

Minutes for the Monthly Parish Meeting of Croxdale and Hett Parish Council

Croxdale and Hett Parish Council

Wednesday 08 November 2017, 7.00 pm

Parish Council Members Present:

Councillor L Griffiths (Chair), Councillor R Burton, Councillor J Garner, Councillor M Ord and Councillor I Watt.

Also Present:

County Councillors J Blakey and S Dunn.

94/17. Apologies for Absence:

Apologies of absence was received from Councillors K Summerson, A Watt and W Watt and County Councillor McKeon.

95/17. Declarations of Interest:

There were no declarations of interest.

96/17. Policing:

There are still ongoing concerns in relation to the incidents at Croxdale, with smashed windows at the Community Centre and cars being vandalised in the car park being the latest occurrences. It was also noted, there is a lot of broken glass being stored at the Croxdale Inn which was being used by the youths. The Clerk is to contact the owner and request if this can be removed immediately. The Parish is in regular contact with the PCSO Officer and ASB Officer, Marie Frost, at the County Council. Residents are encouraged to attend the next PACT meeting on 23 November 2017.

Resolved: For Members' information. Clerk to contact the owner of the Croxdale Inn regarding the glass and advise the PCSO officer that the next PACT meeting may be well attended by residents.

97/17. Public Participation

Michael Graveling, Linda Burton and Michael Wilkes (AAP Co-ordinator) were in attendance.

Michael Wilkes provided Members with an overview of the 14 AAPs in County Durham, giving information on how Town / Parishes can access funding and how the Parish can be actively more involved in Spennymoor AAP.

Members thanked Michael for attending which was very informative.

98/17. Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on the 11 October 2017 were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

99/17. Matters Arising

i. Fencing at Hett Lane:

A site visit took place on 19 October 2017, with attendees being: Clerk, Councillors Griffiths, Garner, Ord, County Councillor McKeon and Brian Buckley of Highways. Discussion took place of the location of the area and concluded there is insufficient risk to warrant the provision of a safety barrier, which will be monitored. It was agreed to write to the

landowner to repair the fence but was noted this will not provide a barrier to vehicles leaving the road. No response has yet been received.

Resolved: For Members' information.

ii. Road Closure – Thinford Works:

A response was received from DCC regarding the survey at Hett on volume and speeds of traffic. A traffic bulletin for Hett residents was produced by Councillor Griffiths which detailed the information to residents. With regard to the Freedom of Information request, now the data has been received from the survey, Councillor Griffiths is to submit an FOI request regarding the assessment criteria and costings in relation to the Thinford Inn works.

Resolved: Chairman to draft FOI request accordingly.

iii. Parish Council Meeting Venues:

Councillor Griffiths confirmed no response from HVHA has been received as of yet with regard to holding meetings at Hett Village Hall. Councillor Garner suggested the Church in Sunderland Bridge could be used also.

Resolved: For Members' information.

iv. Parish Christmas Shopping to Harrogate:

Due to the low intake of people wishing to attend the shopping trip, it was unfortunately agreed to cancel the event before the Parish incurred in any charges relating to the coach car park in Harrogate.

Resolved: For Members' Information. Clerk and Councillor Burton to inform residents the event has been cancelled.

v. General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR):

Training took place on 1 November 2017 which Councillor Ord attended. The Clerk was unable to attend due to a family bereavement. Further guidance is to be issued, however, it was noted the session was not very informative. Councillor Griffiths to consider if this should be relayed to CDALC.

Resolved: For Members' information.

vi. Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC):

Clerk confirmed the application form has been sent to CWGC for signage at Hett and planning consent was received from DCC to gain permission due to Hett being in a Conservation Area. Councillor I Watt confirmed there is also a war grave in Croxdale cemetery and the appropriate signage should be arranged for their also.

Resolved: For Members' Information. Clerk to arrange for appropriate signage at Croxdale cemetery.

vii. Revised Allotment Regulations and Letter:

The above regulations has been revised following feedback from Councillor Summerson. Letter will be drafted end of November for Michael Graveling to hand out when collecting rents in December / January.

Resolved: For Members' Information.

viii. Beat the Scammers – Age Concern:

The Clerk has contacted Age Concern to enquire if the booklet they produced is available electronically to circulate on the Parish's website / Facebook page. Clerk is currently awaiting a response.

Resolved: For Members' Information.

100/17. Chairman's Update

A standard agenda item by way of an update by the Chairman, would be considered every 6 months, with November being the first opportunity for discussion. Councillor Griffiths, reported having taken over as Chairman, the first 6 months of office has been productive. The cemetery fencing is now resolved, reviewed and amended the allotment regulations, looked at the traffic issues in Hett following feedback from residents were a few to mention.

Resolved: For Members' Information.

101/17. Parish Clerk Update / Correspondence:

i. AAP Board Meeting:

The Clerk notified Members of the forthcoming AAP Board Meeting which was to be held on 16 November 2017, 6-8pm, Middlestone Moor Community Centre, with the main focus being on a presentation on the County Council's 2018/19 budget consultation.

