

Timberland Annual Parish Council Meeting Minutes

Date & time Monday, 15th May 2023 – 07:00PM-07:13PM

Meeting Location Timberland Village Hall

Attendees: Councillors Lenton (Chair), Kornat, Audis, Slater, Sharplin,
Parish Clerk Kay Harvey
County Councillor Kendrick
Councillor Sarah Lawrence

Apologies for Absence: Councillor Ogden

1. Welcome to the AGM

The Chair welcomed all attendees to the Annual Parish Meeting

2. Parishioners Open Forum

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

3. Minutes of previous AGM (16 May 2022)

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 Audis, Seconded: Cllr Sharplin

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 Clerk Report to the Annual Parish Meeting 2023

Not required, covered in the Chair report.

6. Election of new Chair

Councillor Lenton was re-elected unopposed as Chair for 2023/24. The official forms of acceptance were signed and witnessed by the Clerk.

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

7. Election of new Vice Chair

Councillor Kornat was re-elected unopposed as Vice-chair for 2023/24. The official forms of acceptance were signed and witnessed by the Clerk.

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

8. Election of Village Hall representative.

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

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

9. Meeting Close

The Chair closed the meeting at 07:13PM

Appendix A : Chair Report to the Annual Parish Meeting

See over page.

Timberland Parish Council

Chair's Report to the Annual Meeting 2023

Good evening, and welcome to the Annual Meeting of Timberland Parish Council for 2023. I would now like to present the Chair's report for the financial year April 2022 to March 2023.

Over the course of the past 12 months the members of the parish council have continued to donate a great deal of their personal time for the benefit of parishioners. As chair of the PC I feel privileged to work alongside a talented and conscientious group of colleagues who are willing to dedicate time and effort to maintain and improve services for the parish. My colleagues have differing skills and aptitudes, but the one thing they all have in common is that they are happy to devote their time for the benefit of others. On behalf of all in the parish I thank them for their efforts over the past 12 months.

During the year there were 2 significant events that affected the composition of the PC. The first was the passing of our friend and colleague, John Sharman. The PC paid suitable tribute to John shortly after his passing so I will not repeat it here other than to say we continue to miss him greatly. The second significant event was the departure of Cheryl Burbidge as parish clerk. Cheryl worked hard for the PC, providing invaluable support and guidance over many years of service and I would like to thank her personally for her support and hard work. Cheryl's resignation initiated a recruitment exercise and after interviewing two very suitable candidates, Kay Harvey was appointed as the new clerk. Kay joined us at a busy time and had to hit the ground running but has quickly shown that she will be successful in the role. Just a reminder that all contact to the PC should go via the clerk and that the contact details remain the same.

The PC has operated for some time beneath the full complement of councillors and is currently staffed by 5 councillors instead of the target number of 7. Vacancies have been advertised requesting new councillor applications. 2022/23 has been an election year and all current councillors submitted forms for re-election and all incumbent councillors were re-elected unopposed. Operating beneath target headcount is not an ideal position for us to be in and the PC hope to be able to fill the vacancies as quickly as possible. Bringing in new talent and new ideas to boost the team's creativity and skills set will be to the benefit to the whole parish.

Amongst the ongoing tasks there were several significant events resolved during the year. Contrary to normal policy the PC had recently adopted a position of objecting to new build planning applications within Timberland village due to concerns about the capacity of the waste-water infrastructure and its ability to cope with extra housing. Following an on-site visit and Q&A with Anglian Water it was established that there is sufficient capacity for the foreseeable future, although guidance has been provided on how to reduce the load on the waste system at time of heavy rainfall. Despite this good news the PC will continue to object to new builds within Timberland village itself as the target number of new builds as recommended in the Lincolnshire County Council Local Plan has been reached. Additionally, the PC will continue objecting to planning applications which could adversely impact the parish as a whole.

Timberland Green continues to remain the focal point for leisure activities in the village and hosted another very successful Family Fun Day in 2022. The green is maintained to a very high standard and is open for use year-round. The council are aware that the shed is showing significant signs of aging and are continually looking for funding sources including grants, to improve or replace the shed and expand on the play facilities that are in place. The 10-year lease agreement on the green is due to

expire shortly and the council are looking to reach agreement on an extension in recognition of the value that the space brings to the many who use it. This is a priority activity for the current year.

Perhaps of most concern to many parishioners is the state of the roads in the parish. Many of the roads are subject to large numbers of potholes, crumbling verges and subsidence. There has also been a number of concerns raised about the excessive speed that some drivers use when travelling around the parish, especially when entering and exiting Timberland village. The PC takes these issues very seriously and continues to raise concerns to the district council for resolution. County Councillor Rob Kendrick remains a good friend to the parish and provides full support in trying to get improvements to local highways, but funding remains scarce and as a result improvements are slower than we would wish.

Towards the end of the year two significant commercial planning applications were raised locally. The first is the Bio digestion Plant targeted for Metheringham aerodrome. The second is the Solar Farm planned for Blankney Estates. Neither proposal is located within our parish boundary, but both could impact parishioners. As a result, the PC determined that we would act to ensure that parishioners are kept fully informed on the progress of these proposals but will act as information providers only. PC members have attended meetings on both these plans and have shared the details as known. Information on the proposals and local action groups is available on the PC website. Leaflets have been distributed door-to-door and posted on notice boards and telegraph poles throughout the parish. This will continue as the year progresses.

From a financial perspective the PC is in a sound position. For a significant number of years, the PC took the approach not to request a parish precept increase to minimise the impact on parishioners. The council adopts a policy of managing finances prudently to ensure we can cover our obligations while maintaining a small reserve fund for unexpected events. The freeze on precept increases has meant that the reserve fund has been gradually diminished over the past few years as it was used to provide funding for day-to-day items which the precept could not cover. As a result, the PC decided that a small rise in the precept for the past two years was required to ensure our funds can meet the cost-of-living challenges that we are experiencing at the current time.

The decision to request a precept increase was carefully considered due to the challenging financial situation that we all face. All parishioners can be comfortable that the PC will always adopt an approach of prudent financial management. Parish expenditure for 2022/23 was within forecast. Costs were kept under control and full records of all spending is available for viewing by parishioners if required. The books for the last financial year have been audited and verified as being accurate and correct.

In summary, 2022/2023 was a year filled with challenges and the new year promises to continue the same way. Going forward the PC would welcome more parishioner attendance at PC meetings to hear concerns, suggestions, and feedback on any subject which affects the parish. If you cannot make the meetings in person, you can contact the PC via the clerk using email or telephone. We welcome your support.

That concludes the chair's report for 2022/23