the later reports.

2021/04 Chairman’s Report

Dave Smith (DS) presented his report. Following a request from a resident, the stile behind Laurel Bank had kindly been repaired by the landowner to whom thanks were expressed for this. The slippery footpath under Sanders Farm bridge remains a problem. DS undertook to patch it up himself. New tree planted on Village Green by DS and DAS who are managing it. The condition of the bench on the village green continues to deteriorate (and will be discussed later this meeting). DS and DAS had met with the site owner of Clearwater Fisheries. His plan is to extend the fishing lakes into the adjacent fields and confirmed there were no plans to add holiday homes, etc. The 2021 litter pick had been held later than usual in the Spring – there was a good turnout and noticeably less litter this year than “normal”. DS thanked DAS for organising it. By contrast dog fouling remains a problem. The village bench is still being used for the swapping of books, etc.

2021/05 Clerk’s report

Dave Scott (DAS) presented his report. He confirmed that a Rowan tree had been acquired and planted on the Village Green, as agreed at previous meetings. Other trees have been planted by Borwick Hall this Spring within their border with the road, as previously promised. Planning applications have been routinely circulated to those on the Parish Meeting mailing list. There is currently an application to begin a process to convert an agricultural building into a single residential building behind the farmhouse at Greenhill, Borwick. This was considered to be preferable to a deteriorating farm building.

2021/06 The Treasurer presented her report covering the following matters:

1. Parish Meetings are required to approve their accounts and related documentation before this year’s deadline of 30 June 2021, hence the importance and timing of this meeting.
2. The receipts and payments account for the 12 months ended 31 March 2021 was presented and the variances from the previous year explained. Income was £1,004, being the precept of £1,000 (as requested) and £4 of building society interest. This was £100 less than last year when the Meeting received a one-off £100 compensation payment from NatWest for poor service. Costs were £1,523 which included £120 and £420 respectively for a tree survey and subsequent removal of an unsafe tree from the village green. The Meeting had also made an agreed donation of £500 to the Village Hall towards the cost of a new boiler in contrast to the prior year when no donation was made. Hence the expenditure for 2020/21 was some £784 more than that for the prior year. The net deficit for the year was £519 compared with the budget deficit of £552 and the prior year’s surplus of £366.
3. As previously reported the Skipton Building Society account had been closed in the year and so at the year end the bank balance held by NatWest was £1,162.35.
4. The Meeting then voted to approve the accounts as presented.
5. As a Parish Meeting with neither income nor expenditure in excess of £25,000, Joyce explained that we are required to complete what is known as the “Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2020/2021 Part 2PM” (or the “AGAR”) but are not required to file this with an external auditor. We are, however, required to have the AGAR approved by the Meeting and to have our financial affairs reviewed by an Internal Auditor. So she explained the various sections of the AGAR and votes were taken as required and noted below.

(i) Joyce explained the Certificate of Exemption, being page 3 of 6 of the AGAR. As Borwick Parish Meeting meets all the criteria listed a vote was held and it was agreed that this can and will be signed by the Chairman and sent to the external auditors as required (before 30 June 2021).

(ii) Joyce drew the meeting’s attention to the Internal Audit Report (being page 4 of 6) 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 Statement on page 5 of 6 of the AGAR and the Meeting voted to approve it. The 2021 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 summarised and reported the information shown in the annual receipts and payments accounts as explained at the beginning of her report. The Meeting voted to approve the Accounting Statements 2020/21 as reported on the AGAR.

(v) Publication requirements -The Parish Meeting is required to display the Certificate of Exemption, the Annual Governance Statement 2020/21, and the Accounting Statements 2020/21 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 year it has to include the first 10 working days of July so a date of 22 June 2021 was agreed. It was also agreed that these would be available at The Green, Borwick and a notice advertising this fact would be posted on the village website with the other information noted above.

1. Bank switch

Following the last meeting, attempts were made to take up NatWest’s offer of a financial incentive to switch banks. An application was put in to the Co-op Bank who rejected it because we were unable to supply a registration number as a Charity or similar body. An application was then put into the other proposed bank, ie the Metro Bank. This was also rejected as they said the bank had “no appetite for Parish Councils”. So, much time was wasted to no avail, and we remain a NatWest customer.

1. Budget for 2021/22 Normally the budget is drafted and then finalised at the (January) AGM ahead of the February deadline for notifying the District Council of the Parish Meeting’s precept request. As the AGM was postponed, the draft budget had been prepared and circulated electronically for approval in January 2021. A copy was presented to the meeting. The treasurer reminded the meeting that they had agreed to maintaining the Precept request at £1,000. However, a decision had been deferred regarding whether to give a donation to the Village Hall in 21/22 or to go ahead and replace/repair the bench on Borwick village Green. A discussion took place and the meeting agreed unanimously to use the funds to replace the bench. The clerk indicated that one could be sourced for £470 and the meeting agreed that this would be a suitable replacement.
2. This concluded the Treasurer’s Report.

2021/07 Poors Land Charity

Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2021 were presented to the meeting by the Treasurer. One grant had been paid during the year ended 31 March 2021 following an appeal for those in hardship as a result of the coronavirus pandemic to come forward. At 31 March 2021 funds/reserves stood at £2,185. It was agreed to maintain the annual rental charge at £275.

Appointment of Trustees - The clerk explained that normally the Trustees would be 2 officers of the Parish Meeting plus another villager. Currently David Scott and Bryan Fell are Trustees and it was proposed and agreed that Dave Smith be appointed to fill the vacancy. Bryan Fell confirmed that he was prepared to continue as Trustee but that he was no longer in a position to undertake physical work on the land. The meeting expressed its gratitude for the work Bryan has undertaken over many years including planting trees, strimming round the trees in the summer, draining and reclaiming part of the land, etc.

It was mentioned that the district council is offering trees for planting and DS said he would investigate their availability. The nature and tenancy of the land was queried and discussed, and DAS offered to email a photograph of the land to interested attendees.

It was suggested that the existence of the Charity and its purpose be publicised in the Village newsletter but it was pointed out that under the Charity’s constitution assistance was only available to residents of Borwick.

2021/08

Election of officers

There being no other nominations, the current Chairman, Clerk and Treasurer were unanimously re-elected to hold office until the end of the next AGM and were thanked for so-doing.

2021/09 AOB – the following were discussed

1. A query had been received by the Clerk about the use of land opposite Borwick railway station. It was thought that this was agricultural / growing /allotment use which is permissible. The ownership was not known.
2. A further query /concern had been expressed about the risk of high speed vehicles using the lane from the canal bridge now that it has been tarmacked and the resultant risk to children/cyclists/ lane users. The Meeting was told that a “Change of Use Application” had been submitted to stop vehicles using the track (which is a bridleway) for any purpose other than access.

2021/10 Date of next meeting

This was set as Tuesday 5 October 2021 – location to be advised in due course.

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

Approved by the Parish Meeting and signed on its behalf by

Date ……………………………….