

Elwick Parish Council
Minutes of Meeting held on Monday 24 February 2014 at Elwick School

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

In Attendance: Ward Cllr. B. Loynes, Mrs. West (Parish Clerk)

Also present: 10 members of the public.

1. Apologies for absence: Cllr. J. Londesbrough

2. Public Forum / Agenda item 5a: Parking around the Green

Phil Hepburn, HBC Parking Services Manager, presented proposals for resolving the parking issues. He first identified what the Council could and could not, by law, do about parking – prohibit, limit or leave unrestricted. Using a map of the village green he outlined the Council's proposals to restrict parking to residents only, during the hours of 8.00 am – 6.00 pm Monday to Saturday (this is the absolute limit allowed by law), for the full length of the south side of the green. Resident permits would be available at a cost of £20 per vehicle per year; those without permits would be allowed to wait for a maximum of 30 minutes. An area from the corner by the PO/shop through to the Spotted Cow would be the only area actually marked on the road; other areas would be covered by statutory notice boards, placed at every access point to the green, identifying the green as a restricted parking zone. The process would involve (i) consultation with every household & business on the south side of the green; if there were sufficient support for the proposals, then the next stage would be (ii) a legal order leading to (iii) formal adoption. The process would take many months. The Chair thanked Mr. Hepburn for his presentation and invited comments. These included concerns about:

- lack of controls after 6.00 pm when most of the problems occur;
- potential for the pub car parks to be used without permission by non-customers;
- large number of extra signs appearing in an already overcrowded street landscape, which is a conservation area;
- the proposal does little to address the problems of (a) damage to parked cars caused by vehicles too large for the narrow roads around the green or (b) improving the line of access to the McOrville car park; and
- how the restriction would be effectively monitored & enforced when the double-yellow lines already in place are not enforced.

The proposals will now go to stage (i) formal consultation.

No other business was raised and members of the public and Mr. Hepburn were thanked for their contributions.

3. Declarations of Interest: None.

4. Minutes of 27 January 2014: Agreed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

5. Matters Arising:

- a. (5b) **Bus service:** Cllrs. H. & R. Thompson reported that they had attended a meeting with Sue & Paul Little of Paul's Travel, together with some Ward Councillors. Sue had stated that the full cost of the service would be £22,000 for 2014/15 however, should the living wage be adopted, then the cost would immediately rise to £27,000. Income from concessionary fares is as yet unknown, but is likely to be at least £2,000 less than in 2013/14 (£9,000) as the average number of bus users has dropped by 20 per week from 2012/13. Ward Councillors agreed to provide £2000 towards the bus service in 2014/15 with a further £1,000 to be made available only if the route was rearranged to include West Park. It is therefore still not known whether the service will be run after April.

The Chair informed the meeting that he had been contacted since by Mike Blair, HBC, to the effect that Sue had reported that two Parish Councillors had suggested to her that concessionary fare numbers be inflated to increase income. The Cllrs. Thompson both refuted this, strongly supported by Ward Councillors who had attended the meeting. The matter was then fully and openly discussed; the view of the meeting was that the statement was slanderous. **Action:** Chair to write to Mike Blair and John Cavanagh to this effect.

