

ELWICK PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of Meeting held at 7.00pm on Thursday 31st October 2019 at Elwick WI Hall

Present: Cllrs. H. Thompson, (Chairman), D. Atkins, E. Hurst, B. Irving, P. Hutchinson, R. Thompson

In Attendance: M. West, Clerk

The Chairman opened the meeting with thanks to all Councillors for agreeing to send in reports a week in advance of the meeting in order to allow these to be circulated and read beforehand, thus saving valuable meeting time.

1. **Apologies for Absence:** Cllr Musgrave and Ward Cllrs Loynes, Stokell and Young - **accepted**
2. **Declarations of Interest:** Cllrs H and R. Thompson declared a personal and prejudicial interest in Item 4(v) on the Agenda – Refurbishment of Footpaths.
3. **Minutes of 26th September 2019:** Cllr Atkins proposed that on Page 2, Line3, the word consultation should be removed, as it was a repetition. This being agreed, it was **then RESOLVED** to accept the amended Minutes as a true and accurate record. The amended Minutes were signed by the Chairman.
4. **Matters Arising:**
 - (a) **Trees on the Green:** The Clerk reported that Derek Wardle had inspected the three trees of concern the previous afternoon. He had agreed that the tree on Church Bank needed to be pruned back to provide clear line of sight for drivers, of the Children playing sign, and informed that he would notify HBC Highways Department of this. He had inspected the Horse Chestnut on the north side of the green and deemed it healthy, despite the large cracks running up the length of the tree; however he concurred with the view that a branch overhanging the road put the tree out of balance and agreed to allow it to be pruned by up to one third its length. Most worryingly, he had identified the Ash tree as, in fact, a Lime tree, and furthermore it was infected with the Kretzschmaiadeusta fungus and would need to be removed as soon as possible, as the fungus destroyed both the roots and heartwood. The Clerk thought it would be an expensive job, but there was money in the budget; she also noted that Mrs. Stockdale had some time ago, offered the village an oak sapling her grandson had grown, and the Clerk felt this would be a suitable replacement tree for this section of the green. It was **resolved** that the tree must be removed as a matter of urgency and the Clerk requested to expedite the matter and to collect the oak sapling if it was still available. **Action:** Clerk to arrange for the tree works.
 - (b) **Car Parking survey in North Lane:** almost all households in the crescent had responded to the survey, with only one in support of the proposal to make part of the green area accessible for parking. Almost everyone had added comments on the lines of there already being adequate parking whilst some had expressed concern that the Refuse Lorry found it difficult to access the crescent, especially when cars were parked in the road, and asked whether the corners of the grassed area could be reduced. The Chairman proposed a site visit be arranged with Ward Councillors and HBC officers to assess this. This proposal was unanimously supported. **Action:** Clerk to arrange site visit as proposed.
 - (c) **A19 gap closures:** The Chairman noted that she had written to Gill Alexander about the impact of the closures on villagers, the dangerous state of Hart Back Lane and the problematic new traffic system at the A19/A179 junction. Formal copies of the letter had gone to Grant Shapps, Minister for Transport, Mike Hill MP, Highways England, The Tees Valley Mayor, the Leaders of both Durham County and Hartlepool Borough

Councils and our own Ward Councillors, a copy of the letter was also forwarded to Parish Councillors and placed on the Parish Noticeboard in the village.

(d) Drains on Church Bank: The Borough Council appears to have resolved the flooding problem – at least for the time being, though no report on what had actually been done had been received.

(e) Footpath refurbishment: The Clerk informed that the contract had been issued and accepted; the work had since been delayed due to the timescale for making the bespoke fencing. The contractor had stated that the work would commence no later than 1st December, possibly earlier and would be completed before Christmas, weather permitting.

(f) Digital Mapping Project: The Clerk reported that all signed contracts had now been received by Pear Technology and that she was expecting the equipment to be delivered within the next couple of weeks. Potential dates/times for training in the use of both hardware and software should also soon be available; these would be forwarded to all Parish Councillors.

(g) Sponsored Waste Bin: The Clerk reported that Mrs Sturrock had now asked the PC to select an appropriate bin; she had undertaken some research into what was available and tabled a number of options. All agreed that the bin should have a large enough aperture to take the biggest plastic milk containers, should have a lid and should be secured to prevent it blowing over. The preferred option was a pole-mounted, green bin.

Action: Clerk to provide Mr & Mrs Sturrock with this information.

