

**Minutes for the Annual General Meeting and Monthly Parish Meeting of**  
**Croxdale and Hett Parish Council**  
**Wednesday 10 May 2017, 7.00 pm**

**Parish Council Members Present:**

Councillor L Griffiths (Chair), Councillor J Anderson, Councillor R Burton, Councillor J Garner, Councillor M Ord, Councillor K Summerson, Councillor A Watt, Councillor I Watt and Councillor W Watt.

**16/17. To Appoint a Chairman of the Council for the Following Municipal Year**

Nominations were sought for the position of Chair of the Parish Council. Two nominations were proposed and seconded: Councillors Anderson and Griffiths. Remaining Members voted via a secret ballot. The Clerk confirmed the voting was 4/3, and Councillor Griffiths be elected as Chairman for the ensuring municipal year.

Councillor Griffiths thanked the outgoing Chairman, Councillor Anderson, for his time as Chairman over the last number of years and valued member of the Parish Council.

**Resolved:** Councillor L Griffiths is elected as Chair of Parish Council for the ensuring municipal year.

**17/17. To Complete the Signing of the Declaration of Acceptance of Office by the Chairman**

Councillor L Griffiths duly signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office as the Chair of the Council.

**18/17. To Appoint a Vice-Chairman**

Nominations were sought for the position of Vice Chair of the Parish Council. Councillor J Garner was proposed, seconded and agreed.

**Resolved:** Councillor J Garner is elected as Vice Chair of Parish Council for the ensuring municipal year.

**19/17. Apologies for Absence:**

There were no apologies of absence.

**20/17. Declarations of Interest:**

Councillor Summerson declared an interest in item 11 (Parish Byelaw).

Councillors Anderson, Garner, Ord and Summerson declared an interest in item 12 (Review of Allotment Holder Tenancy Regulations: Gardens and Small Holdings). However, the Clerk advised applications were received from the abovementioned Councillors for dispensation to speak and vote in connection with the Council's allotments and garages.

**Resolved: The Parish Council considered the applications for dispensation and agreed to grant on the following grounds for the remaining term of office (May 2021):**

- i. Granting the dispensation is in the interests of persons living in the authority's area

- ii. **Without the dispensation, the number of persons may prohibit from participating in any business would be so great a proportion of the body transacting the business as to impede the transaction of the business.**

**Resolved: Councillors Anderson, Garner, Ord and Summerson be granted the dispensation accordingly.**

#### **21/17. Policing:**

There was no Police attendance at the meeting; however, a report was circulated for the period 10 April 2017 – 10 May 2017 with 15 reported offences for the area.

In relation to issues at: Rogerson Terrace – PCSO Abby Pattison confirmed there will be extra attention given in an attempt to speak to nuisance road users. The complaint has also been forwarded to the Police's Traffic and Highways Department.

With regard to parking at the former Ness factory site, warning notices (not fines) are to be given to drivers parking irresponsibly outside the former Ness factory. Police will also provide management at the factory with an email/letter which they can forward to employees as a reminder not to park there.

No response has yet been received from Ron Hogg following his attendance at the last meeting regarding the recent Police investigation.

**Resolved: For Members' information.**

#### **22/17. Public Participation**

Michael Graveling was in attendance.

#### **23/17. Minutes**

The Minutes of the meeting held on the 12 April 2017 were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

#### **24/17. Matters Arising**

- i. **Fencing at Hett Lane:**

Clerk advised she had followed this up with DCC on whether a letter has been issued to the landowner and is still awaiting a response.

**Resolved: For Members' information.**

- ii. **Dyke at Butchers Race:**

Clerk advised Members this was reported to DCC on 04 May 2017 and are still awaiting a response. It was noted DCC was unable to locate the dyke in the first instance, which may have resulted in the delay.

**Resolved: For Members' information.**

- iii. **Road Plainings:**

Councillor I Watt confirmed no road plainings has yet been received despite DCC confirming the Parish could source some.

**Resolved: Clerk to follow up with the County Council.**

**iv. Croxdale Inn Fencing:**

Clerk confirmed Mr Praveen D'Silva has now paid 2017/18 car park rent (£500.00). Fencing works to the car park are to be carried out at the end of May.

