

Elwick Parish Council

Minutes of Meeting held on Monday 30 September 2013 at Elwick School

Present: Cllrs. C. Banks (in the Chair), P. Hutchinson, J. Londesbrough, R. Musgrave, L. Parks, H. Thompson and R. Thompson

Also present: Mrs. West (Parish Clerk), Ward Cllr. B. Loynes and one member of the public.

1. **Apologies for absence:** None
2. **Public Forum:** The flooding in the North Lane area, and North Close in particular, was raised. The Chairman reported that he had received a letter from two residents of North Close and that Mrs. Hunter wished to speak on this matter. He then gave a synopsis of the issue as follows: on 6 September the whole of Elwick was subjected to an unusually heavy downpour which resulted in flood water travelling from both North and North East into North Close, causing £50,000 of damage to one house which would be uninhabitable for at least the next 6 months; other homes in the Close were also affected although not as severely. Flooding in this area had been raised with the Borough Council's officers many times over the last three years. A site visit had been held with the Council's engineers, the Chairman and Cllr. Loynes in January when it was agreed to undertake a full investigation. To date, despite pressure, nothing appears to have been done – Cllr. Loynes expressed her dismay that the matter had not been dealt with, as agreed in January. The Chairman reported that since 6th September, he had spoken with Leader of the Borough Council, who had promised an immediate investigation into short and longer-term solutions. Also, Mike Blair from HBC, had said that a full Drainage and Topographical survey would be undertaken in the next 2 weeks, to identify both shorter and longer-term solution to the problem. Residents were concerned that any further increase in the volume of water being channelled into Char Beck from the north of the village, would create even more problems as, over the last three years, there had been an increasing number of times when the beck had flooded their gardens. As a shorter term solution, a resident had proposed that, a chicane be placed in North Lane to divert the water away from the entrance to the Close. After discussion, Councillors **agreed, in principle**, to support the idea of a chicane, noting that this would have the added benefit of slowing traffic. **Action:** Cllr. Loynes to take this matter up with the officers responsible, as a matter of urgency.
3. **Declarations of Interest:** None
4. **Minutes of 29 July 2013:** Agreed as a true record and signed by the Chair.
5. **Matters Arising:**
 - (5) **Footpath at No 4, The Green, the electricity sub-station & Church Bank:** The Chairman reported that BSG has now completed this work.
 - (5) **Stones on The Green:** Cllr. R. Thompson will complete this immediately, in liaison with Cllr. Parks.
 - (6) **Dog Fouling:** Since the publicity, no further reports received of dog fouling on the Playing Field.
 - (8d) **Replacement street lights:** these were now in place although the new light bulbs gave a harsh blue-white light and did not light up as large an area. **Action:** Cllr. Loynes to report this to Bob Golightly.
 - (8f) **20 MPH zone:** Cllr. Loynes reassured councillors that the restriction also applied to The Green,
 - (12a) **Hedge opposite Tunstall School:** it was noted that this had still not been cut back, but Cllr. Loynes confirmed that this would be done very soon.
6. **Chairman's Report:**
 - a) **Mobile Library Service:** The Council is undertaking a review of library services including the future of the mobile service, loss of which would be detrimental to the village. The Chairman had been assured that some service to the village would be maintained, but what form this will take has not yet been agreed. It was also noted that the school uses the mobile service. It was agreed that the Clerk should register the concerns of the Parish Council. **Action:** Clerk to write to Council.
 - b) **Resurfacing of roads:** Various roads in the parish are to be resurfaced during October, these include sections of Coal Lane (15th), Dalton Back Lane (17&18th), Dalton Lane (19&20th) and Worset Lane (21st&22nd).