Resolved: For Members' Information.

ii. Draft Neighbourhood Plan:

The Clerk notified Members of a 6 week consultation in relation to the draft Neighbourhood Plan from 4 November – 18 December 2017, which covers the central part of Durham City.

Resolved: For Members' Information. Clerk to circulate details of the plan electronically for comment and determine if the Parish Council will submit a response at the next meeting.

iii. Hett Village Green – Wild Flower Meadow:

The Clerk reported notification was received on 26 October 2017 that DCC could now fund the works of the grass seeds project (£1,500) plus the possibility of further costs to cover the ground preparation works. However, a contribution from the Parish Council would still be required. County Councillor Dunn agreed to put forward a contribution for the project, which was gratefully received.

Councillor Griffiths reported a local farmer is willing to do the works and will submit a quotation to cover fuel costs. A full scheme of works is required for the project.

Resolved: For Members' Information. Clerk to source quotations from other businesses for comparison for discussion at the next meeting.

iv. Community Grants:

The Clerk advised Members that DCC is offering up to £500 worth of funding, to a maximum of 15 community groups, in an effort to encourage volunteers to take part in environmental improvement projects.

Resolved: For Members' Information. Clerk to circulate to HVHA and CCA to see if this is of interest.

102/17. Resignation of Councillor J Anderson

The Clerk reported resignation of Councillor Anderson which was received on 17 October 2017. The vacancy was subsequently reported to DCC and are currently awaiting feedback on whether there will be a by-election. Deadline for electors is 14 November 2017. The Council's Bank will also be notified due to Councillor Anderson being a bank signatory.

Councillor Garner gave a verbal and written reply in response to the content of Councillor Anderson's letter, which was noted by Members.

Members thanked Councillor Anderson for his long service as Parish Councillor and wished to thank him for his dedication in his term of office as Chairman and Councillor.

Resolved: For Members' Information.

103/17. Financial Matters:

i. Financial Report for the Period 1 April 2017 – 08 November 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 11 October 2017. The current net bank balances totalled £7,636.40.

The following cheque payments were approved:

Cheque Number – 400333 - Miss C Maddison – Clerk's Wages - £258.00

Cheque Number – 400334 – HMRC – Tax & NI Contributions – £64.40

Cheque Number – 400335 – Miss C Maddison – Broadband Subscription - £37.99

Cheque Number – 400336 – JW Smith – Cemetery Maintenance - £160.00

Resolved: For Members' Information.

ii. Budgetary Control: Forecast of Outturn – 31 March 2018

The Clerk provided details of the forecast of outturn budget position for the Parish Council highlighting key areas of income, expenditure and budget pressures to the end of 31 March 2018. It was noted requests for financial assistance would be reviewed at December's meeting, once the outcome is known on whether there will be a by-election. However, a donation of £40.00 was agreed in relation to the cost of this year's Remembrance Wreath and donation to RBL Poppy Appeal.

Further discussion / clarity is required with Croxdale Community Association on the maintenance / insurance costs in relation to the defibrillator that is to be funded via County Councillors Neighbourhood budget grant and contribution from the Parish Council.

Resolved: For Members' Information.

104/17. Revised Code of Conduct

The Clerk advised Members of the revised Code of Conduct from CDALC to incorporate changes on the additional point on 'disrepute', which will help standardise the procedure across County Durham.

Resolved: The revised Code of Conduct was agreed and adopted with immediate effect.

105/17. Cemetery Update:

The Clerk reported a site visit took place on 19 October 2017 with the Clerk, Councillors Griffiths, Garner and Ord along with Mr Mark Hutchinson to inspect the fencing works. Works are all now complete, totalling a cost of £5,938.87 which includes a 2.5% discount. It was noted there was a couple of straps missing on fence line A but this has now been completed.

It was noted, the Parish would look at repairing the whole of fence line A in the future.

Resolved: For Members' Information.

106/17. Planning Issues:

No planning matters was discussed.

107/17. County Councillor Reports

County Councillor Blakey gave an update in relation to: Universal Credit roll out began in October. There may be delays in payments to claimants, therefore referrals to food banks may increase. The Council is currently reviewing Schools funding formula, which is scheduled for Cabinet agreement in December.

County Councillor Dunn gave an update in relation to: estimated of £50m cuts by 2020. Budget consultation being carried out via AAPs. A revised offer for Teaching Assistants has been accepted.

Resolved: For Members' Information.

108/17. AOB:

i. Litter Pick – Hett Lane / Leaman's Lane:

Councillor I Watt requested for a litter pick to take place at Hett Lane and Leaman's Lane.

Resolved: Clerk to request litter pick from Durham County Council.

ii. Hett Village Green

Councillor Griffiths reported a tree on Hett Village Green requires pruning following a request from a local farmer.

Resolved: Clerk to contact local Tree Surgeon for quotation who previously tendered to carried out works in Sunderland Bridge.

109/17. Date and Time of Next Meeting:

It was agreed that the next meeting would be held on Wednesday 13 December 2017 at 7.00 pm.