- b. (5c) **Church Bank:** The amended quote for the extra work received from Mark White for the rebuilding of the steps was considerably higher than his estimate for the original work; the Chair had therefore asked for two separate quotes –viz: a quote for the building of two extra sets of two steps near the top of the bank and another for continuing the steps to the bottom of the bank.
 - c. (5d) **Trees on Green:** In the light of responses from two tree surgeons in regard to the pruning of the roots of the tree outside Village farm, it was agreed that Derek Wardle, HBC Tree Officer, be further consulted before a decision is taken. **Action:** Chair.
 - d. (14a) **CCTV:** Steve Mailen has agreed with the Chair to obtain a quote for the reinstatement of the CCTV at the shop.
 - e. (14b) **IT Training:** Cllr. H. Thompson reported that TVRCC is willing to provide computers and trainer. The meeting agreed to implement this service for the parish. **Action:** Cllr. H. Thompson to request TVRCC to proceed.
6. **Bonfire:** Following receipt of the letter, both publicans and shop owner had agreed to attend a meeting to discuss this issue. **Action:** Chair and Clerk to implement.
7. **Chairman's Report:** (i) **Martindale Farm:** The Chair put on record that he had written to express Councillors' strong opposition to any proposal to reintroduce a haulage business at the farm.
- (ii) **Waste bin at bottom of Church Bank:** the door of the bin is broken and needs repairing or replacing. **Action:** Cllr. Loynes to speak to Jon Wright, HBC.
- The Chair also asked that, as the road here was to be soon resurfaced, would it be possible to use the planings to resurface the car parking area at the bottom of Church Bank, where the bin is placed. **Action:** Cllr. Loynes to speak with Mike Blair, HBC.
- (iii) **North Lane:** The Chair had consulted John Pearson as to possibilities for improving the visual aspect of the land to the north side of North Lane, on the approach to the A19, where the flower bed had deteriorated badly. John has proposed that the area be grassed over and that the healthy shrubs be replanted near the hedge at the top of the bank; he provided a quote of £536.16 for the work. **Agreed unanimously.**
- (iv) **Village Farm:** A formal request has been received from Miss Harrison, for the temporary placement of a skip to the front of the house whilst a bathroom is being renovated. Whilst in principle Councillors had no objection, concern was expressed as to how a skip could be put in place without considerable damage to the green. **Action:** Cllr. Hutchinson to discuss with Miss Harrison.
8. **Ward Councillor's Report:** (a) Church Bank to be closed for four weeks from 1 March; (b) A culvert is to be placed next month, on the farm to the north side of North Lane, to take the surplus water under the road; (c) Planning permission had been granted in 2002 to the Spotted Cow for the boarding up of the windows; (d) A lamp has been replaced outside 42, The Green; (e) The beck at the bottom of Church Bank is to be cleared of rubble whilst then road repairs are undertaken.
9. **Village Maintenance Group:** Cllr H. Thompson reported that enquiries had been made as to possible options for appropriate fencing protection for the damaged corners of the green. Sam

Turner would make metal posts to order, but strongly recommended diamond boards between the posts rather than chains, as the latter were a safety risk for children. Willow Crete of Sunderland had sent examples of different metal post and rail styles that would be appropriate for use in a conservation area. **Action:** Chair to meet the VMG members on the green at 3.30 pm on Wed. 27 Feb. to discuss options.

10. Finance:

The Clerk presented the list of receipts and payments made since the January meeting as follows:

Income		Expenditure	
Rural Plan expenses	232.00	Bus Service	430.00
DCLG Grant (Rural Plan)	5,850.00	Tree Surgery	400.00
Grant from Ward Councillors	<u>3,000.00</u>	Village Atlas	4,338.60
	9,082.00	Village maintenance	180.00
		Rural Plan	<u>135.50</u>
			5,484.10

The Clerk also presented an up-to-date statement of transactions against budget; both reports **accepted**.

11. **Elections to Parish Council:** Notice of election by 14 April; close of nominations 12 noon, 24 April; Polling day 22 May. Seven Parish Councillors to be elected.

12. Correspondence:

- a) Police Commissioner requests to revisit the Parish Council – agreed to invite to next meeting.
- b) Planning Services Manager, HBC - offer of training for Parish Councillors on Planning applications and material planning considerations – agreed for after the May elections.
- c) Data Protection & Freedom of Information one-day training, 27 March – Clerk to attend.
- d) Newsletter from Unity Trust bank – noted.

13. **Planning:** H/2013/0414 – Nelson Farm wind turbine – no comment.

14. **AOB:** Cllr. Hutchinson reported that a man trimming hedges in North Lane, on behalf of the Parish Council, had been abused by a local resident; this was deprecated by members.

15. **Date of Next meeting:** 7.00 pm Monday 31 March at Elwick School.

The meeting closed at 9.02 pm.