- c) **Rural Broadband:** The Rural Plan Steering Group together with TVRCC, made a successful 'Expression of Interest' bid to DefRA, in support of broadband for the south-west of the parish, including Wynyard. The cost of a consultant to write up the full bid will be £2,500 and the Chairman asked if Councillors would be prepared to make a contribution towards this. It was **agreed** that the Parish Council would contribute up to £500.
- d) **Christmas Fair:** The Friends of Elwick School requested permission to hold their annual event around The Green on the 30 November, format as last year. **Agreed.**
- e) **Christmas Tree Lights:** The Chairman requested that three more sets of lights and a transformer be purchased, at a cost of approximately £60.00 to increase the coverage on the Christmas Tree. **Agreed.**
- f) **Bus Service:** This would be an agenda item for the next meeting to consider future funding.
- g) **Parish Notice Board:** There had been further problems with the notice board – the situation will be monitored over the winter but, if no improvement, it may be necessary to purchase a replacement.
- h) **Hartbeat circulation:** It was noted that the Council's magazine was not being delivered to households to the west of the A19. **Action:** Cllr. Loynes to request that copies be left at the PO for these residents to collect.

7. **Ward Councillor's Report:**

Cllr. Loynes reported:

- (a) The Council did not retain/store the 'setts' taken up from older roads in the town.
 - (b) The Council wished to be informed of any further specific incidents of dog fouling.
 - (c) No further complaints had been received about damage to hedges caused by the refuse team.
 - (d) She was awaiting a further response regarding a mirror on Church Bank bend. Cllr. Musgrave suggested an alternative safety measure could be motion-sensitive traffic lights, powered by solar panels.
8. **Village Atlas update:** The Clerk reported that it was hoped to have all the sub-group reports completed by the end of November; these, together with other reports (of work undertaken by archaeologists, ecologists, geologists, hydrologists and volunteers), photographs, pictures, poems, maps, etc. would form the Village Atlas. A booklet was to be produced, which would make the information more accessible' to the general public, as well as both a Heritage Trail and Wildlife Trail, which would be outlined both in leaflets and on a large map of the area to be placed on the back of the Parish Notice Board. A celebration of the work was to take place in spring 2014, probably with a 'Picnic on the Green' and exhibition.
9. **Paths4Communities:** A written update was submitted by Chris Scaife, HBC Countryside Access Officer. He informed that one farmer had not yet signed a contract allowing the land to be fenced off and, as a result, one of the footpaths might not be completed within the funding timeline. The Clerk noted that, should both the proposed new footpaths not be completed, the Parish Council would probably have to return some, if not all, of the grant.

10. **Financial Report:**

The Clerk presented the financial transactions report as follows:

Receipts:

£0.00

Payments:

Bus Service	£860.00
Grass Cutting	£1,200.00
Room Hire	<u>£10.00</u>
	<u>£2,070.00</u>

The report was accepted.

11. **Correspondence:**

- (i) Natural England – change of address and requirement for logo to be used
 - (ii) HBC – Hartlepool Borough Definitive Map and Statement. **Agreed NOT** to offer to host a map.
 - (iii) Borough Solicitor – Openness and Transparency on personal interests – a guide for Councillors
 - (iv) Mr. & Mrs. John Hall re: damage caused by sycamore trees outside nos. 22-25 The Green.
- Action:** Clerk to arrange a site visit with Derek Warden, the Council's Arboriculturist.

- (v) North East Air Ambulance Service – request for funding. **Not supported.**
- (vi) HBC - notice of meeting of South & Central Community Forum – 10.00 am Wednesday 2 October.
- (vii) TVRCC – notice of AGM – 1.30 – 4.30 pm 4 October at George Reynolds Stadium, Darlington.

12. **Any Other Business:**

- (a) Cllr. H. Thompson reported that the three flower tubs in front of the Spotted Cow were not being maintained and were badly overgrown with weeds.
- (b) The Spotted Cow - The Clerk reported that she had received many complaints about the new colour scheme and the new pub sign which was deemed to be not in keeping with a Conservation area. Many complainants asked why the changes had been allowed. Councillors agreed that the complaints were valid. **Action:** Clerk to write to the Council's Conservation Officer, with a copy to the licensee, outlining the Parish Council's concerns.
- (c) Cllr. Hutchinson reported that the hedge in North Lane was in need of cutting. **Agreed** Chair to take appropriate action.
- (d) The Chairman reported that Borough Council's Standards Committee had been replaced by two independent people, one of whom wished to attend a Parish Council meeting. **Agreed.**

13. **Planning Applications:** H/2013/0439 – McOrville – no objections raised.

14. **Date of next meeting:** 7.00 pm, Monday 28th October 2013 at Elwick WI Hall.

The meeting closed at 8.50 pm.