

ARKENGARThDALE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Clerk to the Council – Susan Dray
Email: arkengarthdalepc@gmail.com

DRAFT MINUTES

of

ARKENGARThDALE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

held in St Mary's Church, Arkengarthdale on Monday 13th May 2024 at 7 pm

Present: Councillor S Stubbs (Chair); Councillor P Harker (Vice-Chair); Councillor R Stones; Councillor S Atkinson; Councillor N Barningham; County Councillor Y Peacock

In attendance: S Dray (Clerk); J Lundberg (Community Hub and Sports Committee); J Ruthven (ACEG); and 4 members of the parish

1. Welcome and apologies

Chairman Stephen Stubbs welcomed everyone to the meeting. There were no apologies.

2. Report from Arkengarthdale Sports Committee

Mrs Jill Lundberg gave a report on behalf of the Arkengarthdale Sports Committee, explaining how the Committee and its remit had changed since the closure of Arkengarthdale School and the COVID pandemic. It was now run by a small team of volunteers who met three times a year. For the last 2 years, the committee had organised a summer family function on the sports field with outdoor games and bring-your-own picnic. This had replaced the Arkengarthdale Sports Day and was held for local residents of all ages. The Committee continued to raise funds by holding a Bonfire Night and a Domino Drive with a raffle. The venue for both of these was The CB Inn.

3. Report from Arkengarthdale Community Emergency Group (ACEG)

Mr John Ruthven gave a report on behalf of the Arkengarthdale Community Emergency Group. The Group had formed after November 2023, following a couple of well attended community meetings which had identified a strong local interest in establishing a Group in order to develop an emergency plan for Arkengarthdale. A core team of about 10 local volunteers was currently working on the development of the plan. A larger group of about 20 local volunteers had indicated their willingness to contribute support and/or resources during an incident. The Group was liaising with the North Yorkshire Council's community emergency planning team and with Melbecks/Low Row Community Emergency Group.

The Parish Council received a proposal from the ACEG to consider taking on the governance and banking duties of the Group. It was agreed that this could be discussed at the next Parish Council

meeting in July 2024, and in the meantime the Council would seek advice from the Yorkshire Local Councils Association.

4. Report from Arkengarthdale Community Hub

Mrs Jill Lundberg gave a report on behalf of the Community Hub, acknowledging the vision, determination and enthusiasm of Mr Tony Oldershaw in making The Hub become a reality when the Dale lost the last remaining community building with the sale of the school. The Hub opened in Summer 2023 and was run by an informal group of volunteers, overseen by St Mary's Church. It had experienced a very successful first year financially, with room bookings for events including arts and crafts classes, zumba exercise classes, a series of talks by local speakers, parish council meetings, coffee mornings, concerts, and fund-raising quiz nights. There was also a public self-service tea and coffee making facility, and a popular "champing" (overnight camping in the church) booking system. The Arkengarthdale Horticultural Society curated the graveyard, and had created a successful community garden next to the Church.

5. County Councillor's report

County Councillor Yvonne Peacock, who chaired the Richmond (Yorks) Area Committee, reported to the community on the County Council's first year as a unitary authority, noting that most of her time had been spent on issues relating to the highways, specifically, roadsides, road surfaces and bridges. Cllr Peacock reported on other matters of local concern including:

- *The roll out of BT Digital Voice and its requirement for the internet.* It was reported that homes in the area that did not have the internet would nevertheless be switched over to digital but would be installed with appropriate equipment free of charge, to enable the telephones to work.
- *The changes to the school bus policy.* It was reported that despite the recommendations to send children from Reeth Primary School to Kirkby Stephen via Nateby, and to Barnard Castle via The Stang, this was highly unlikely to happen, and that all children leaving Reeth Primary School would be likely to be sent by default to Wensleydale School in Leyburn via Stainton Lane. It was proposed that a representative for Swaledale and Arkengarthdale should attend the full council meeting at Northallerton on 24 July 2024 to object to the proposals. It was agreed that the Parish Council would liaise with Reeth Parish Council to ensure a representative attended.
- *Resilience & Emergencies Team North Yorkshire Council:* It was noted that the NYC Emergency Planning Officer, Jason Wainwright, would be able to support the ACEG in the development of their group and plan. Cllr Peacock offered a sum in the region of £300 in principle to the ACEG for equipment.

6. Minutes of the last Annual Meeting of the Parish held on 3 April 2023

The minutes of last year's Annual Parish Meeting were not read out as these had already been approved and signed at the Parish Council meeting held on 5 June 2023.

7. Chairman's Report

Councillor Stephen Stubbs gave a report on the Council's activities over the last year, including:

- *The completion of the Community Hub* and the role the Parish Council had played in enabling St Mary's to secure the funding for the development of the Hub;
- *The facilitation of the development of a Community Emergency Group*, instigated and supported by North Yorkshire Council;

- *The introduction of a mobile phone service* from EE in Arkengarthdale, following several years of lobbying by the Council for mobile coverage in the dale;
- *The renovation of the pinfold* in the centre of Langthwaite, which was now a seating area. Thanks were conveyed to the volunteer members of the Arkengarthdale Horticultural Society, who kept the pinfold free from weeds;
- *The renovation of the ore cart* on High Green, thanks to a grant awarded by the Sustainable Development Fund of the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority;
- *The collapse of the retaining wall at Foregill Bridge* on New Year's Eve 2023/24 had been a significant event in the last year. Despite this technically being a matter for Reeth Parish Council, Arkengarthdale Parish Council had been approached for help in identifying local knowledge and historic information about the road and the bridge's construction, and had played a role in successfully objecting to a full road closure whilst the wall was rebuilt.
- *Co-funding (with North Yorkshire Council) of a replacement defibrillator at the CB Inn;*
- *Finances:* It was noted that the Council's finances were healthy, although the budget was increasingly restricted year on year, and funds had been allocated to core operating costs only this year. The Chair reported the balances of the Council's accounts.

CLlr Stubbs thanked the councillors and the clerk for all their work this year.

8. Questions and comments from members of the public

There were no questions.

The meeting closed at 8.15 pm