**Resolved: For Members' information.**

**v. Sunderland Village – Garden Waste Bin:**

Councillor Griffiths raised he has been approached further from residents at Sunderland Bridge now requesting for two garden waste bins. The request was reconsidered by Members and remained with the original decision; it would not be appropriate for the Parish to pay for this service as it would be unfair to other residents within the Parish who pay for the Garden Waste scheme direct.

**Resolved: Councillor Griffiths to report back to Sunderland Bridge residents.**

**vi. Road Closure – Thinford Works:**

A response from DCC was received which confirmed funds have been identified to carry out patch repair and verge works on Leeman's Lane. This work is estimated for completion by the middle of June. In terms of increased traffic through Sunderland Bridge and Hett, the Parish has been advised it would be best to leave for a longer period to allow traffic patterns to settle down further following the works. The works at Thinford had a number of aims but the main aim was to increase capacity at the roundabout. Councillor Griffiths requested for Hett Lane and Leeman's Lane to be made into single track roads.

**Resolved: Clerk to pursue with the County Council.**

**25/17. Parish Clerk Update / Correspondence**

**i. Councillor & Chairmanship Training CDALC:**

Clerk gave advanced notification with regard to two full day sessions on Councillor training (locations at Barnard Castle & Peterlee) with further details to follow.

**Resolved: For Members' Information**

**ii. County Association Executive Committee and AAP Representation:**

Clerk informed Members the Parish can nominate up to three representatives from Croxdale and Hett PC and Spennymoor TC to establish a new representative for the CDALC Executive Committee member and AAP Board representative. Once representatives have been identified, a meeting of the CDALC Spennymoor and Croxdale and Hett Area Committee will need to be convened to determine the new representative following the recent elections.

**Resolved: Councillor M Ord be nominated as representative for CDALC Executive Committee member and AAP Board representative. Clerk to inform Spennymoor TC accordingly.**

**26/17. Financial Matters:**

**i. Parish Council's 2016/17 Annual Return**

The Clerk reported that the Parish Council's Internal Auditor, Mr G Bestford, has examined the Council's 2016/17 accounts and records and certified the annual internal audit section of

the Council's Annual Return to BDO accordingly. Mr Bestford also confirmed that there were no matters arising from his audit.

The Clerk had read to Members sections of the Council's Annual Governance Statement with respect to accounting statements 1-9 and was agreed by Members as prepared by the Clerk.

The Parish Council's Accounting Statements 2016/17 was approved and duly signed by the Chairman and Parish Clerk.

**Resolved: The Parish Council's Annual Return be signed and sent to BDO (External Auditors) by the submission date of 07 June 2017.**

**ii. Financial Report for the Period 1 April 2016 – 10 May 2017**

A financial update prepared by the Clerk was circulated to Members which included a detailed schedule of receipts and payments for the financial year to date and bank reconciliation to 10 May 2017. The current net bank balances totalled £17,567.33.

The following cheque payments were approved:

Cheque Number – 400303 – Durham County Council – Donation - £25.00

Cheque Number – 400304 - Miss C Maddison – Clerk's Wages April - £258.00

Cheque Number – 400305 – HMRC – Tax & NI Contributions – £64.40

Cheque Number – 400306 – Miss C Maddison – Broadband Subscription - £35.69

Cheque Number – 400307 – CDALC – 2017/18 Subscription -£114.77

Cheque Number – 400308 – G Bestford – Internal Audit Fee - £100.00

**Resolved: For Members' Information.**

**iii. Request for Donation – Citizens Advice County Durham and Croxdale Community Centre**

Clerk reported the Parish has received a donation request from Citizens Advice County Durham. Following discussion, it was agreed all requests for donations received will be considered later in the financial year until issues with the cemetery fencing is resolved. Similarly, the further donation to Croxdale Community Centre as previously agreed in September 2016, would be considered in due course.

**Resolved: Clerk to inform Citizens Advice County Durham and Croxdale Community Centre accordingly.**

**iv. Bank Signatories**

The Parish Council's bank signatories were reviewed following the recent elections. As there were no change in Councillors, the bank signatories remained the same; being Councillors Anderson, Summerson, I Watt and A Watt.

