

HEIGHINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

c/o 17 East Green, Heighington, Co Durham. DL5 6PP

MINUTES OF ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 18th MAY 2017 AT 7.00 PM

PRESENT. Cllr C Teare (Chairman)

Cllr E Thompson

Cllr M Woodward

Cllr M French

Cllr L Bedocs

Cllr L Garner

Cllr G Blenkinsopp

L Dunn

APOLOGIES. Cllr B Anderson

Cllr G Lee

053.2017 WELCOME BY CLLR C TEARE

Cllr Teare opened the meeting. There was one parishioner in attendance.

054.2017 RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

None.

055.2017 APPROVE MINUTES OF ANNUAL PARISH MEETING ON 19 MAY 2016

The minutes of the annual Parish meeting held on 19 May 2016 were approved as an accurate record of the meeting and signed by the Chairman accordingly.

056.2017 MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

There were no matters arising.

057.2017 QUESTIONS

None

058.2017 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 7.05pm.

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APOLOGIES. Cllr B Anderson

Cllr G Lee

059.2017 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies had been received from Cllr Anderson and Cllr Lee.

060.2017 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

Cllr Anderson had stated at the last Parish Council meeting that he would like to be considered for the position of chairman. Cllr Garner proposed that Cllr Anderson be re-elected chairman. Cllr Thompson seconded the proposal and Cllr Anderson **WAS UNANIMOUSLY RE-ELECTED CHAIRMAN.**

061.2017 ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN

Cllr French took the chair while the election of the vice chairman was considered. Cllr Woodward proposed that Cllr Teare be re-elected vice chairman. This was seconded by Cllr Bedocs and Cllr Teare **WAS UNANIMOUSLY RE-ELECTED VICE CHAIRMAN.**

062.2017 REVIEW OF BANK ACCOUNT SIGNATORIES

The Clerk confirmed that current signatories were Cllr Anderson, Cllr French and the Clerk and this had operated efficiently during the year. **IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY AGREED that** this should be unchanged.

063.2017 ACCOUNTS ENDING 31 MARCH 2017

The accounts up to 31 March 2017 had been circulated following the April Parish Council meeting and had just been returned from the internal auditor. They were to be discussed further as part of the main business of the meeting.

The agenda now follows that of an ordinary meeting.

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064.2017 RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN AGENDA ITEMS

None

065.2017 APPROVE MINUTES OF MEETING ON 21 APRIL 2017

The minutes of the meeting on 21 April 2017 were approved and signed by the Chairman accordingly.

066.2017 MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

Cllr Teare corrected a point recorded in minute reference 052:2017 from the meeting held on 20th April in that he had previously spoken to a resident regarding parking on the Village Green, not residents.

Responses to all planning application notifications had been sent to Darlington Borough Council on 24th April.

Letters regarding Right of Access across the Village Greens were sent to both 18 and 20 East Green on 26th April. The resident from 18 East Green has provided a number of documents to prove his property's Right of Access but nothing has yet been received from number 20. It was agreed that a letter should also be sent to the third property within the triangle, being 22 East Green and once replies had been received from all concerned further discussion could be had on the next steps required.

ACTION Parish Clerk

067.2017 HEALTH AND SAFETY

Cllr Anderson carried out the Health and Safety Inspections on 30th April 2017.

068.2017 SPORTSFIELD

The seesaw and replacement spring for the play equipment has been ordered and are scheduled for delivery and installation w/c 29th May.

The Clerk and Cllr Anderson met with Dave Ward from Clover Landscapes on 10th May to discuss field improvements. Mr Ward advised that there was no need to aerate the ground as it was naturally dry and cracking due to recent weather. He was to put together improvement proposals for consideration.

He also mentioned that it looked like the pitch lines were being burnt in with diesel. This shouldn't be used as it is a H&S issue as well as the diesel seeping wider and eroding the grass. Cllr Anderson agreed to raise the matter at the next football meeting.

ACTION Parish Clerk

The Clerk has contacted DBC on more than one occasion regarding the drainage and has been advised that someone from Highways will be in contact directly. To date this has not occurred.

ACTION Parish Clerk

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Cllr Anderson had provided the Clerk with a report from a recent visit to the Sportsfield as follows:

Damaged bench removed - Cllr Garner asked if the parents of the child responsible for the damage were going to be approached and asked if they were willing to contribute towards the cost of a replacement. Cllr Teare suggested that before any such action further information should be sought from Cllr Lee as he seemed to be aware of the circumstances around the matter.

ACTION Parish Clerk

Burglar alarm cover damaged. The Electrician has been contacted and is to fit a new cover. Cllr Teare is to fit a mesh guard to protect it from further damage.

Finally Cllr Anderson wanted to know if other Councillors visit the Sportsfield and there was a general agreement that visits were made.

Cllr Bedocs has received a complaint regarding the Notice on the wall of the pavilion in that it states the facilities are for boys only. Cllr Thompson proposed that it be changed to include females and this was seconded by Cllr Bedocs.

ACTION Cllr Teare

069.2017 FUNDING AND FUNDRAISING

None

070.2017 REDWORTH

Cllr Bedocs attended the PACT meeting on 17th May and was advised at the meeting that the new speed signs in Bedworth only indicate speed and do not record it. Residents from the village have noticed a substantial reduction in the number of speeding vehicles since the signs were installed.

Following discussion Cllr Bedocs proposed that that the Clerk should write to the Redworth Committee asking for a feedback following the speed sign installation. Cllr Thomson seconded the suggestion.

ACTION Parish Clerk

071.2017 THE CHESTNUTS

Following the request to DBC for additional dog bins an email has been received from the Neighbourhood Services and Resources Group advising that they have monitored the area and feel that there are sufficient bins. They advised that due to recent cuts to their service they no longer introduce new bins unless they are absolutely necessary.

