

**Minutes of the meeting of Heddon-on-the-Wall Parish Council held on
Wednesday 11th December 2024 at 6:00 p.m. in Heddon Community Library**

PRESENT: Cllrs. K. Dryden [KD]; (in the Chair); R. Adams [RA]; M. Wilson [MW]; D. Matthews [DM]; J. McGreevy [JM]; D. Keller [DK]

IN ATTENDANCE: L. Barton (Clerk); **Members of the public: 1 present**

**Minute
No.**

Agenda item

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** R. Oatway [RO]; Lesley Irving-Munro [LIM]; K. Ince [KI]
2. **WELCOME GUESTS AND RESIDENTS AND ASK THEM TO SHARE MATTERS OF INTEREST:** One resident attended the meeting to feed back to councillors on the online speeding petition which has been launched on the Northumberland County Council website. There are currently 111 signatures. It was **agreed** to share the petition via the Parish Council Facebook page.
3. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:** Cllr. Keller declared an interest in Karbon Homes and Cllr. Wilson declared an interest in St Andrew's Church and Heddon on the Wall Education and Training Trust (HETT).
4. **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING: RESOLVED:** The minutes of the Parish Council meeting on 13th November were approved and signed by the Chair.
5. **MATTERS ARISING AND REVIEW OF ACTIONS:** covered elsewhere
6. **FINANCIAL MATTERS:**
 - a) To approve payment of invoices presented at the meeting. **RESOLVED.** All councillors confirmed that as per our financial regulations and ahead of this meeting, we've circulated via email a full record of accounts, bills and invoices paid and due to be paid this month. The following invoices were approved for payment:

| | |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| Selman Park Q3 lease payment £350 | Removal of damaged tennis net box £100 |
| Petty Cash £100 | Tree Maintenance Welfare Field £2340 |
| Library roof clearing £110 | Wall repairs Welfare Field / shops £420 |
| Library cleaning £135 | Trumpet player Remembrance £50 |
| Window cleaning £33 | Office supplies (laminator pouches) £4.99 |
| Grounds Maintenance £414 | Boiler Service library £309 |
| Grass cutting Selman Park £120 | Graffiti removal Memorial Park £125 |

- b) To consider any applications for grants or donations received at least 3 days before the meeting: None received
- c) To agree the Precept and Budget – councillors considered the draft budget for 2025 / 2026. It was **agreed** to remove the Business Centre contingency fund from the Precept part of the budget and instead move this to the Business Centre part of the budget. It was further **agreed** to consider using the War Memorial account to pay for some costs relating to cleaning the Memorial cross and maintaining the Memorial Park. It was **agreed** to finalise the budget and the precept request at the January meeting.
- d) To consider any matters relating to the Internal Audit report:

The clerk told councillors that JC accountants have completed the mid-term audit review. A duplication error relating to a Trust bank account had been noted on the spreadsheet used to track income and expenditure. On the auditor's advice, this error has been rectified and the duplicated entry has been removed from all affected sheets. Furthermore, all trust accounts are now listed separately on the spreadsheet. Councillors accepted the findings of the audit, but noted that the above points had not been picked up in previous internal audits.

Items not on the agenda:

- The BT bills fall just after the meeting each month and have to be paid within 14 days. The direct debit mandate was signed by two authorised signatories at the meeting and will be sent to BT.
- The clerk informed councillors that the trust income paid into the Barclays War Memorial account will increase from £400 to £1,000 per annum for 5 years starting in October 2025. This is contingent upon the Parish Council submitting information on how the money has been spent each year.
- Cllr. Keller mentioned the Heddon Gossip (produced by a resident) for which the software is quite expensive. It was **agreed** that the Parish Council would offer a 50% contribution towards the cost of the software in future years.

7.

HR POLICIES

8.

To discuss HR policies which may need drafting or reviewing. It was **agreed** to move this item to a later meeting.

NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL:

To consider any matters relating to Northumberland County Council (NCC)

Updates:

Electric car charger – Cllr. Oatway will contact Community Action Northumberland about this in the spring.

Cllr. Wilson emailed Cllr. Jackson about lighting in the Welfare Field and Memorial Park on 14th September and is awaiting a response.

Cllr. Wilson emailed Cllr. Jackson about potential funding for play equipment on 15th November and is awaiting a response.

The Local Transport Plan has been submitted and a response is awaited from NCC.

Cllr. Wilson advised that a consultation has taken place with some residents on Trajan Walk regarding a School Street parking scheme and details on the next steps are awaited from NCC Highways.

Car parking on Hexham Road is being considered as part of the School Street Scheme and Local Transport Plan.

Speeding on Hexham Road – an online petition has been launched and can be found on the NCC website. The link will be shared via the Parish Council Facebook page.

The resident requests regarding bus services to the village were passed on to the Passenger Transport Team at NCC who considered them and advised that they are not able to proceed at the present time due to funding constraints.

The damaged bus shelter sign has been reported.

Any Other business

9.

MAINTAINING AND IMPROVING OUR VILLAGE FOR ALL:

To consider any matters relating to maintenance, repairs, and assets management, projects

Reports and updates:

Asset Officer report: The annual boiler service has been carried out at the library and the faulty radiator valve in Office 2 has been replaced; the library outdoor light has been repaired; the graffiti has been removed from the Memorial Park shelter and the damaged tennis net box has been removed from Welfare Field.

The Asset Officer has contacted Environmental Health about disposal of chicken manure at the allotments on several occasions. They have not responded. It was **agreed** to contact a private waste removal firm to dispose of the waste.