**Resolved: For Members' Information.**

**27/17. Cemetery Update – Fencing:**

Councillors I and A Watt attempted to hand deliver a letter to RA Fencing Ltd on 25 April 2017 but to no avail. A neighbour informed them the recipient no longer lives there. In order to move this

forward, it was agreed to contact Croxdale Farms in the first instance and ask if they would be interested in carrying out the repair works to the cemetery fencing and at what cost. Following this, if the farmer did not want to undertake the work, further quotations would be sourced from the recent fencing contractors who tendered for works at the Croxdale Inn car park. A letter is also to be issued to Burnell Fencing Ltd, to seek for co-operation of its employees: RA Fencing Ltd, who understandably is contracted to them.

**Resolved: Clerk to contact Croxdale Farms accordingly and write to Burnell Fencing Ltd for assistance.**

#### **28/17. Planning Issues:**

The Clerk reported the Parish Council has received the following planning application(s) for comment / objection:

21-22 Sunderland Bridge - new render finish to all elevations and replace UPVC windows with timber windows (DM/17/01419/FPA).

**Resolved: For Member's Information – no specific comments / objections were made with regard to the above planning application.**

*Councillor W Watt left the meeting (8.20 pm)*

#### **29/17. Parish Council Byelaw: Cricket Field**

Clerk confirmed the new Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) effective from 1 June 2017 will not apply to the cricket field as only fenced off play areas are covered. However, the cricket field will be covered by DCC Open Space Policy of general dog fouling which are enforced by Neighbourhood Wardens who can issue fixed penalty notices. If the Parish does decide to revoke the Byelaw, there are various steps to follow as directed by DCLG.

The Clerk circulated a draft public notice for the consultation which amounted £271.84 for inclusion in a future edition of the Northern Echo for 1 day. Discussion took place on whether the Parish should consult with residents in the first instance on revoking the Byelaw or for it to remain in place. CDALCs legal team are to confirm that the Parish has the necessary powers to do so, just as a precaution.

Councillor Anderson objected for the Byelaw to be revoked and voiced his view on the matter. Following much debate, it was agreed for the Byelaw to remain in place and Croxdale and Sunderland Bridge Parish Councillors to report feedback back at the next meeting from residents.

**Resolved: Members to report feedback at the next meeting.**

*Councillor Anderson left the meeting (8.30 pm)*

#### **30/17. Review of Allotment Holder Tenancy Regulations: Gardens and Small Holdings**

Members agreed for this item to be deferred to the next meeting for discussion.

**Resolved: Clerk to agenda for the next meeting.**

### **31/17. Circulation of Correspondence to Parishioners**

Councillor Griffiths suggested setting up a parishioner circulation list on news, events and information within the Parish for anyone wishing to sign up. Members agreed to this request.

**Resolved: Clerk to discuss with Chairman to take this suggestion forward.**

### **32/17. Hett Green**

Councillor Griffiths informed Members of discussions with Hett residents on turning the green north west of Hett Village Hall into a wildflower meadow. A site visit for Monday 15 May 2017 has been arranged with the County Council, Councillor Griffiths and the Parish Clerk to seek further details and initial costs involved. Councillor A Watt reported a similar request was received previously from a resident, therefore the two greens at Hett would be considered.

**Resolved: For Members' information at this stage.**

### **33/17. County Councillor Reports**

County Councillor Blakey gave an update in relation to the fencing on the A167 now being completed. Members congratulated Jan Blakey on being re-elected as County Councillor following the recent elections.

**Resolved: For Members' Information.**

### **34/17. AOB:**

#### **i. Data Sharing:**

Councillor Griffiths suggested on sharing Parish Council correspondence with members of the public on a shared area, with a specific area designated for Councillors.

**Resolved:** Clerk is to contact Durham County Council's ICT Service to see how this could be possible.

#### **ii. Hett Village Green:**

Councillor Griffiths reported complaints received from residents with regard to agricultural vehicles accessing fields via Hett Village Hall car park and over the village greens rather than using the road.

**Resolved: Clerk is to write to the farmer concerned and request to use the main road as access in the future.**

#### **iii. Damage to Recreation Ground:**

Councillor Ord reported damage to the children's play area at Croxdale; fence railings being removed and broken glass within the grounds which has been reported to the County Council and Police to action. Since being reported to the County Council, a resident has subsequently cleared the glass to avoid a child being hurt. Any information can be reported to Councillor Ord to feedback to the Police.

**Resolved: For Members' Information.**

**35/17. Date and Time of Next Meeting:**

It was agreed that the next meeting would be held on Wednesday 14 June 2017 at 7.00 pm.