

DARLEY AND MENWITH PARISH ASSEMBLY
TUESDAY 19 APRIL 2022 7.30-8.30pm
AT THE DARLEY MEMORIAL HALL, DARLEY

MINUTES

1. Welcome and Chairman's Remarks (Councillor Sue Welch):

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the Assembly meeting (copy of the full report attached below).

2. Reports:

The Parish Clerk (Martin Pearson) read reports from North Yorkshire County Councillor Stan Lumley and Harrogate Borough Councillor Tom Watson on their respective councils (copies attached below). The Parish Clerk delivered his report on Darley and Menwith Parish Council for the year ending 31 March 2022 (copy attached below).

3. Updates from local organisations:

It was noted that there are a large number of thriving organisations within the Parish and that the annual report gives an update on the last year together with contact details.

It was confirmed that the new Boules Courts at Darley Playing Fields will be officially opened on Saturday 21 May 2022 with a French-themed event, with wine and baguettes for those attending. Darley Playing Fields Association (DPFA) intends to have a number of sets of adult and children's boules available for use on the new courts via the village shop. DPFA is also hoping to arrange for training sessions for those wanting to learn how to play.

Darley Memorial Hall intends to change its organisational structure to become a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO). This type of entity takes on the assets and liabilities of the organisation but offers limited liability to its trustees. The transfer of the assets owned by Darley Memorial Hall to the new CIO is planned to take place on 31 July 2022 subject to a vote by the parish (expected to take place in late June).

The Parish Council, Borough Councillor Tom Watson, County Councillor Stan Lumley and the Parish Clerk were thanked on behalf of Christ Church Community Centre (CCCC) for helping to acquire and install a defibrillator quickly and at very little cost to the CCCC.

Congratulations were expressed to Erica Spencer for being recognised for her work with local uniformed groups with an invite to a garden party at Buckingham Palace.

4. Current local issues:

It was noted that the elections to be held on 5 May 2022 are for one on the North Yorkshire Council Pateley Bridge & Nidderdale ward, with three candidates standing for election. Elections will also be held on the same day for seven seats on Darley and Menwith Parish Council, with nine candidates standing.

An overview was given of the changes planned to take place when the new North Yorkshire Council is formed on 1 April 2023. This included confirmation that Darley and Menwith Parish will be administered as part of the Skipton & Ripon local area committee (based on its parliamentary constituency) rather than Harrogate & Knaresborough and that all services from 1 April 2023 will be provided by the new authority. It was noted that the longer-term plan (expected to be in 2024) was to elect a mayor of the North Yorkshire and City of York Councils in order to gain access to additional funding from central government.

It was noted that the Harrogate Borough Council planning committee is expected to decide on the latest application for the redevelopment of the Darley Mill Centre on 10 May 2022.

It was also noted that following a review, one of the potential changes being considered is changing the name of Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty to “National Landscapes” (e.g. Nidderdale National Landscape).

5. Open Forum

No further issues were discussed.

1. Chairman's Remarks

Welcome to everyone

It is good to meet in person after the last 2 years, with no assembly or one via Zoom.

Introduction of Parish Councillors and County Cllr Stan Lumley and Harrogate Borough Cllr Tom Watson if present, and thanks to them for their support

A brief outline of what the Council has done over the past 2 years:

- I was proud of our village that rallied round to help our community during Covid
New volunteers came forward and will hopefully continue to be involved.
The Council Installed a Thank you Bench on Low Green, as a gesture of thanks and to commemorate the pandemic for future generations
- The PC also helped with installation of 3 more defibrillator units – at CCCC, Darley PFA and Hookstone Memorial Hall. Assistance was also provided by County and Borough Cllrs.
- A Memorial Plaque was purchased and affixed to the outside of Darley Memorial Hall
- The Council funded a car park sign for the Darley Memorial Hall Car Park, signifying that it is now a general village car park and will be allocating annual funding to DMH to support its upkeep.

Congratulations are due to Darley PFA re boules court, created using an external grant and a great deal of local volunteer help, including Pateley Bridge Men's Shed and RAF Menwith Hill. The Parish Council is buying 2 special Platinum Jubilee benches to be installed next to the courts.

Other village events include a Platinum Jubilee Ball in DMH on 28th May – with hog roast and live music, and a Tea Party in the Hall on Thursday 2 June

This is the end of term for the current Parish Council, so I would like to thank all the Councillors for their support over past 4 years. They all give their time and efforts freely to help the village. At the last election, only 3 Cllrs put themselves forward and others were co-opted over the next year or so. This time there are 9 nominations – so there will be an election.

Thanks to Martin Pearson (Parish Clerk) for all his work and support.

I know it is a tough and thankless job, but can also be rewarding. I hope he agrees.

Thanks to all of you for coming and for helping to make Darley such a great community.

I am proud to have been the Chairman of your Parish Council!

Sue Welch

2. North Yorkshire County Councillor's Report

County Councillor Lumley has worked during the year to update and inform Parish Councils regarding North Yorkshire County Council (NYCC) news through his regular attendance at Parish Council meetings. He thanks Darley and Menwith Parish Councillors for working with NYCC through the year. If elected to the new council in May 2022, County Councillor Lumley hopes to continue to do this.