The damaged planter at the entrance of the village has been rebuilt using timber sleepers. Councillors all agreed that the work was carried out to a very high standard by Newman Homes and Gardens Tynedale, who donated their labour for the project. The materials were donated by Jewsons. It was **agreed** to allocate up to £150 to replant the planter.

School Streets Plan update: under NCC

Welfare Field Enhancement project update: a consultation event will take place at the library on Saturday 14th December to seek feedback from residents; an online form to capture feedback will also be shared with residents. The project has been shared with parents via the school newsletter.

Selman Park update: the lease has been signed for another year's extension as per current terms

Allotments update: it was **agreed** that there will be a small increase in rents in 2025 (£1.25 for half sized plots and £2.50 for full sized plots). Councillors also discussed the Golden Rules feedback received from the allotment holders. It was **agreed** to amend the wording on the Golden Rules document to show that allotment holders and members of their family can access their plot. This will bring the Golden Rules in line with the Tenancy agreement wording. It was further **agreed** that bonfires will be allowed at the allotments without restrictions and the wording on the Golden Rules document will be amended to reflect this.

Any other matters e.g. quotes for work: none

10. PLANNING APPLICATIONS:

Planning consultations:

24/04019/FUL Driving range and café Close House Estate – proposed roof covering and external wall cladding – no comments or objections

Planning decisions:

24/03313/FUL 314 Hexham Road – permission was **GRANTED** for a single storey rear extension and new flat roof to garage

Item not on the agenda: 5 Mithras Gardens – the new owner had contacted the Parish Council to enquire about whether they could purchase the strip of land at the edge of their property which belongs to the Parish Council. Advice was sought from the solicitor. Specific clauses contained within the deeds in place would make it difficult for the Council to sell this land. It was **agreed** to write to the resident and offer them a right to cultivate agreement instead.

11. CORRESPONDENCE: A group of business owners on Taberna Close had contacted the Parish Council to explain that they were organising and paying for a Christmas Tree for Taberna Close. Residents would be able to buy baubles from the shops and any funds raised would be donated to charity. Councillors agreed this was an excellent idea and the clerk will offer thanks on behalf of the council.

12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS: Cllr. McGreevy fed back to councillors on the Knott Hall committee meeting which she had attended on behalf of the Parish Council. Cllr. Wilson mentioned sponsored trees which need replacing. The clerk will contact Batsons about this. Cllr Keller. thanked everyone for their hard work in 2024.

NEXT MEETING

13. That the date of the next meeting shall be Wednesday 8th January 2025 at 7pm.

CONCLUSION OF MEETING The meeting closed at 8.05 pm.

Income and Expenditure from 13th November to 11th December:

Account 1 (Precept) Expenditure:

| | | |
|-----------------------------------|----------|-----------|
| Grounds Maintenance | £414 | 14 Nov 24 |
| Grass cutting | £240 | 14 Nov 24 |
| Water Tank Installation | £849.34 | 14 Nov 24 |
| Play equipment part | £197.23 | 14 Nov 24 |
| Newsletter | £70 | 14 Nov 24 |
| PA system hire | £210 | 14 Nov 24 |
| Wreath for Remembrance | £24.49 | 14 Nov 24 |
| Leaving gift | £21.40 | 14 Nov 24 |
| Microsoft Office Business renewal | £148.32 | 14 Nov 24 |
| Payroll | £1217.94 | 15 Nov 24 |
| NCC Bins | £16.67 | 15 Nov 24 |

Account 1 (Precept) Income: Allotment rent pro-rata part year £60

Account 2 (Library) Expenditure:

| | | |
|-------------------------|---------|-----------|
| Window cleaning library | £33 | 14 Nov 24 |
| Library cleaning | £47.28 | 14 Nov 24 |
| BT (Library landline) | £38.82 | 14 Nov 24 |
| BT (PC landline) | £36.06 | 14 Nov 24 |
| Gas library | £117.52 | 19 Nov 24 |
| Fire Alarm | £19.54 | 25 Nov 24 |
| Burglar Alarm | £60.22 | 25 Nov 24 |
| CCTV | £43.20 | 29 Nov 24 |
| Electricity library | £219.33 | 02 Dec 24 |
| Electricity Selman Park | £21 | 10 Dec 24 |

Account 2 (Library) Income: from 13th November to 11th December Rental income: £1200

APPENDIX

MAINTAINING OUR VILLAGE FOR ALL:

ACTIONS:

LT to get prices for tap covers
LB to discuss Missing bench slat with handyman
DK to speak to resident about planters and possibly replacing them
LB / LT to organise removal of chicken manure from allotments
LB Treatment of planter at entrance of village to be added to maintenance schedule

IMPROVING OUR VILLAGE FOR ALL:

ACTIONS:

LB to contact handyman re fence on Taberna – add additional posts for support
RO contact Community Action Northumberland re Car charger for village in the Spring
LB to check final requirements for Welfare Field replacement sign and organise
LB to contact family with damaged tree in WF and explain PC will replace it
LB to contact Batsons to request replacement sponsored trees

FINANCE AND ASSETS:

ACTIONS:

LB Check previous budgets (when precept was requested by Louise) does Ac 1 expenditure have to be the same as our precept request?
LB Check with NALC regarding procurement Act Feb 25
LB Chase up water bill with Halls of Heddon
LB Contact resident at 5 Mithras Gardens re land at the side of their property

OTHER:

ACTIONS:

LB Respond to resident re bus queries
LB Official thank you for work on planter at the entrance to the village