**ELWICK PARISH COUNCIL**

**Minutes of Meeting held at 7.00 pm on Monday 27th September 2021**

**at Elwick WI Hall**

*(Social Distancing was observed throughout)*

**Present:**Cllrs. H. Thompson, P. Hutchinson, B. Irving, R. Musgrave, R. Thompson, A. Williamson and D. Woodward.

**In Attendance:** M. Ireland, Clerk.

1. **Apologies:** PCSO Cath Jones
2. **Public Forum:** No members of public present.
3. **Declarations of Interest:** Cllrs H & R. Thompson - Item 6(a).
4. **Police Report:**  PCSO Jones had submitted a written report in which she noted that an incident involving intimidation by a cold caller and a burglary at a non-residential location had been reported, along with one ASB incident. The Ward Police newsletter is available at: cleveland.police.uk.
5. **Minutes of 19th July 2021**: Cllr Williamson proposed, with Cllr R. Thompson seconding, the acceptance of these minutes. It was unanimously **resolved** to accept these as a true record.
6. **Matters Arising: (a) Church Bank** - The Clerk reported that she had received no response from any tree surgeons she had contacted, but that John Pearson had a contact and would ask him. Cllr Hutchinson suggested contacting Tim Davies, a qualified tree surgeon and provided his contact number, for which information the Clerk thanked him. Cllr R. Thompson reported that he now has someone who will tarmac the top third of the footpath but, in response to a question from Cllr Woodward, as yet had no timescale for this. All noted this was now a matter that needed to be addressed urgently, before the first frost.

**(b) Village Green protection** – Cllr Hutchinson reported that he was still trying to get hold of someone at the quarry, but the matter was in progress.

**(c) Greening of Elwick** – The Clerk showed the signs she was planning to place on the areas identified by Councillors, but also proposed that these be put on the digital map. Both were approved. **(d) Parish Plan** – the Clerk noted that she had circulated the draft Parish Plan in June, but had not yet received any additional points to add. She read out the points currently included; Councillors agreed that this was a fair summary and approved it being put on the parish website. It was noted that the plan was a rolling document that should be updated every year. Cllr Williamson stated that he though the Plan needed actions and timescales adding and agreed to forward his proposals to colleagues and the Clerk. He further proposed that the website be updated and linked to the Elwick Village Face Book page, managed by Cllr Woodward. **Actions:** Cllr Williamson to forward 5-year planning profile to all and to meet with Clerk to discuss potential improvements to the website.

**(e) Wynyard Tree planting** – the Chairman reported on further correspondence received from Kit Lofthouse, Chairman of Wynyard (Stockton) Parish Council, in which she explained that SBC had not allowed monies to be transferred from Grindon PC to Wynyard PC, and she expected HBC to follow suit. The Clerk informed that she was in process of setting up a meeting between herself, the Democratic Services and Precept Officers of HBC to discuss the process to be undertaken and the finances involved. Councillors **agreed** to take no further action until further information was available.

**(f) Sponsored bench for North Lane** – the Clerk informed that she had recently contacted the supplier for an update and had been informed the delay had been due to lack of material supplies but that this was now improving and the bench should be delivered by the end of October.

**(g) School parking issues** – The Clerk informed the matter had been passed to the police. It was agreed she should write once again to the school expressing the PC’s concerns for the safety of children and pedestrians. **Action:** Clerk to write to school.

1. **Queen Elizabeth ll Platinum Jubilee**: The Clerk passed around a brochure being circulated by the organisers of the Jubilee celebrations, which covered the lighting of beacons, an international song competition and pipers and choirs delivering specially commissioned music. It was felt that the only viable lace for a beacon would be Beacon Hill, where one had been lit for the Silver Jubilee. Cllr Woodward suggested that an event be organised on the church car park, from which people would be able to see the beacon. Another option discussed was to ask the Rising Stars to perform the Jubilee Song. After a brief discussion it was **resolved** to delegate the organisation of appropriate events to the Social Activities Committee. **Action:** Social Activities Committee to undertake organisation of Jubilee events.
2. **Ward Councillors’ Reports**: The Clerk reported no reports received.
3. **Chairman’s Report**: The Chairman reported as follows:

