

**DACRE PARISH COUNCIL  
PARISH ASSEMBLY  
TUESDAY 27 APRIL 2021 AT 6.45PM**

**BY CONFERENCE CALL/ONLINE  
MINUTES**

**Present:** Councillors Jackie Kerr (Chairman), Sandra Darnbrook, Ken Johnson, Carol White, Russ Brown and County Councillor Stan Lumley. Martin Pearson, Parish Clerk. No members of the public attended.

**Apologies:** Councillor Jess Dales due to work commitments. Councillor Alan Brown due to work commitments. Borough Councillor Tom Watson due to a meeting clash.

1. *Chairman's Welcome:* Councillor Kerr welcomed all to the Dacre Parish Assembly.
2. *Minutes of the last meeting (April 2019):* Noting that there no Parish Assembly in 2020 due to the Coronavirus pandemic, Councillor Kerr signed the minutes of the last meeting; **Clerk to file.**
3. County and Borough Councillors reports - County Councillor Stan Lumley presented a North Yorkshire County Council report (copy below). Clerk read a Harrogate Borough Council report prepared by Borough Councillor Tom Watson (copy below).
4. Parish Report: Clerk presented a Dacre Parish Report (copy below).
5. Reports on Parish organisations were presented:

***Dacre and Hartwith Playing Fields Association (DHPFA):*** Councillor Kerr reported that there had been no meeting of the DHPFA management committee in the last twelve months due to the Coronavirus pandemic. Steps had been taken ensure that the facilities were inspected regularly and maintained.

Some sport was played during the last year (following the relevant rules and guidance applying) and all three sports clubs that use the playing fields have now started activities in 2021. The children's playground was open to the fullest extent possible during the year.

Grants were obtained from Harrogate Borough Council (Covid support), Sport England (repairs following flooding in February 2020) and the Small Transport Scheme Initiative (to purchase and install bike racks).

An issue relating to the constitution of DHPFA is under discussion and it is hoped that can be resolved in the near future.

***William Hardcastle Trust (WHT):*** Councillor White reported that the last meeting of the Charity of William Hardcastle was held in October 2019. No meetings have been held since then due to the Coronavirus pandemic. The last presentations to schoolchildren were made in July 2019; no presentations were made during 2020.

In June 2019 Pat Hutchinson stepped down as Chair after nearly 40 years as a Trustee. Councillor White has taken over as Chair and together with Councillor Alan Brown represent Dacre Parish Council nominated trustees. A new North Yorkshire County Council nominated trustee has been appointed alongside the existing Treasurer.

Funding for two standing desks at Summerbridge School was provided by the Charity in May 2019.

The Charity has a balance of £1,326. All returns have been made to the Charities Commission.

The next planned meeting is in June 2021.

***Dacre and Hartwith Village Hall Committee (DHVC):*** Councillor Darnbrook reported that Dacre and Hartwith Village Hall has been closed as a result of the Coronavirus pandemic. The Committee is grateful to all of the volunteers that helped by carrying out weekly checks of the building while it has been closed.

DHVC received a Harrogate Borough Council Covid Support grant in 2020 and this has helped with the ongoing maintenance and running repairs the building needs. A second Covid support grant has been applied for in 2021. The Committee is also grateful to Councillor Kerr for her help with this.

The intention is to open the hall in Autumn 2021 and a meeting is to be held to agree the way forward. Sales of 200 Club tickets started in March 2021 and have gone well; the revenue is used to assist with ongoing running costs for the hall.

The closure of the hall has led to an understandable drop in income from users, including donations from the Lunch Club. It is hoped that this will return to normal levels when the hall opens again.

***Nidderdale Safer Neighbourhoods Group (NSN):*** Councillor Johnson reported that NSN held no meetings during the year to March 2021, preferring not to meet remotely/by conference call. but is anticipating an in-person meeting after 21 June 2021 in Pateley Bridge (exact date and venue to be confirmed).

6. Open Forum: No members of the public in attendance and no further issues were raised.

7. Chairman's Remarks:

This has been a difficult and testing year in the unprecedented times of Coronavirus.

In March 2020, a volunteer support group was formed, with the aim of helping those in need during the lockdown. The attendance at the meeting to agree how to set up and run the group was magnificent.

In addition to the support group, across the Parish there have been many examples of parishioners informally helping friends and neighbours, helping to maintain the Parish through cutting grass, clearing paths, planting flowers and generally tidying up.