NYCC continues to face many challenges including the provision of health and adult services (this expenditure represents more than 50% of the total budget of NYCC, with demand for services increasing as approaching one in three people within the county are now over the age of 65) and maintenance of the road network (North Yorkshire has one of the largest road networks of any county in the country and maintaining the roads and bridges (many of which are listed) is a significant challenge within a budget of £40m).

NYCC has undertaken a number of initiatives, such as the replacement of all of NYCC sodium lamp streetlights with LED lights (this should save money with significantly lower energy and maintenance costs expected from the new LED lights) and pioneering bus schemes (a trial of "dial and ride" buses between Bedale, Masham and Ripon) to help increase access to public transport in areas not covered by other public transport.

The new road scheme for Kex Gill on the A59 is expected to start construction in Autumn 2022. This £60-65million scheme is partly funded by NYCC and is hugely important for transport links within the area.

The work on Junction 47 of the A1(M) is also nearing completion and should lead to a safer and better junction for road users.

The creation of a new unitary authority for North Yorkshire in April 2023 should simplify the local authority structure. The authority will make use of area constituency committees to help manage the provision of services. Darley and Menwith Parish Council will fall within the area constituency committee serving Skipton and Ripon rather than Harrogate.

County Councillor Lumley wishes Darley and Menwith Parish Council success for the future.

Stanley Lumley

2. Harrogate Borough Councillor's Report

The Covid 19 epidemic arrived in the UK in early 2020. Throughout the pandemic all Councils have carried out council meetings remotely or in person when permitted by Government guidance.

1. *Local Government Review for North Yorkshire*

Local Government in North Yorkshire is to be merged into one single Council Authority from the 1st April 2023. All Borough and District Councils, including the County Council, will be abolished on the 31st March 2023.

Elections for the new authority and for Parish Councils will be held on 5th May 2022 and all elected councillors will serve for a 5-year term until 2027 with elections every 4 years after that date.

2. *Housing in Nidderdale*

Affordable rented housing in the Nidderdale AONB is a major problem for young families wishing to remain in the dales. Five new-build houses and one ex-council house were bought by the Borough Council in Summerbridge last year and three more homes are nearing completion at Darley.

The Borough Council is now purchasing ex-council houses that have been sold under the Right to Buy scheme which is helping to maintain the Council's housing stock within the Borough.

3. *Defibrillators*

I have worked with Parish Councils and local communities to obtain unused defibrillators and cabinets from obsolete sites, these now being relocated to the following places locally:

Heyshaw Village (Defibrillator only)

Hookstone Memorial Hall

Christ Church Community Centre

Darley Playing Fields Pavilion

I would like thank all Parish Councillors and the residents of Nidd Valley Ward for their support and help over the last year and look forward to serving my last year as Harrogate Borough Councillor for Nidd Valley.

Tom Watson

3. Clerk's Report

Darley and Menwith Parish Council has had a full complement of seven Councillors throughout the last twelve months and met eleven times during the year. Initially meetings were held online/by conference call due to the pandemic, with in-person meetings resuming in May 2021 and being held at Hookstone Memorial Hall or here in Darley Memorial Hall.

The Council considered twenty-four different planning-related consultations, ranging from planning applications to proposals for the naming of a new local street during the year.

The Council was very active in pushing North Yorkshire County Council to carry out highway repairs and improvements during the year, including repairs on Main Street to the East of the school, improvements to the drainage system on Walker Lane and the cleaning of gullies within the Parish.

The Council is supporting the use of Darley Memorial Hall car park as a public car park, through the purchase of a sign to confirm the parking terms and conditions and the granting an annual amount to the Darley Memorial Hall Committee to help with the upkeep of the car park.

A grant was also awarded to Darley Playing Fields Association during the year towards the cost of the children's playground.

With the support of Harrogate Borough Council and North Yorkshire County Council, the Council added additional defibrillators within the Parish at Hookstone Memorial Hall and Christ Church Community Centre. This means that Darley village now has three devices for emergency use, with a further device in Thornthwaite.

During the year Councillors represented the Council at, or were nominated trustees of, at least nine other organisations, including the Charity of Isabel Day, the Yorkshire Local Councils Associations, Nidderdale Safer Neighbourhoods Group, Darley in Bloom, Darley Playing Fields Association, Darley Memorial Hall, Focus on Darley, Nidderdale Plus and North Yorkshire County Council Unitary Council / Parish and Town Council Working Group.

The Council was also represented by the Chairman and Clerk at the Remembrance Day service in Pateley Bridge and by the Chairman at the Remembrance Service at Darley Memorial Hall.

I would again personally like to thank the Councillors for giving their time and energy, particularly given many competing pressures and the uncertainties of the pandemic.

I would especially like to thank the Chairman of the Council, who puts in a significant amount of additional time throughout the year to make the Council productive and to make life as the Clerk very straightforward for me.

Martin Pearson