* There had been a great response to the ‘Gig on the Green’ on 11th September, which Cllr R. Thompson would report on.
* Tees Flex had held a session in the village on Wednesday22nd. Only 5 people had attended, which was disappointing, but all had aired their concerns. The Tees Flex staff were keen to make things work better in the future. All were pleased to hear that more secondary destinations had now been added, but residents were concerned to see Pick-Ups and timings improved. At present, a passenger could wait up to half-an-hour to be picked-up. Cllr Williamson said the Tees Flex App was very accurate, and gave excellent and up-to-minute information about where the bus was. It was noted that not everyone had a smart phone, so could not use the App. Cllr Williamson offered to have his mobile phone number published so he could act as a contact point for anyone wishing to book a trip – he could call the bus and let the passenger know exactly when it was due. Councillors thought this a very generous offer.
* A large tree branch from the horse chestnut on the green opposite the WI Hall, came down at 7.45am on Thursday 23rd September and blocked the road. Local famers, Andrew Sturrick and Brian Claughan cleared it from the road and reported it to HBC. HBC staff responded quickly and disposed of the branch with a chipper. The Clerk contacted Derek Wardle who came out later that day to assess the tree. Apparently, the tree is infected with canker; it now needs balancing out, but only has a few years more. **Action:** Clerk to arrange for tree surgeon to balance the tree.
* She had been very pleased to received a ‘Thank You’ card from Hart PC for hosting the afternoon tea with Jill Mortimer MP.

1. **Red Gap Projects:** The Clerk reported that the Village Road Repair had now been completed and one of the residents affected had been very complimentary about the work and the Parish Council; both she and the Chairman had taken lots of photographs, and, once the invoice had been received, these would be forwarded to Grantscape and the project closed. The carousel had been ordered and was expected to be delivered and installed next month; the ground needed to be cleared in preparation; she and Cllr Woodward had agreed the location already. She further informed that she had a concern about the Soft-fall Surface replacement. It now appeared that the area not only had to be cleared of the bark, but that a stone surface was required for the Rhino Mulch to be laid on – this had not been mentioned when in discussion with the company earlier in the year. It was not absolutely necessary, but was highly recommended, as this would prevent movement which could affect the new surface. To save disposal costs, the Clerk offered to have the bark put into her large bottom garden, which was unused at present. Following a brief discussion, it was agreed that:
2. The Clerk should discuss with John Pearson, the cost of removing and disposing of the bark, first asking him to make a few test holes to assess the underlying ground.
3. A price should be obtained for the stone (dolomite) required; The company recommended at 100cm layer.

Cllr Musgrave volunteered to obtain the price of stone and delivery. The Clerk informed that, for Health & Safety, the Playing Field would have to closed to all from the date the carousel was to be installed until the soft-fall area had been resurfaced. **Actions:** Cllr Musgrave to obtain costs of stone, Clerk to discuss the removal of the bark and testing the underlying ground with John Pearson.

1. **Social Activities Committee Report:** Cllr R. Thompson reported that the ‘Gig on the Green’ had been a great success, with most people in a celebratory mood. The weather had been kind and combining the music with a mini-fete had worked well. He tabled the notes of the last SAC meeting, which had been held to debrief after the event and start planning the next. All involved were warmly thanked for their endeavours – the teamwork had been fantastic. The Clerk had provided a full financial report, which showed the event had made a profit of £402.52, which will be put towards future events. Lessons learned included:

* Start planning sooner and open the event later – 2.00pm rather than 1.00pm
* Try to involve the pubs more in the organisation and sponsorship
* Buy a water carrier and bags of ice for the tea stall
* Obtain a suitable First Aid Kit for use at village events
* Recruit a first- Aider for all events.
* Donation Buckets are needed.

