**DUNFORD PARISH COUNCIL**

**MINUTES of the meeting held on**

**Thursday 18th January 2024 at 6.30 p.m.**

**at The Parish Community Centre**

**Present:** Cllr Smith (Chair), Rachel Mahon (Vice-Chair), Helen Mahon, Currie and Crow.

**Minutes of the meeting held on 23rd November 2023**

The minutes were accepted as an accurate record.

**Matters arising**

*Mel’s bench* – The Parish Council fully understands that this issue is upsetting for Mr Parkin. The Parish Council will make enquiries for a volunteer to remove the concrete around the bench with Mr Parkin’s assistance. The concrete will need disposing of, which may attract a charge and the Parish Council does not have funds for this. The clerk will make enquiries with Barnsley Council regarding the original plans and permissions for the memorial bench as no records exist around ownership and responsibility for maintenance, which was erected around 20 years ago. The commercial cost of removing and disposing of is between £350 and £400.

**Crowedge Play Area** - nothing to report

**Dunford Residents Association**

An update of recent activity was given. Items to note included: the hire of the community has increased, with young farmers, caravan club, private parties and regular football sessions on the field. Enquiries will be made about grass cutting on the field. Internal refurbishment is almost complete, with a refit of the toilets and other internal cosmetic improvements. The Tractor Run was a massive success and raised valuable funds of over £3000 for Penistone Gateway Club. More events are being planned for the summer.

**Planning Applications -** 2023/1110 – no comments

**Finance**

The accounts for January 2024 were circulated and approved. Future Grant Funding for various projects around the area, to include the community centre, playground and other outdoor space, will be explored in the spring. Defibrillators will be installed once the quote for electrical wiring is received.

A discussion took place regarding the precept for 2024/25. No increase has been requested since 2009 and expenses have risen exponentially in the many years since, particularly utility bills for the community centre which have seen the biggest increase, in line with the general cost of living crisis. Grant funding is not available to pay for such expenses and the parish council has no option other than to ask for an increase in the precept in order to keep the community centre open for the benefit of the local community. It was agreed that the Clerk will contact BMBC and make them aware of the proposed request for an increase.

**Any other business**

Enquiries have been made about the possibility of getting some recycling bins onsite at the community centre.

**Date and time of next meeting:** Thursday 14th March at 6.30 p.m. at the Parish Community Centre, Sheffield Road, Victoria HD9 7TP.