072.2017 PLANNING

Application Ref 17/00317/FUL related to the proposed erection of a single storey extension to the rear of 6 Hall Lane. The Clerk was instructed to give a no comment response as inadequate information was available to access the proposal.

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Application Ref 17/00355/FUL related to the proposed erection of a two storey extension to the side elevation of 4 Twinsburn Road. The Clerk was instructed to give a no comment response as inadequate information was available to access the proposal.

Application Ref 17/00364/FUL related to the proposed garage conversion to form a utility room, cloakroom and study at 4 Greenhill Road. The Clerk was instructed to give a no comment response as inadequate information was available to access the proposal.

Application Ref 17/00096/FUL related to the proposed relocation of the existing 2m high garden fence to footpath boundary at 30 Hawthorn Drive, School Aycliffe. The Clerk was instructed to give a no comment response as inadequate information was available to access the proposal.

Cllr Garner was keen to discuss the planning issues raised by the representatives from DBC at the last Parish Council meeting and stressed that in his opinion the earlier the opinions and suggestions of the Parish Council were put to DBC the more chance they had of being considered. Extensive discussion followed regarding the proposals put forward by DBC for various possible planning sites and it was agreed that some dedicated time was needed in order for a submission to DBC to be put together. It was agreed therefore to start the next scheduled Parish Council meeting 30 minutes earlier than normal at 6.30pm and that the matter would be discussed under the Planning Agenda item. All Councillors would also bring to that meeting their thoughts and points they wish to raise regarding DBC's proposals to the meeting.

ACTION All

073.2017 FINANCE

The annual governance statement was read out by the Clerk and IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY AGREED THAT the statement was APPROVED. The Clerk was authorised to submit the audited statements to BDO.

The accounts for the year ended 31 March 2017 and the accounting statements in the audit pack were circulated and reviewed. IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY AGREED THAT the accounts and statements be APPROVED.

ACTION Parish Clerk

The Clerk advised the meeting that the insurance policy had been renewed. Cllr Bedocs raised the issue of the Litter Pickers and their insurance coverage. He stated that historically they used to be covered by the Parish Council insurance policy but this was taken off approximately two years ago and he felt that they should be reinstated onto the policy. Cllr Blenkinsopp stated that investigation should first be undertaken as to the additional cost to the premium before any decision on adding the Litter Pickers onto the policy and it was agreed that the Clerk make enquiries with Zurich Municipal.

ACTION Parish Clerk

The Clerk informed the meeting that a discrepancy had been discovered regarding the Environmental Wardens hours of work and rate of pay details held by the payroll provider and as a result there had been some miscalculations of his salary in April 2017 and additional hours worked throughout 2016. The conclusion of the investigation into the discrepancy has resulted in the Warden being underpaid by £0.85. This amount will be added to his May salary.

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ACTION Parish Clerk

The Clerk has applied to HSBC for internet banking which will allow real time access to bank statements. This will be an improvement on the current paper statements as April statements have still not yet been received. Once the facility is set up users and access will need to be determined.

ACTION Parish Clerk

The Vat return for the period ended 30th April 2017 has been submitted to HMRC.

The declaration for Auto Enrolment to the Pensions Regulator has been submitted. Neither employees of the Parish Council fall under the requirements of auto enrolment.

074.2017 REPORTS/CORRESPONDENCE

Information regarding the Great Aycliffe Neighbourhood Plan had been received earlier in the day and circulated by email by the Parish Clerk. Cllr Bedocs suggested that all Councillors read the document carefully as it may have an impact on HPC's future plans.

ACTION All

Cllr Lee had previously circulated a report in consideration of his absence. The report covered the following topics:

- Anti Social Behaviour
- Damage to picnic bench
- Oakwood School
- Littering on sports field
- Planning
- Batts Lane
- TPO's
- Land occupied by Travellers off A68

Cllr Bedocs advised the meeting that at the PACT meeting on 17th May the attendees were informed that PC Dalby is moving on to be replaced with PC Kinney. Amongst other things discussed was fly tipping and the fact there are to be some speed checks in the Parish in the near future. Anyone seeing sheep rustlers are also advised to take vehicle registration numbers and pass these onto the Police. The next meeting is scheduled for three months hence.

075.2017 OTHER MATTERS

The Clerk had circulated with the meeting agenda details of the Transparency Code which is a legal requirement for all councils with an annual turnover of less than £25,000. Certain items of information have to be available on a website for the electorate and the public to access. This includes:

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- All items of expenditure above £100
- End of year accounts, annual governance statement and internal audit report. The end of year accounts need to be accompanied with:
 - a copy of the bank reconciliation for the relevant financial year
 - an explanation of any significant variances (e.g. more than 10-15%) in the statement of accounts for the relevant year and previous year; and
 - an explanation of any differences between “balances carried forward” and “total cash and short term investment” if applicable.
- A list of councillor or member responsibilities
- Details of public land and building assets owned by the Parish Council

The mandatory code also requires the following information to be published more frequently than annually in that:

- The draft minute from all formal meetings (i.e. full council, committee and sub committee meetings) should be published not later than one month after the meeting has taken place. These minutes should be signed either at the meeting they were taken or at the next meeting.
- Meeting agendas and associated meeting papers should be published not later than three clear days before the meeting is taking place

The County Durham Association of Local Councils is holding a drop in session at County Hall in Durham on Wednesday 21st June between 11.30am and 1.30pm where council representatives can go in and discuss their exact requirements with NALC and CDALC representatives. The Clerk informed the meeting that she intended to attend and asked if any Councillors wished also to attend. Cllr Thompson and Bedocs expressed an interest. The Clerk will inform CDALC accordingly.

ACTION Parish Clerk

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.01 pm.