

Church Fenton Parish Council

Minutes of the Annual Council Meeting

Minutes of the Annual Council Meeting of Church Fenton Parish Council held on Thursday 16 July 2020 as a Virtual remote meeting. (due to Covid19 govt lockdown)

In attendance: Cllr Sarah Chester (Chair), Cllr Ross Higham (Vice-Chair), Cllr Craig Blakey, Cllr Samantha Charlston, Cllr Paul Herbert, Cllr Andrew Mason, Cllr Michelle Seguss and Georgina Ashton (Clerk). In addition 6 members of the public.

Meeting started at 9.37pm

43. Signing of declaration by Councillors
This could not be done remotely but the Clerk has sent an electronic copy of the Declaration to all Councillors after the meeting for a wet signature.
44. Appointment of Chair and Signing of Declaration & Acceptance of Office
Cllr Chester made a short address to Council regarding her 5 years as Chair to the Council.

It has been a privilege and a pleasure to Chair the PC over the past 5 and a COVID bit years. There is a huge amount of passions, dedication and work from all councillors during that time, both previous and new councillors, as well as those of us that have been around for a few years. It is also a pleasure to work with our new Clerk, Georgina, who has helped shine a light of areas of improvement and is working to support us in our new direction. Over the past municipal year we continued to build on the success of previous years that I Chaired this Council, the previous years included two significant purchases to support the continued trading of the Community Shop, the reopening of the White Horse Public House and Restaurant - thank you to the Shop Committee and the Community Hub Group and all their hard work to support these initiatives.

More recently, in this year we have been actively working on our NDP which has been invaluable as it holds weight in our work on planning applications and it is a great relief that two developments, 50 houses around St Marys and the 3 houses at Hillahgarth have been refused. Thank you to Cllr Seguss, Rebecca Hunt, Joseph Miller Faisal Farooq for your work and professionalism at the Planning Committee meetings to highlight strong planning justification for the applications to be refused and protect the heritage of our village. In the coming months, once SDC are able to accept our NDP post COVID, I look forward to the plan being adopted to provide even more support for the village on applications as well as significantly increase the amount of funding available to improve our village, via the CIL payments.

The next year I am sure will continue to be a busy one, with our priorities being discussed later in this meeting, include the potential acquisition of the greenspace around the Church to support in graveyard spaces, our website and mandatory documentation to be completed, as well as the exciting new playground equipment and improvements for our younger parishioners. Add this to the HS2, Network Rail, LEA and the work on a new Local Plan means we will not be short of things to do.

I am confident the new chair will support us in going back to basics, aligning on reasons for priorities and support the councillors in their volunteer roles to make the best of the limited time they have available and continue to move things forward. There will be 'pop up'/urgent challenges e.g. just this month being the LEA music events that we need prompt reaction too, that along with the fundamental element of our role to read the documentation prior to meetings, come open minded and ready for a debate is the key aspect of our role.

Managing our email load to focus on a weekly bulletin & replying within a reasonable deadline or discussing at the monthly meeting (thank you to Georgina for this excellent suggestion) with only urgent emails outside of this will help us keep abreast of the latest and remain up to date on what is happening while managing to juggle our busy lives. And of course, where our councillors are able to do more and go above and beyond the expectations of the role, we will continue to be a proactive council.

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It is with pride I can share with the public that we are regularly asked to provide advice and guidance to other Parish Councils who are in awe of our forward thinking of our council which has led to our massive achievements. I'm looking forward to continuing my role as a councillor and wish the new Chair all the best to succeed in their role.

44. cont'd

Cllr Mason nominated Cllr Charlston, Cllr Higham nominated himself for the position of Chair. Cllr Chester seconded the nomination of Cllr Charlston and Cllr Blakey seconded the nomination of Cllr Higham. A vote took place and Cllr Charlston was elected as Chair till at least May 2022.

Resolution: Cllr Charlston elected as Chair of the Parish Council till at least May 2022.

45. Appointment of vice Chair and Signing of Declaration & Acceptance of Office
Discussion around the position of Vice Chair.

Resolution: No Vice Chair to be appointed at the present time.

46. Apologies, Declarations, and Dispensations
None received

47. Appointments to Outside Bodies

a. Village Hall Committee

Cllr Mason declared an interest in joining this committee. Cllr Herbert was happy to stand down as Representative to allow Cllr Mason to take up the seat. Cllr Higham and Cllr Chester (trustee) would like to continue in this role.

Resolution: Cllr Mason, Cllr Higham and Cllr Chester to be external representatives on the Village Hall Committee

b. YLCA Branch

Cllr Charlston wished to continue in this role. Cllr Seguss declared an interest and wished to shadow Cllr Charlston in this position and attend some YLCA branch meetings.

Resolution: Cllr Charlston to continue as external representative at the YLCA Branch meetings.

c. Community Shop

There was some discussion around the difference between being a Director of CFCS Ltd and being a representative on the Management Committee. Cllr Higham was nominated and seconded and votes were placed. However, the vote was then suspended as it was clear that Council did not have a clear understanding of what position there were voting for. Chair suspended the voting until the next meeting (17th September 2020) to ensure that Council had clarity on what they were voting for.

Resolution: Cllr Mason to continue as external representative to the CFC Shop as a Director.

d. CF Community Hub

Cllr Higham expressed an interest to continue in the role. No other Councillor put themselves forward at this point. The Chair was in the process of calling a vote and the Clerk interrupted to explain that she had confidential information regarding Cllr Higham continuing in this position. The Clerk was pressed to expand on this by Cllr Higham but reiterated it was inappropriate to do so in a public meeting, just that "concerns" had been raised and that the Hub committee would like to see a change in representative. Cllr Herbert put himself forward at this point and a vote took place.

Resolution: Cllr Herbert to be the new external representative to the Community Hub Committee.

e. Sub Groups – Task and Finish groups for key projects.

Key priorities for Church Fenton Parish Council were agreed in the ordinary meeting held on 16th July 2020 as follows:

- i. Graveyard Acquisition - **Cllr Mason to be the lead on this project**
- ii. Playground upgrade – **Cllr Seguss to continue to lead on this project**
- iii. Highways – **Cllr Blakey to lead on this project (with Cllr Higham)**
- iv. Network Rail – **Cllr Charlston to lead on this ongoing project**
- v. Policies – **Cllr Charlston to lead on this**
- vi. Website – **Cllr Herbert to lead on the design and implementation of the new website**
- vii. Climate Change – Council agreed to not form a sub group for this project at the present time.

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48. To note the Councillor projects assigned for the summer break
Whole Council priorities were agreed in the ordinary meeting held on the 16th July 2020 with the following Councillor identified leads:
Local Plan (Cllr Mason with Cllr Chester)
Graveyard Acquisition (Cllr Mason and Cllr Blakey)
Highways (Cllr Blakey with Cllr Higham)
Policies (Cllr Charlston)
Website (Cllr Herbert)
49. Date and time of next meeting – Thursday 27th May 2021, venue TBC dependant on government advice (re Covid19 lockdown)
Meeting closed at 10.16pm

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