

# HEIGHINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

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

## MINUTES OF PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 11<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY AT 7.00PM

**PRESENT.** Cllr B Anderson (Chairman)

Cllr C Teare

Cllr E Thompson

Cllr L Bedocs

Cllr L Garner

Cllr M French

Cllr G Lee

Cllr M Woodward

Cllr G Blenkinsopp

L Dunn

G Simpson (Miller Homes)

### **141.2017 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Cllr M French, Cllr G Lee

### **142.2017 RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN AGENDA ITEMS**

None

### **143.2017 APPROVE MINUTES OF MEETING ON 16<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2017**

The minutes of the meeting on 16<sup>th</sup> November 2017 were approved and signed by the Chairman.

### **144.2017 MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES**

The response to the planning applications were sent to DBC on 21<sup>st</sup> November.

A letter was sent to the village resident outlining they have no exclusive right on 21<sup>st</sup> November. A reply was received dated 8<sup>th</sup> December stating "...Please refer to previous correspondence in which our position has been made clear."

The tarmac outside the Village Hall was repaired by DBC.

Cheques for assistance to both Heighington Village Hall and Redworth Village Hall were sent on 17<sup>th</sup> November.

The WI were informed of the decision by HPC on the area where daffodils could be planted on 21<sup>st</sup> November.

Cllr Anderson has sorted through the documentation in the filing cabinets.

Cllr Teare put up the Christmas Tree lights very successfully.

The weeds around the tree stump on the grass adjacent to the George and Dragon have been cut down.

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The Clerk was awaiting the names of the residents who were to be thanked for cutting grass at Hopelands. Cllr Woodward confirmed he would email the details.

**ACTION: Cllr Woodward**

The Chairman introduced Mr Graeme Simpson, Site Manager for Miller Homes who are building 101 new dwellings at The Chestnuts. Mr Simpson informed the meeting that Principle Contractors were now on site and he would be the point of contact for any queries / problems that may arise during the period of development. He is mindful of keeping a safe and clean site and will ensure that adjoining roads are maintained to a high standard of cleanliness. The timescale for the development is estimated to be approximately three years. A letter has been sent to those residents of The Chestnuts who are close to the building site to keep them informed. Access for delivery lorries is currently through School Aycliffe due to weight restrictions on the road leading from the A6072. Miller are to try and negotiate with Darlington Borough Council to change this so that access can be gained via the A6072 as it would cause less disruption to households of School Aycliffe. Parish Councillors agreed and informed Mr Simpson that Miller had full backing of the Council for the change in access route.

## **145.2017 HEALTH AND SAFETY**

None

## **146.2017 SPORTSFIELD**

DBC have cut the hedge around the sports field but have missed an area due to trees. Cllr Woodward agreed to investigate.

**ACTION: Cllr Woodward**

## **147.2017 FUNDING AND FUNDRAISING**

None

## **148.2017 REDWORTH**

None

## **149.2017 THE CHESTNUTS**

Cllr Blenkinsopp informed the meeting that a loud sound, possibly a blown pressure valve, occurred from INEOS at 9pm on Wednesday evening (10<sup>th</sup> January) and asked if they could be written to.

**ACTION: Parish Clerk**

## **150.2017 PLANNING**

None

## **151.2017 FINANCE**

### Clerks Report

The bank reconciliation for November and December was circulated and balanced.

### *Transparency Code*

The Clerk reported that a cheque to the value of £1,805.32 had been received from the Transparency Fund. This covers costs incurred in ensuring HPC is compliant with the Code and also running costs to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018.

### *2018/19 Draft Budget*

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The Chairman had considered each line of expenditure and ensured that there is no increase in the precept for the 18-19 financial year. The proposed budget had been circulated prior to the meeting. Details of the precept are required to be submitted to DBC no later than 12<sup>th</sup> January. Cllr Thompson was happy to propose that the 2018/19 budget be accepted, Cllr Bedocs seconded the proposal and it was UNANIMOUSLY AGREED.

