

ELWICK PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of meeting held at 7.00pm on Monday 24 April 2017 at Elwick school

Present: Cllrs. J. Hall, P. Hutchinson (Chair), B. Irving, R. Musgrave, J. Sturrock, H. Thompson, R. Thompson

In Attendance: Mrs. M. West, Clerk; Ward Cllr. B. Loynes, Kelly Flockett, Wynyard Residents Association (WRA); PCSO Pete McBride & PCSO Darrell Aspery

Before the meeting commenced, the Chairman advised that the meeting had to end before 9.00pm, as the school had now implemented a charging policy, which meant that a 2-hour meeting would cost £50 and a longer meeting £90. Considerable concern was expressed at this, especially when the Clerk informed that the Parish Council would not be able to reclaim this expenditure from the Borough Council. She had therefore been in contact with the President of the WI, who had agreed that the PC might hold their future meetings (normally held on the last Monday of the month) at the WI hall for a fee of £10 per meeting.

1. Apologies: None

2. Public Forum: No issues raised.

3. Declarations of Interest: None declared.

At this point the Chairman invited the police representatives to speak. They had no incidents to report but informed that changes within the Force meant that PC Robinson was no longer dedicated solely to rural issues. All PCSOs now served the whole of Hartlepool, although PCSO Cath Jones still had overall responsibility for Farm Watch and other rural issues. The officers were asked about the problem of cars parking on pavements and also in such a manner as to block residents from entering/exiting their drives. They asked that the registration numbers of offending vehicles be recorded and the 101 telephone number used to report such incidents. Before leaving, they were warmly thanked for their attendance.

4. Minutes of 27 March 2017: Agreed and signed.

5. Matters Arising:

(a) Village fête – Cllr. H. Thompson reported on the first meeting of the Steering Group held on Thursday 6 April. All village organisations, together with Wynyard Residents' Association were represented. The date agreed was Sunday 25th June, from 2.00pm onwards. A wide range of activities were agreed for both children and adults, with a baking competition, dog show, Silver Band if available, and Strawberry Tea. The next meeting of the group will take place on Thursday 27th April at the WI Hall at 7.30 pm.

(b) AGM: The Parish Council AGM will now take place at the WI hall at 7.00pm on Monday 22nd May, and be followed by the monthly PC meeting.

(c) Annual Parish Meeting: The Clerk informed that the WI hall would not be available on 18th May. In the light of the cost of hiring the school, it was agreed to alter the date of the Parish Meeting. The preferred option, providing that Young farmers were not using the hall that evening, was for Tuesday 23rd May; if the hall was not available, then 1st June would be the fall-back position. **Action:** Clerk to contact WI to ascertain availability of the hall.

(d) Grantscape panel: Cllr. H. Thompson reported that a meeting between the CEO of Grantscape and all those nominated to be on the panel was to take place at Holmlea, on Wednesday 26th April.

(e) Christmas Tree: Following a discussion about the current state of the tree, and consideration of options such as using another tree on the green, or purchasing a tree each year, the decision on whether to remove the large tree was deferred for a year, as it was felt

that the smaller tree was not yet large enough to provide an impact.

(f) Flower tubs: The Clerk reported that she had now purchased 28 large plastic 'oak' tubs, sufficient to replace all the tubs around the village, with the exception of the three groups of four at each entrance to the village. This would save considerable expenditure over the next ten years or more, as these tubs would not rot and would not require annual painting. The Clerk was thanked, and it was **agreed** to start the transfer of tubs immediately, with a view to having as many replaced this season. Cllrs. Irving and H. Thomson informed that the landlord of the McOrville was keen to adopt the four tubs at the west end of the green and also wanted a tub outside his pub; this was welcomed. A working party is to meet at 6.00pm on Tuesday 2nd May, with a view to replacing the tubs on the south side of the green.

(g) Play Equipment: The HBC Officer had not yet submitted costings for the repair of the swings. It was suggested that replacement/additional equipment, particularly for younger children could be the subject of a Grantscape bid.

(h) Martindale: The Clerk informed that no response to her letter, sent by Recorded Delivery to his work address, had been received from Mr. Adamson. The Borough Solicitor had informed that the Parish Council had the right to take whatever action they deemed necessary. Councillors **agreed** that the removal of the garden on the green should be implemented immediately, with the bill for this being forwarded to Mr. Adamson. **Action:** Clerk to arrange removal of garden and to invoice Mr. Adamson.

(i) Wildlife Garden: Mr. Howe has asked that his name be removed from the Notice Board in the Wildlife Garden as he does not wish to be associated with a place that is being spoilt by the few children who ignore the request to respect the wildlife, run all over the garden, smash trees and shrubs, and ride over the raised beds. Councillors **agreed** to his request, but expressed their sadness. It was further **agreed** to discuss this at the Parish Meeting.