5. Public Forum: No members of the public were present.

6. Our Community Matters project: The Clerk reported that Janice McColm, TVRA, had informed her that the Hartlepool Sea Cadets were keen to participate and that the PC's role would be to recruit the over 50s to the project. At the first meeting of the project group, suggestions as to a project theme would be sought and jointly agreed. Once the project was completed, which should take no more than 6 weeks, there was a requirement to disseminate the project outcomes to at least 100 people. After a brief discussion it was felt that, with the 8th May 2020 being the 75th Anniversary of D Day, and already declared the Spring Bank Holiday, this could be a suitable theme for the project. This would mean that the project need not start until the February half-term, when the young people would be more likely to be available during the day. It was agreed that a recruitment flyer be produced for every household in the village, as well as an article for Village Life. **Action:** The Chairman and Clerk to draft article and Cllr R. Thompson to produce flyer.

7. Chairman's Report: The Chairman reported that: (a) she had already reported on the survey under Matters Arising; (b) she had attended an informal meeting with SBC and HBC Planning officers and members of Elwick and Wynyard PCs re the Wynyard Master Plan, a two-hour meeting. We viewed the plan and listened to the officers. There was discussion re the wide distances across Wynyard and Councillors felt that another entrance was desirable at the west end of the A689. Two different positions for the school were in the Plan and we were all very against the one near to the road. There was continuing talk around crossings and we were told that the footbridge was still going ahead. All Councillors expressed strong views about the need for community facilities. Nothing new; (c) she was still getting reports of traffic backing up onto the A19 at peak times on the A179 slip road – extremely dangerous, and near misses at the traffic lights at the top, miles and miles of extra driving, and the desperate state of the road from Worset Lane to the A179. It should be noted that the gaps are open both north and south of Elwick which very much belies the statement that they were closed for safety reasons! (Interesting to look back on the letter that the PC circulated to residents of Elwick in March this year regarding the gap closures. That flyer warned of the very issues

now materialising!); (d) she had been very pleased to see the Police presence in the Village recently, which on one day included a large blue camera van at peak time.

8. **Ward Councillors' Report:** Cllr Young had submitted a written report on behalf of all three Ward Councillors, who were unable to be present due to there being a Full HB Council meeting that evening. Cllr R. Thompson suggested that EPC meetings should be convened on dates to avoid Full Borough Council meetings in future, as the absence of Ward Councillors was keenly felt.

The Councillors' report covered the 38 points raised at the September (and earlier) meeting, and the Chairman invited colleagues to comment on each in turn. Some of the items were contested, others required further elucidation. All these were noted and it was agreed that the Chairman and Clerk should liaise over a formal response to the Ward Councillors. **Action:** Chairman and Clerk to respond to Ward Councillors' Report.

9. **Social Activities Committee Report:** Cllr R. Thompson reported that the SAC had not met since the Gig on the Green event, as Dave Woodward, a key member for this event, had been out of the country. A Ceilidh was planned for 30th November, a ceilidh band and hall booked and the event publicised in Village Life. As it now appeared that Dave would be out of the country until mid-November, the next meeting would be held without him, on Wednesday 6th November at 7.00pm. The annual Children's Christmas party and Mince Pies, Mulled wine and Santa for Christmas Eve were also under development. Cllrs Atkins and Hurst informed of a Christmas Celebration event to be held at the Care Home at Wynyard, 2-4.30om on Sunday 22nd December.

10. **Village Maintenance Group Report:** Cllr Irving reported that two No parking signs had now been replaced, but a further two were required. The broken bollard had been replaced and the damaged flower tub outside Old School, House had been removed as requested.

Tasks not yet completed were:

- Tree trimmings, believed to be from 6, The Paddock, left on roadside in Manor Close
- Pavements throughout the village in a very poor state
- Replacement of sign on Playing Field fence
- Replacement of 2 bars on main gate into Playing Field – a H&S hazard as a small child could easily get through onto the road
- New seat not yet in place on Playing Field
- Zip wire pole and seat missing
- Extra bark chippings required, especially under the basket swing
- Lid on bin in Playing Field still missing
- Bench on left hand bank has disappeared into undergrowth
- Rubble still there though now covered by weeds and ivy
- Paths at each end of village green and fence on Church Bank not yet renovated
- Several drains around the village were blocked.

Several of these issues had been discussed under the Ward Councillors' report. Cllr Hutchinson reported that the Playing Field gate was deemed beyond repair; it was an unusual size and would probably require a new gate to be tailor-made. He would provide the Clerk with the names of potential suppliers. He further reported that the recent heavy rains had led to flooding in North Close once again, the surface water no longer going down the new gully installed by HBC – he thought it likely that the field trench dug by the Borough Council had been damaged. The Chairman noted that the cover appeared to be missing from a narrow gully on Church Bank, opposite Church Bank Cottage and, whilst the flooding on Church Bank seems to have been resolved, there were many blocked gullies around the village. In the light of these issues, she proposed that Ward Councillors and HBC officers should be invited to make a site visit to the village. Cllr Irving noted that the Borough Council had previously been asked, in vain, to advise when

the gullies were due to be cleaned, in order to ensure that vehicles were removed to allow access. She proposed that the PC should purchase a number of cones to be used for such occasions. This was agreed. **Actions:** Cllr Hutchinson to provide information to Clerk on gate suppliers, Clerk to report drain and flooding issues to HBC officers and request a site visit be arranged; Clerk to request 48 hours' notice be provided of future visits by the gully cleaner and purchase cones.

