**Minutes of the Annual Parish Council Meeting**

**held on Wednesday 12 July 2023 in Hickleton Village Hall**

**1 Attendance and Apologies**

In attendance:

Gordon Wordsworth (Acting Chair), Margaret Marsh, Jean Dickinson

Apologies: Eric Williams, Margaret Goddard, Cllr Glenn Bluff and Cllr Cynthia Ransome, DMBC Sprotborough Ward

**2 Declaration of Personal Interest**

None.

**3 Adjournment for Parishioners’ Questions or Statements**

No adjournment was taken.

**4 Approval of Minutes**

The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Wednesday 24 May 2023 were proposed by MM and seconded by GW.

**5 Matters Arising from Previous Minutes**

1. It was agreed that Paula Fenton be presented with the Ken Keen Award at the forthcoming Book Club meeting. The award, of a wine glass and stand, marks her prolific work both in and around the village, helping Hickleton to look attractive and making it a better place to live. An article will be included in the next edition of the ‘Hickletone’. It was agreed that the recognition award be changed from next year. Efforts will be made to prepare a Ken Keen Awards Board, listing the recipients from its inception, to be displayed in the Club/Hall.

**6 To Discuss and Approve the Financial Reports for the 2023/2024 Accounts**

1. GW reported that the current financial position was similar to that reported at the last meeting in May.
2. Income and Expenditure: There have been extra cuts by the gardener, the cost of the audit and bank charges to account for. To date this year £1,895 has been spent, leaving a total of £5,782 in the bank, with the £600 precept to come in September/October. GW has also lodged a VAT claim for around £200, yet to be received.
3. Spend v Budget: The licence fee for the Winston Churchill Memorial Gardener has increased from £75 to £80, payable to Halifax Estates and GW was reimbursed the cost of bunting to decorate the Club for the King’s Coronation. The domain licence for the website has also been paid to the sum of £108. Out of the planned annual budget of £8,775, so far £1,895 has been spent, leaving a total of £6,880.
4. GW will arrange for the war memorial to be professionally cleaned before November.
5. GW advised that all insurance premiums have shot up. The last insurance premium included a sum of £18,000 cover for the stone pillars and chain around the crossroads memorial and also the fencing around the central memorial triangle. This will be reduced to £3,000 to cover the fencing around the central monument only. Currently an annual sum of £800 is paid. The renewal is due in August, and a revised quotation is, therefore, awaited. The insurance premium to cover the Club/Hall building is now paid by the VHMC.

**7 Payments for Authorisation**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1 | Gardener (6/6 cut) | £120 | Approved by GW | Seconded by MM |
| 2 | Gardener (16/6 cut) | £120 | Approved by GW | Seconded by MM |
| 3 | Gardener (5/7 cut) | £120 | Approved by GW | Seconded by MM |
| 4 | Bank Charges June | £8.60 | Approved by GW | Seconded by MM |

**8 Open Spaces**

1. The Home Court street sign has been repaired.
2. The path to Goldthorpe has been cleared by DMBC. This led to the appearance of a lot of litter which has since been cleared by a handful of villagers. Grateful thanks to them.
3. MM has asked DMBC’s Streetscene for more litter picking equipment.
4. In cutting the grass in Lady Mary Walk, the Council have cut around the paths but have left some areas wild. It will be ascertained which areas are to be left in this way. The Council, however, have weed-treated the paths.
5. A questionnaire was distributed around the village asking for views on the future of the compost heap – of the replies, 66% wished it to be removed. As the land which constitutes Lady Mary Walk is DMBC-owned, that area will now return to the Council’s care.
6. An email had been received from Cllr Bluff regarding the triangle of land at the crossroads which comprises the memorial. He agreed with the PC that it is a very dark area. He suggested opening up the closed slip road to ‘improve traffic movement’ and invited comments towards a co-ordinated plan. The monument is a listed asset and the closed road is currently used by churchgoers as their only means of parking. The PC did have a tree survey carried out, in line with statutory regulations, of that area and it was recommended that two of the trees should be taken out as they were deemed unhealthy and unstable. DMBC did not agree and Gloaming, the tree surgeons, stated that they would appeal the decision with the Secretary of State. According to Daniel Atkinson of DMBC, this has not been done and the time limit for appeal is well past. MM is to ask Gloaming if they did lodge an appeal. After discussion, it was agreed that GW reply to Cllr Bluff that, although the PC are not happy with the idea of reopening the road, the area needs to look brighter, so would agree with measures to achieve that.

**9 Neighbourhood Watch**

1. In the early hours of 9 June, four masked men were picked up on camera around the village looking at cars and into windows and were able to steal a jacket from one of the residents’ cars parked on their drive. The Police were informed but did not put in an appearance, even though they had tried to break into a house before running away. Residents were warned to be alert and to ensure safety measures are taken. JD will liaise with NW contacts on what the circumstances of a crime must be to ensure a police presence during and after an incident.

**10 Any Other Business**

1. There was no other business.

**11 Date of Next Meeting**

The next Parish Council Meeting will be held on Wednesday 13 September 2023 at 7.30 pm in the Village Hall.