- 6. Chairman's Report:** **(i)** The Chairman reported that he had attended the Liaison meeting with the Leader of the Borough Council, at which he had pushed for all the pavements in North Lane to be resurfaced. He was informed by Mike Blair, HBC, that the footpaths are inspected regularly and currently meet safety standards. Cllr Hall stated that the pavement at the corner of North Lane and the green, outside Village Farm was tilted so much it was dangerous. **(ii)** The new Primary School at Wynyard is expected to pay for traffic calming measures as part of the planning agreement. **(iii)** The Borough Council is willing to place dog waste bins at Wynyard, once it is known where these are required. Mrs. Flockett informed that such a discussion had been held by WRA and agreement reached; she was asked to inform the Clerk where they were required. **Action:** Mrs Flockett to forward e-mail stating where the dog waste bins should be placed.

7. Ward Councillor's Report: Cllr Loynes reported that:

- Dropped kerbs had now been installed, and that the blue setts had been incorporated.
- Double yellow lines opposite the school were in process of being placed.
- The damaged grit bin on the green had now been removed and would be replaced with a new bin at the start of the winter.
- The 'bend' sign on the road to Hartlepool had been replaced, and the painted on-road signs were to be renewed.
- The trees in North Lane had now been pruned, except for one which, due to a car parked close by, could not be accessed.
- The High Volt wind farm had been built prior to community benefit being required, therefore there is no funding, available to residents, attached to this wind farm.
- All companies working on the development at the end of valley Drive had been contacted informing them that they must NOT use the road through Elwick to access the A19.
- If Wynyard wished to form their own Parish Council they would need to contact the Borough Solicitor.
- The lampposts had been ordered but not yet received, therefore a temporary replacement would be installed. She stressed that this was a temporary measure only and that the

special lampposts matching the others in the Conservation area would be placed as soon as received.

The Chairman asked Mrs. Flockett, in an advisory capacity, whether there were any issues for Wynyard residents. She reported none, other than the Wynyard Residents' Association had met the previous week. She was asked to report back that Elwick PC had not received an invitation to attend.

8. **Village Maintenance Group Report:** Cllr Irving reported that the lights on Church Bank were still not working. A grey bin full of bricks had been dumped opposite the Playing Field two weeks previously; this had been reported to the Borough Council but was still there. Cllr. Hall reported that he had been so dissatisfied with the second grass cut of the green that he had made a complaint to the Clerk. She had followed up this complaint immediately, and the next day the green had been re-cut to a much better standard. He commended the grass-cutters on their quick response, and hoped that the standard now set would be maintained. He reported that several householders at the north-east end of the green were still either putting their waste bins out too early and/or leaving them out for several days after collection day, and also noted that some dog walkers were again leaving dog waste on the footpath in the ghyll.
9. **Financial Report:** The Clerk presented the financial reports, which were accepted. She also reported that (i) the annual VAT claim had been submitted to HMRC, that (ii) the Parish Council now had to deduct PAYE tax from her pay, as the pay rise she had received in the financial year 2016/17 pushed her over the threshold. She had informed HMRC of her altered pay level and had paid the PAYE required. She also noted that HMRC preferred payments to be made electronically, and that (iii) she had underpaid herself £250 in 2016/17 due to a misunderstanding of the basis of the calculations made by the Remuneration Group. When this was explained, Councillors **agreed** to meet the underpayment with immediate effect.

Income	£	Expenditure	£
Balance of Petty Cash to bank	14.94	Bank Charges	18.00
Precept, Concurrent & HS Grant	<u>16,997.00</u>	Broadband Line	30.48
Total	17,011.94	Rural Community Transport	1,069.20
		Administration	124.03
		Grass Cutting	650.00
		Room Hire	70.00
		Village Maintenance	502.82
		Wildlife Garden	<u>100.00</u>
		Total	2,564.53

10. **Annual Audit:** (a) The Clerk reported that she had received the Annual Return form from BDO, which would be completed once she had received the final bank Statement for the financial year ending 31st March 2017. (b) The first section of the Return is an **Annual Governance Statement**, which Councillors had to complete. This comprised nine questions, which she then read to the meeting and asked Councillors to respond to each in turn. The first seven questions were answered in the affirmative, the last two were felt to be not-applicable to Elwick PC at this time. The Chairman then signed and dated the completed statement, and noted that the Minute reference would be 11(b). (c) She noted that the Annual Accounts would be passed to the Internal Auditor as soon as he was available., and the Internally Audited accounts should be available for the AGM.
11. **Correspondence:** (a) Pensions Regulator – requiring automatic enrolment of all employees - noted. (b) CALC – requesting the PC to join – **not agreed**. (c) Zurich Insurance – reminding that cost of insurance is to rise due to 2% increase in Insurance Premium Tax.
12. **Planning Applications:**
 - H/2017/0158 - Oak gazebo with seating, Wynyard – No Objection
 - H/2017/0154 – Plot 14, Wellington Gardens, Wynyard – No Objection
 - H/2017/0166 – temporary Classroom and parking for school, Wynyard – No objection

13. Matters of Concern to Councillors: None raised.

14. Date of next meeting: 7.00 pm, Monday 22nd May 2017 at Elwick WI Hall, immediately following the Annual Meeting.