Local businesses appear to have weathered the storm. This included not just the very visible businesses such as the Dacre Village Shop and the Royal Oak Public House, but other less visible businesses within the Parish. We are lucky to have them.

Holy Trinity Church has continued to support the community, offering online services to help provide time to reflection and prayer despite its finances suffering during the pandemic.

I would like to thank the Parish caretakers, Richard Langley and Ian Grayshon, who have both worked hard to help the Parish Council during the pandemic.

I would also like to thank County Councillor Stan Lumley and Borough Councillor Watson for their significant contributions to Dacre Parish Council meetings and the Parish more widely. They have many calls on their time and their regular attendance at our meetings is appreciated.

I want to offer my thanks to my fellow Councillors for their work on the Council during the year and in particular, to Councillor Darnbrook for contributing positively and fully to meetings despite attending by conference call rather than Zoom. I would also like to thank the Clerk for his ongoing support, showing the right level of attention to detail and helping to keep the Council on the right track.

**Councillor Kerr (Chairman)**

The meeting closed at 7.10pm

## **Dacre Parish Assembly 2021**

### **North Yorkshire County Councillor's Report**

Firstly, I would like to thank my fellow councillors and clerks for all the support over the past year.

It is a great privilege to serve my community on parish, district and county councils.

I thank parishioners for putting trust in me to represent them and to speak up for our local needs and the county's aspirations and goals.

The planned North Yorkshire County Council elections this May have been cancelled due to the planned local government reorganisation meaning the disillusionment of both North Yorkshire County Council & Harrogate Borough Council next year to form a new single tier council. The geography of the new council is dependent on the final decision by Central Government, with elections to the new council in 2022.

This has been a most difficult year for North Yorkshire County Council and we should be both pleased and proud of the way our staff have stepped up to the challenge of trying to deliver services in unprecedented conditions. Not one has refused to adopt new ways of working. Over three thousand now work from home, this was a huge effort from our IT people to facilitate this.

We have worked well with a range of partners, including other local government people from parishes, districts, national parks, blue light services, NHS, the Army, businesses and especially our great volunteers.

We have organised 25 formal Community Support Organisations, and helped hundreds of smaller more informal groups. All with the same aim of helping those who need it.

Our Public Health teams have been very busy managing outbreaks wherever they occur, and leading on helping set up test and trace activity.

Our social services team went to a temporary 7/7 working model, which we are now consulting staff on continuing with as good practice.

We have supported the 235 care settings in the County by being in daily contact with them, and have set up Infection Prevention and Control teams, and helped them access PPE and mobile testing.

We continue to implement our flagship Extra Care Housing – two schemes opened this year in Great Ayton and Scarborough, with three on course for next year Skipton, Bentham and Filey.

Our children's services have been rated as Outstanding by Ofsted, the first council in the country to get this rating.

We are transforming our Healthy Child program to make it work even better, working very closely with Health services.

82% of our children now attend a school rated "good" or "outstanding" by Ofsted. We have seen a decrease in fixed term and permanent exclusions.

We have supported our schools throughout the difficult and challenging times of Covid.

We have invested heavily in an area of educational under-achievement on the Coast.

We rolled out a scheme of supermarket vouchers for families in need over Christmas and this will be extended for now, supported by central government cash and North Yorkshire County Council cash.

The music service has changed to online and does over 1,000 lessons a week this way.

We have managed record investment into road repairs this year – sadly there will always be more to do as we manage the largest road network in England.

We have spent money on modernising the rail line from York to Harrogate to Leeds, increasing the frequency of trains per hour, so taking more cars off the road.

We have continued to pay bus operators even when services haven't been running to make sure they are still there when normal running resumes.

We continue to invest heavily in broadband provision, edging ever nearer to 100% coverage – this year should see us achieve 97%. However, we know the final 3% will be the most difficult, and we are determined not to leave them behind.

We are also supporting increased provision of mobile phone coverage, trying to get from 60% to more than 90% of the county's geography.

We are striving to keep Council Tax as low as possible. There will be a 1.99% increase this year plus an Adult Social Care levy of 1.5%. This represents an increase of c.£50 per annum for an average sized property. We don't like increasing Council Tax at all, after all we are all payers ourselves, but we have experienced extra spending this year of £75m on Covid activities alone.

Central government have supported us but with all the pressures they are facing, we could not expect 100% reimbursement.

