**BERKSWICH PARISH**

**Annual Parish Meeting**

**Minutes of Berkswich Parish Meeting held on Tuesday 9 May 2023**

**at 7.00 pm at Walton Village Hall**

**Present:** Cllr Sue Francis (Chairman), Cllr Malcolm Millichap (Acting Secretary), Cllr Ann Millichap, Cllr Alan Taylor, Cllr Tim Luker, Cllr Caroline Pearson, Cllr Beverley Hughes, Cllr Michael Norris, Mrs Sue Fullwood (Clerk) and three members of the public.

**23/1** **Welcome and Introduction by the Chair** - Cllr Francis welcomed everyone to the meeting.

**23/2** **Apologies** - none received.

**23/3** **To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 3 May 2022** – **Resolved:** the minutes were agreed and approved.

**23/4** **Chair’s Annual Report 2022/23**

The Chair outlined the work completed in the Parish in the last twelve months. It was pleasing to report that the Parish Council had gained financial support to improve Walton Coppice and work was ongoing. The Hollybush play area had seen substantial improvements in the equipment available for children and the tea party, arranged to mark the late Queen’s jubilee had been well attended.

The Clerk left the meeting at 7.05 pm.

**23/5** **Annual Financial Statement**

The Chair read out the following on behalf of the Clerk/RFO: The Parish Council had invested over £30,000 in new playground equipment using earmarked reserves. The large old wooden multiplay equipment had been replaced by a new multiplay piece with two slides, and a new large accessible springy to seat four children and a basket swing were also added.

Budget for 2022/23 had allowed for the use of earmarked reserves to plant a hedgerow around Walton Coppice, but in March 2023 a grant was successfully applied for from the Farming in Protected Landscapes scheme therefore earmarked funds were saved for future management of the Coppice.

Although inflation had been over 10% for many months, the precept for this year had been increased by 8% from last year to keep costs to the general public to a minimum during the cost-of-living crisis, whilst also allowing for increasing costs to the parish.

The Finance Group had compared the interest rates for the three Parish investment accounts and resolved to draw the money for the play equipment from the account with the lowest interest rate. The Parish Council still had substantial earmarked reserves.

No large purchases were anticipated for financial year 2023/24, but the Council would endeavour to obtain grants where possible.

**23/6 Matters Raised by Parishioners**

1. Speed limit on the Brocton/Milford Road

Concern was expressed about the 30mph speed limit on the Brocton/Milford Road. The Chair said a joint Parish Council letter had been sent to the County Council and this would be made public. Any support from the public would be welcome and most helpful. A meeting was being arranged with the local PCSO to view the speed problem on site. The Council was informed that the Head County Ranger was looking at improvements to the bunding on Milford Common. PC Karl Green was said to be a good contact in relation to ASBOs.

**23/7 Close of Meeting**

There being no further matters the Chair closed the Annual Meeting at 7.15 pm.