**ACTION: Parish Clerk**

## 152.2017      REPORTS/CORRESPONDENCE

### HVHA

The Clerk had been contacted by the Secretary of Heighington Village Hall Association, thanking the Council for the grant cheque and explaining to them the reasons why charges for hire of the hall had been increased with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2018. Windows in the hall need replacing and recent quotes are suggesting the cost of the replacements will be in the region of £100,000. Terms and conditions of hire of the hall have also been updated and HPC were asked to acknowledge the updated conditions by signing an acceptance form, which was done so by the Chairman. Cllr Teare suggested that it may be beneficial for the Chairman of HVHA to be invited to a Parish Council meeting which would give him the opportunity to outline the challenges currently facing the Village Hall Committee. Cllr Blenkinsopp stated that the income the Parish Council receive from the solar park was to be used for Community projects and should a request from the Village Hall Committee be made for funding it could be discussed and considered in this context. Cllr Bedocs requested that the Secretary be thanked for their letter and be informed that if the Parish Council could help in any way they would be prepared to do so.

Discussion was then had on the Section 106 monies which should have been made available to the Parish Council from the current housing development at The Chestnuts. Cllr Anderson informed the meeting that he was aware that the money from Section 106 for this was being ringfenced and used to fund transport for children from the new houses to school. These monies previously came to the Parish Council. Cllr Bedocs stated that children who live on the new development will use the facilities of Heighington Village including the sports field and Village Hall and as such there is good argument that Section 106 funds should come to the Village. He requested that a letter be sent to the Chief Executive of DBC to ask how much Section 106 money was being paid as part of the development, and how much would be allocated to HPC. Cllr Blenkinsopp seconded the proposal.

**ACTION: Parish Clerk**

### Erosion of Verges

An email has been received from a resident regarding the erosion of verges to Hall Lane and Green (New) Lane. Cllr Garner informed the meeting that he has inspected the area and feels that any erosion is due to the weather and not vehicles. Following a short discussion, it was agreed that the subject was not the responsibility of the Parish Council as it was a Highways matter and should be dealt with by DBC.

**ACTION: Parish Clerk**

### External Audit Update

The Clerk informed the meeting that an event has been planned by the new external auditors, Mazars, on 28<sup>th</sup> March in order for them to meet their new parish council clients and provide an update on recent changes in this area. The Clerk is to attend the briefing.

### Data Protection Officer

The Clerk informed the meeting that a briefing note produced by the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) on the General Data Protection Regulations which are due to be introduced on 25<sup>th</sup> May 2018 has confirmed that the Clerk cannot be appointed as the DPO due to a number of factors, including conflict of interest.

### Waste Bin

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Contact has been received from a resident regarding the relocation of a waste bin from the corner of Greenhill Road/Highside Road. It has been moved to grass in Hopelands and according to the contact it is unstable and keeps coming apart. Cllr Garner gave some background on the bin and following discussion Cllr Anderson proposed that its current location was better and that it should stay, which was UNANIMOUSLY AGREED. It was acknowledged however, that it was unstable and needed securing better. Seeing as the bin was now located on DBC land it was agreed that DBC should be written to, informing them of the bins new location and asking them to address the stability of it.

**ACTION: Parish Clerk**

## 153.2017 OTHER MATTERS

Cllr Garner informed the meeting that he had attended two meetings regarding possible development at the rear of Snackgate Lane and despite informing DBC's representative of the decision of the Parish Council to stop access to the car park should any further development take place, the representative stated that this was not finalised.

He also stated that he is concerned about any assessment Highways have made of both access road into any proposed development in this area and questioned whether they had also considered other roads in the village. He asked that DBC be contacted regarding this question.

A representative from DBC was in the village earlier this week to clear gutters between Batts Lane and Highside Road Nurseries. Due to the weather conditions he was unable to use the sweeper vehicle he was driving and asked to borrow a spade to enable him to do the job. Cllr Garner proposed that a letter be written to the manager of this representative to thank him for going the extra mile, this was seconded by Cllr Thompson and it was UNANIMOUSLY AGREED.

**ACTION: Parish Clerk**

Cllr Bedocs informed the meeting that he had been told that the village shop, Spar was struggling for trade and it was possible that it may have to close within the next two years if things did not improve and asked if there was anything the Parish Council could do. Following discussion, it was agreed that unfortunately as it is a private business there is nothing HPC could do.

Paint on the south side internal bus shelter wall is peeling and looks untidy. As it is DBC responsibility Cllr Bedocs asked that they be contacted and asked to address the matter.

**ACTION: Parish Clerk**

Cllr Thompson wanted to clarify the area of Green which had been decided could be used by the WI to plant daffodils. Following discussion, it was confirmed that there were two areas:

1. The small triangular piece of land at the bottom of the Churchyard on East Green
2. The small triangular piece of land at the bottom of West Green (in front of property No. 1)

**ACTION: Parish Clerk**

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.20pm.