

ELWICK PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of meeting held at 7.00pm on Monday 23 October 2017 at Elwick WI Hall

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

In Attendance: Mrs. M. West, Clerk.

1. Apologies: Cllrs Sturrock and H. Thompson; Mrs. K. Flockart (WRA)

2. Public Forum: No members of public present

3. Declarations of Interest: None.

4. Minutes of 25th September 2017: Acceptance proposed by Cllr J. Hall, seconded by Cllr R. Musgrave and unanimously agreed and signed by the Chairman.

5. Matters Arising:

(a) Benches: Cllr Hall reported that 9 benches around the village had been refurbished and presented the receipts for the materials he had purchased for the task, together with an invoice for the time. Councillors agreed unanimously that Ben Forbes had done an excellent job, and he was warmly thanked.

(b) Wildlife Garden: The Clerk reported that Wildlife Gardening Services had, as requested, treated the meadow area of the garden, and would return later to reseed it with flowering plants, and that Mr. Gross would be refurbishing the carved bench as soon as the weather allowed. She noted that it appeared that yet another tree to the rear of the garden had a branch torn down.

(c) Gas-powered Electricity sub-station: The Clerk reported that this planning application had been passed by the Planning Committee. The recommendation of the Planning Officer had been set aside and the objections of the Parish Councils of Hart and Elwick were deemed irrelevant. The Chairman of the HBC Regeneration Committee, who had spoken in support of the application, had read from a script, believed to have been handed to him by the applicant's agent. She had therefore, at the request of Parish Councillors from both parishes, submitted a formal complaint about the procedure, through the Borough Council's website.

(d) Bridge over the Beck: The Clerk reported that Chris Scaife (HBC Access Officer) had looked at the damage done by horses (2 broken planks) and would instigate repairs as soon as possible; he was also minded to install some fencing/barriers to prevent horses from accessing the footbridge. The overgrowth on the footpath between Elwick and Dalton Piercy had been addressed.

6. Chairman's Report: Cllr. Hutchinson reported that he had attended a Parish Liaison meeting last Wednesday, at which he had raised the issues of heavy goods vehicles & speeding through the village, and the proposed By-Pass. He was assured that the latter would be started early next year, as soon as the funds were obtained. He noted that Cllr Walker, Chairman of Greatham PC, had raised concerns about HBC publicity materials, which always referred to the town of Hartlepool rather than the Borough. Cllr Hutchinson felt this was a reflection of an attitude prevalent amongst both members and Officers, viz that the rural areas were not of particular importance to Hartlepool, and had led to the down-grading of the Parish Liaison meetings, originally set up as an opportunity for closer consultation between the Borough Council and Parish Councils through meetings of elected leaders at both levels, to one at which fairly minor issues, normally dealt with by a Clerk, were being brought by some PCs and the meeting was now chaired by an Assistant Director, rather than the leader of the Borough Council. It was **agreed** that the Chairman should discuss this concern with other parish Council chairs before deciding what, if action was needed.

The Chairman further reported that he had attended a consultation event at Billingham, on the Stockton Local Plan, which could affect Elwick residents living in Wynyard. The Clerk had also attended the same event, though later in the day. Two items of interest had been noted; firstly,

that the Plan included the installation of traffic lights at several of the roundabouts on the A689 and a proposal to install a pedestrian bridge over the dual-carriageway. The Clerk had suggested to Stockton Planning Officers that this was probably not a good idea, and that as traffic lights were already planned, a pedestrian-controlled crossing at each roundabout would be more useful and cost effective. Wynyard Resident Association members present at the consultation had vehemently opposed the idea of a footbridge. It was therefore **agreed** that the Clerk should submit a proposal to SBC for pedestrian-controlled crossings rather than a footbridge. Secondly, the two Borough Councils, Hartlepool and Stockton, were working together on a Master Plan for Wynyard. The Chairman expressed concern that Elwick PC had not been party to this, and that it supported his view that the parish Councils were being ignored in major areas of decision-making that affected their residents. It was **agreed** that the Clerk should write to the HBC Chief Executive, Gill Alexander, raising these concerns. **Actions:** Chairman to contact Chairmen of other Parish Councils in Hartlepool in regard to status of Parish Liaison meetings and role of Clerks vs Chairmen, Clerk to write to CEO, HBC re Wynyard Master Plan.