The North Yorkshire County Council Locality grant scheme offers £10k per year to support good causes at the discretion of the elected member. I have been able to support many local venture and projects including a Glasshouses bus shelter renovation, several new Vehicle Activated Signs, Lofthouse school playground improvements, Nidd+ voluntary transport scheme and emergency hub, Pateley Bridge Playhouse modification for COVID and disabled access, musical instruments for schools, Nidderdale 'Men's Shed' charity start-up fund to bring buildings given to the organisation by North Yorkshire County Council up to standard, Darley Christ Church Community Centre safe off-road parking scheme, helping Pateley Bridge Bowling club recover from flood damage and purchase a new grass cutter, a Bewerley Parish Council notice board, road safety cycle signs for Dacre PC, land drainage scheme for the allotment society and supporting Dales bus charity Nidderdale weekend services.

Harrogate Borough Council will cease to exist next May as will North Yorkshire County Council. I am very proud to serve on both councils, and proud of our achievement over many years. The efficient and prudent management of both councils left us in a position to deal with the financial burden that Covid 19 presented and fare better than many other councils in the UK.

I look forward to single tier local government and I welcome a new unitary council for North Yorkshire whichever model is chosen by central government, and once established I very much hope that we will then be able to achieve devolution, with an elected Mayor for North Yorkshire. This will attract significant money and the ability to prioritise projects important to our communities and spend where and when local people decide it is needed and deserved.

**Stanley Lumley**

## **Dacre Parish Assembly 2021**

### **Harrogate Borough Councillor's Report**

Dear Residents

We are living in strange times at the moment with the covid lockdown now being eased.

It is just over a year since the first lockdown started in March of last year but Harrogate Borough Council has continued to deliver services to residents in the Borough throughout the lockdowns with Council meetings being held remotely on Zoom and council office staff mainly working from home.

Local government reorganisation for North Yorkshire is now ongoing with two proposals now out for consultation. The first is one unitary council for the whole of North Yorkshire and the second is an east/west split of North Yorkshire with two councils, both being unitary authorities. The Government is yet to make a decision on the way forward but in the meantime has delayed the election of County Councillors.

Harrogate Borough Council's local plan, which controls planning development in the district, has been adopted. Also, a number of affordable homes have been built in the Dale over the last two years which has been a great help in housing young families with local connections.

The NHS handed back the Harrogate Convention Centre to the Borough Council on 1st April 2021 following its use as a Nightingale Hospital and work is now ongoing to return HCC to an exhibition centre as soon as possible.

I would like to thank all volunteers and helpers throughout the Dale for the hard work they have put into supporting the local community in these difficult times. The effort that everyone has contributed has been magnificent and I wish everyone all the best for the coming year.

**Tom Watson**

## **Dacre Parish Assembly 2021**

### **Clerk's Report**

Dacre Parish Council gained two new Councillors during the year and now has a full complement of seven Councillors.

The Council met twelve times during the year. All meetings were held online/by conference call due to the Coronavirus pandemic.

During the year individual Councillors also represented the Council at, or were nominated trustees of, nine other organisations - the Dacre and Hartwith Playing Fields Association, the William Hardcastle Trust, Dacre and Hartwith Village Hall Committee, Nidderdale Safer Neighbourhoods Group, Yorkshire Local Councils Associations, Nidderdale Plus, the Greenhow Enhancement Fund, RAF Menwith Hill Civic Leaders and a North Yorkshire County Council meeting to consider local authority restructuring.

The Council submitted twenty-two consultation responses to planning applications to Harrogate Borough Council during the year from April 2020 to March 2021.

The Council has remained active in pursuing additional road safety measures within the Parish (including pushing for increased safety-camera presence, road and footpath surface repairs and additional gritting), fighting the closure of the Grange Medical Centre in Dacre Banks, highlighting dog-fouling issues within Dacre Banks and in asking for open and wide consultation on the extension of the Nidderdale Greenway Cycle Route from Ripley to Pateley Bridge.

In addition to maintaining the public conveniences in Dacre and maintaining two defibrillators, the Council has helped improve the Parish through its ongoing support of the Dacre and Hartwith Playing Fields Association and the Dacre and Hartwith Village Hall Committee, its purchase of new lighting for the bus shelter at Dacre, its refurbishment of the phone box at Dacre, benches in Dacre Banks, the village pump in Dacre Banks and its provision of Christmas decorations at Dacre and Dacre Banks.

I would personally like to thank the Councillors for giving their time and in particular, the Chairman of the Council, who puts in a huge amount of additional time throughout the year to make the Council productive and to make being Clerk of the Council very straightforward for me.

**Martin Pearson**