

Timberland Annual Parish Council Meeting Minutes (Draft)

Date & time Monday, 20th May 2024 – 07:00PM-07:18PM

Meeting Location Timberland Village Hall

Attendees: Councillors Lenton (Chair), Kornat, Audis, Slater,
Parish Clerk Kay Harvey

Apologies for Absence: Councillor Sharplin

1. Welcome to the AGM

The Chair welcomed all attendees to the Annual Parish Meeting

2. Parishioners Open Forum

Three parishioners were present at the meeting. No questions or comments were raised.

3. Minutes of previous AGM (15th May 2023)

It was agreed that the minutes of the previous Annual Parish Meeting were a true reflection of the meeting. No changes were required.

Proposed: Cllr Kornat, Seconded: Cllr Slater

The minutes were signed off by the Chair

4 Chair Report to the Annual Parish Meeting 2023

The Chair presented the report to the Annual Parish Meeting. The Chair confirmed that the report also included a summary of financial matters and as a result a Clerk report would not be required.

No comments were raised from the attending councillors. The full report can be found in Appendix A at the end of these meeting minutes.

5. Election of new Chair

Councillor Lenton was re-elected unopposed as Chair for 2024/25. The official forms of acceptance were signed and witnessed by the Clerk.

Proposed: Cllr Audis, Seconded: Cllr Kornat. All agreed.

6. Election of new Vice Chair

Councillor Kornat was re-elected unopposed as Vice-chair for 2024/25. The official forms of acceptance were signed and witnessed by the Clerk.

Proposed: Cllr Audis Seconded: Cllr Slater. All agreed.

7. Election of Village Hall representative.

Councillor Kornat was re-elected unopposed as the Village Hall Representative.

Proposed: Cllr Lenton proposed. Seconded: Cllr Audis. All agreed.

8. Asset List

Councillor Lenton has created a new asset list format including a replacement value.

All Councillors approve the asset list.

9. Meeting Close

The Chair closed the meeting at 07:18PM

Appendix A : Chair Report to the Annual Parish Meeting

See over page.

Timberland Parish Council

Chair's Report to the Annual Meeting 2024

Good evening, and welcome to the Annual Meeting of Timberland Parish Council. I will now present the Chair's report for the financial year 2023/2024.

During the past year the parish council has had to deal with a number of challenging events which include flooding, the need to renegotiate the lease on Timberland Green and speeding traffic entering and exiting the village. As always, the councillors have responded well to these challenges and have individually, and collectively, taken action to resolve these issues. More on these topics in due course.

For a relatively short period of time the PC operated with its target complement of seven parish councillors. However, this happy position was short-lived, and we are now back to a situation where we have the original five councillors that were in place at the start of the year. As a result, we are once again actively recruiting for two new volunteers. In many ways it is good to have a churn on the members of the PC. New volunteers bring new ideas which is always a good thing, and we look forward to getting back to a full head count as soon as possible in the new financial year.

Probably the major challenge that arose this past year was the need to negotiate a new lease for Timberland Green. After a one-year gap, it was agreed that the Family Fun Day would return in 2024. This popular event could only take place if the lease on the green was renewed, so discussion commenced with Lincolnshire County Council. The negotiation became a frustrating and protracted exercise as the LCC adopted a tough position against a small parish council. The terms proposed included a significant rent increase and tight restrictions on our ability to add new structures to the green, in addition to the continuing requirement to maintain the adjacent dyke and grassed areas. Despite a protracted and frustrating negotiation, a position was finally reached on which the PC could agree. The new lease has been signed and Timberland Green has been made available to parishioners for recreational purposes for a further ten years. The terms of the lease agreement are beyond initial expectations, but a break clause is in place after five years should the PC wish to exit the agreement.

After a long period without any significant rain events, Timberland village was hit by two in a period of three months over the Autumn and Winter. In October, Storm Babet struck and caused major flooding on Church Lane and Hallam's Lane. After the mopping up exercise had completed, Storm Henk arrived on January 2nd to bring a cheery start to the new year. Once again flooding impacted various parts of the village. A look at the Met Office website reveals that although the UK weather is generally getting wetter, the number of storms has not noticeably increased over the last few hundred years. However, the frequency of winter storms is expected to increase over the coming years due to the climate change. A compelling reason if it was needed, to ensure that the perennial problem of the parish dykes headache is resolved and that they are regularly cleaned.

On the first occasion councillors distributed sandbags, moved cars and patrolled the streets to assist villagers where necessary. By the time that Storm Henk arrived the PC had developed an Emergency Plan which defines how to react and manage such serious events. Working to the plan, the Fire Service and Lincolnshire County Council were immediately contacted to provide support. Members of the volunteer emergency team patrolled the village once again, offering sandbags, assistance and a comforting word wherever possible to try and minimise the impact. Additionally, the village hall was opened to provide warmth, hot drinks, and a refuge for anyone in need. All activities were voluntary, took up much of the day and resulted in cold, wet and tired councillors. Sadly, a number of properties suffered water damage as a result of the flooding, but the assistance provided under the emergency plan was welcomed by many residents. The plan will be regularly reviewed and updated as necessary to ensure that we are always in a position to react to emergency events of many types.

Throughout the year the PC worked with highways to investigate cost-effective methods of ensuring speeding within Timberland village is reduced. Recent speeding reports provided by LCC support the view that vehicles are entering and exiting the village in excess of the speeding limits, but not by a significant amount. This is the case on all three roads into Timberland. The explanation provided seems to be that vehicles are always accelerating when exiting a 30 MPH limit and decelerating when entering a 30 MPH limit. However, the speeds are not at a level where the police intend to carry out any enforcement action at this stage. LCC have once again recommended the installation of village gates and the setup of community speed watch. Our recent discussions have indicated that village gates would be the preferred option should funding be available.

The budget target for 2023/24 was achieved. The accounts have been audited and approved and will be signed off later in this meeting. The figures will be made available should parishioners wish to see what has been spent. Inflation and rising costs during the year have meant that a moderate increase was requested for the 2024/25 parish precept. This was approved and the council has received the funds. We will continue to ensure that finances are managed prudently and are available for scrutiny if required.

After protracted struggles in contacting Barclays, we are now able to return to paying invoices and salaries by electronic transfer. We have also reorganised the bank accounts to provide separation of the day-to-day business account, the reserve account and the Family Fun Day account. This will provide clearer visibility, better control of spend and easier auditing.

Finally, it just remains for me to thank all councillors for your effort on behalf of the parishioners over the past year. You all give up your free time for the benefit of others and without this there would not be a council. Your efforts, ideas and enthusiasm for public service is fantastic. I would also like to thank the clerk who provides excellent support and without whom the PC could not function. Last but not least my thanks go to the litter-picker who maintains Timberland's streets tidy and litter-free.

That concludes the chair's report for 2023/24.

Chris Lenton

Chair, Timberland Parish Council