7. Ward Councillors' Report: No Ward Councillor present.

8. Village Maintenance Group Report: Cllr Irving reported that the rusty tin bath was still in the Playing Field, despite having been raised as a matter of concern at every meeting since June and that it now contained another trough; she felt it to be a genuine Health & Safety issue. **Agreed:** Clerk to raise the matter again directly with Officers and Ward Councillors, Cllr Hall noted that a pile of old bricks had been dumped in North Lane, on the right-hand side going out of the village. **Action:** Clerk to inform HBC Officers of both issues.

9. Financial Report: The Clerk presented the monthly reports, which were **accepted**.

Income	£	Expenditure	£
Miscellaneous (G. Adamson)	465.00	Grass Cutting (2 cuts)	650.00
Miscellaneous (B. Irving)	28.00	Wildlife Garden maintenance	500.00
Wayleaves (2016 & 2017)	<u>25.00</u>	Room Hire	<u>60.00</u>
Total	518.00	Total	1,210.00

No response had yet been received from XLN in regard to the overpayment for Broadband. A PAYE Paying-In book had finally been received from HMRC, as well as a letter regarding a move from annual to quarterly/monthly payments of PAYE. As this tax has always been paid quarterly, at the same time as the Clerk's salary, this was somewhat confusing!

10. Annual Budget Proposals: The Clerk was asked to send an e-mail to each Parish Councillor, about those items under consideration for the 2018/19 budget, as well as a reminder as to what a parish council may legally undertake. Items currently under consideration:

- Repairs to the roads crossing the north side of the green
- A bonded-gravel surface on the road down the south side of the green, to be more in keeping with the Conservation status of the green
- Refurbishment of the cinder paths at each end of the village
- New flower tubs to replace the remaining oak tubs
- Benches in the Playing Field and at the top of North Lane at the edge of the village
- A hand gritter (to allow pavements to be gritted in winter)
- More play equipment for the Playing Field
- Somewhere to store equipment owned by the Parish Council.

All were asked to consult villagers for further ideas and, if at all possible, to inform the Clerk in advance of the November meeting, in order to allow her to obtain costings.

Action: Clerk to e-mail Parish Councillors as requested.

11. Correspondence:

- (i) Pensions Regulator – rise in minimum pension contributions – **noted**.
- (ii) Mrs. Boagey – concern about poor parking in The Paddock, causing obstruction to large vehicles including the refuse wagon. **Action:** Clerk to write to all residents in The Paddock,

HBC Officers and the police.

(iii) Great North Air Ambulance – request for financial support – declined.

12. Planning Applications:

H/2017/0548 – Micro-brewery, Benknowle Farm – supported

H/2017/0536 – 19, Manorside, Wynyard – no objection

For information: Diversion of Public Footpath No 20 – Order approved.

13. Matters of Concern to Councillors: Cllr Hutchinson noted that no application had been received to date for permission to hold a bonfire on the green, and proposed that no such permission be given. **Unanimously agreed.**

Cllr Musgrave mentioned that the road up to the Graham's house, on the north side of the green, was in urgent need of repair, as where a gas main had been installed some years ago the road was now collapsing. It was noted that, as this road is on the village green, the parish Council is legally responsible for its maintenance, and therefore it should be included in next year's budget proposals.

Cllr Irving stated that Mr. Tom Hall had raised with her again concern about the level of traffic noise emanating from the A19; the volume of traffic, and thus the noise, had increased substantially since the second tunnel under the Tyne had opened. It was **agreed** that the landowners of the Fishponds Field should be asked for permission to plant further trees and shrubs along the hedgerow bordering the field/A19, explaining the negative impact the noise was having on residents of Elwick and, in particular, North Close. Further, the Clerk also to write to Highways England. **Action:** Clerk to write to Howells and Highways England.

Cllr Irving reported that Mr. Stockdale had offered a young oak tree to the village, currently in a tub in her garden. It was **agreed** to accept this kind offer, with a view to replanting the oak in the Playing Field along the boundary fence.

14. Date of Next Meeting: 7.00pm, Monday 27th November at WI Hall.

Meeting closed at 8.52 pm.