11. Wynyard Report: Cllr Atkins reported a new issue, viz residents have reported flooding on Wynyard Woods near the temporary school site. This has happened repeatedly with the rains and will form a skating rink come winter. A resident has forwarded pictures to Cllr Young.

All other issues had been previously raised but no action has been seen. These include:

- Builders signage and hoardings – no progress.
- Wynyard Woods street sign, first junction LHS has no street name plate in it and is crooked.
- Painting of street lights. This is the responsibility of WES, can HBC pursue?
- Results of the traffic survey on the A689. Can Parish Councillors have a report please? Also, confirm that the next survey will extend to the West of the west gate roundabout to provide the base level of traffic arriving at the roundabout from Sedgfield and the speed at which it is approaching the roundabout. No progress with a zebra crossing (or similar) across Wynyard Woods at the junction with the new road.
- There are 2 playparks pending under Section 106. The Wimpey play park was due to be completed in first week of November yet had no ground broken as at today. HBC officers had stated that they would take enforcement action should this slip; it has slipped, so has enforcement action been taken? The Dere Street play park is imminent. Will HBC adopt these parks after construction? Or who will be responsible long term?
- Chris Scaife has been to see the sub-standard footpath from Wynyard Village West Gate to the Castle Eden walkway. Wynyard councillors would like the cost of the required upgrade to be sent to them along with an outline of the works required. This is with a view to assisting with the funding of the upgrade.
- Would Wynyard children, who live within the Borough of Hartlepool, wishing to go to school in Hartlepool get a free school bus?
- Any news regarding the planning application by David Wilson / Barrett (H/2019/0226)?

12. Financial Reports: Cllr Atkins noted that the VAT reclaim seemed to have been omitted from the latest Actual against Budget report; the Clerk apologised for the omission. With this amendment it was resolved to accept the reports.

Receipts	£	Payments	£
	0.00	D.M. Ireland (Flowers & card for 60 th Wedding anniversary)	15.00
		CDALC (Clerk CiLCA Mentoring)	170.00
		Mazars (External Audit)	288.00
		D.M. Ireland (salary July-Sept)	558.88
		HMRC (PAYE)	139.72
		Bank Service charge	18.00
		Affordable Landscapes (grass cutting June-August)	673.00
		Affordable Landscapes (grass cutting September)	780.00
		Total:	5,642.60

13. Proposals for 2020 Budget: The Clerk asked that Councillors forward any suggestions for next year's budget in order that these could be costed before decisions were made at the November meeting. Immediate suggestions were the refurbishment of the current Wildlife Garden to make it more attractive to residents, one issue of the Wynyard

magazine and the refurbishment of the road corner at the north-east end of the village green. **Action:** All Councillors to provide suggestions for PC activities in 2020-2021 year to the Clerk at least one week before the November meeting.

- 14. Correspondence:** (i) A request from Cleveland Police to circulate posters asking for help in the disappearance of a Middlesbrough woman – the Clerk had placed posters on the notice board, in the Tea Room, both pubs and the WI hall. (ii) A request for people to apply to join the Tees Valley Local Access Forum. It was agreed that the information be placed on the notice board.

15. Planning Applications:

H/2019/0365 – land at Wynyard Park, North Wynyard – no objection but concerns about the loss of habitat – needs a condition to replace lost habitat if approved. It was noted that this application, together with application H/2019/0226 if approved, would bring the total number of houses on the north side of Wynyard to the maximum allowed in the Hartlepool Local Plan.

H/2019/0390 - Plot 5, The Beaumont, Wynyard Park – no comment

H/2019/0423 - felling of tree covered by TPO 94, at 21 Hillcrest Grove, Elwick - support

H/2019/0433 - Plot 2, The Beaumont, Wynyard Park – no comment

H/2019/0441 - Plot 30, Wellington Gardens, Wynyard Park – no comment

H/2019/0449 - 15, Snowdrop Avenue, Wynyard – no comment

- 16. Matters of Concern to Councillors:** The Chairman noted that no application had been received for a bonfire on the village green and no permission was granted. Councillors felt that all issues had been covered elsewhere in the meeting.

- 17. Date and Time of Next Meeting:** 7.00pm Thursday 28th November at Elwick WI Hall.

The meeting closed at 9.28pm.