A letter received from Baton Rouge, was read out - they had very kindly returned the £50

donation given them (as was done with the GT Band and Ukelele Band), to put towards future events.

After a brief discussion about First Aid requirements, it was agreed that it would be useful to have several people trained, in order to have a pool to draw from for events – not necessarily to qualification standard, but sufficient to be able to deal with minor incidents and knowing what to do in an emergency.

Future events discussed included:

* Queen’s Platinum Jubilee, June 2022.
* A Halloween Party – not to be actioned as a resident is already organising one for village children.
* Children’s Christmas Party, possibly 29th December, but with different entertainment.
* A Christmas Fair, with marquees along the edge of the green, stalls and Santa’s Grotto.
* Working with the church to organise a Christmas Carols event on Christmas Eve.

The next meeting of the Committee is to be at 7.00pm, Wednesday 29th September at Holmlea.

It was **agreed** that the Clerk should purchase the First Aid Kit immediately, and investigate First Aid training opportunities, and that the Village Face Book page be used to recruit those interested in being a volunteer First Aider. **Actions:** Cllr Woodward to post on Face Book, Clerk to purchase First Aid Kit and investigate appropriate training opportunities.

*Cllr Musgrave eft the meeting at 8.45pm*

1. **Village Maintenance Group Report**: Cllr Irving spoke to her report, circulated in advance:

**Tasks completed:**

* Interior of bus shelter painted
* Bench installed in bus shelter
* All trees on greens crown lifted to 6’
* Potholes in Manor Close repaired
* Large pothole outside garages in Martindale repaired
* Tree removed from Wildlife Garden.

**Tasks not yet completed:**

* All pavements in village in bad state - HBC
* Corner of land in middle of North Lane still not repaired - HBC.
* Footpath down Church Bank still not repaired – EPC
* Bus Shelter needs exterior painting – EPC
* Fence to Playing Field needs wood staining; notice & bench to be installed - EPC
* Several benches around village need sanding and staining - EPC
* Tree stump and rubble to be removed in Wildlife Garden and Crab Apple planted – EPC
* Oak tree to be planted in Playing Field – EPC

She then added further items to the list of tasks to be undertaken:

* A salt bin on the green has been tipped over and needs putting back – EPC
* A street light on Church Bank is on at the wrong time – HBC
* An Amelanchier tree and plaque to be purchased and installed in memory of Chris Banks.

Cllr Irving then referred to her earlier complaints about the Wildlife Garden, viz the mound of rubble and the pond, saying that the plants she was storing in her yard were now dying, and it was urgent that the tree stump and rubble be removed in order the perennials and shrubs could be planted before the winter. The pond needed stones around the edge to protect the liner, and a stone ramp putting at one end for wildlife.

Cllr Woodward noted the lack of a grit/salt bin at the top of Church Bank; HBC had previously refused to install one here, saying that people should use the one on the green.

The Clerk raised concern about the Playing Field fence, which had been badly damaged over the summer and was now a H&S hazard, with horses once more getting into the field. She had obtained quotes from Geoff Bell for the replacement of the whole fence with linked sections of stronger chain fencing. The cost of this would be considerable, therefore it was **resolved** to replace only the damaged sections for now and to ask Chris Scaife to investigate the Rights of way across Grieves’ land, informing him that residents had walked this way for over 40 years.

After some discussion it was **agreed** that the following **Actions** were needed:

* Cllr R. Thompson to provide stone for pond.
* Cllr Irving to obtain a cost from David Lewis for the work he had undertaken already on one bench, but do no more for the time being.
* Maintenance Committee to identify those benches in need of urgent treatment, and exactly what was needed for each.
* Clerk to find someone to undertake the work on the bus shelter exterior woodwork, and also to request a new salt bin to be situated at the top of Church Bank; to organise the plaque and purchase an Amelanchier tree, to arrange the repair of the Playing Field fence, to contact Chris Scaife about Rights of Way and to urge John Pearson to remove the tree stump and rubble as soon as possible.

1. **Financial Reports**: (circulated in advance). The Clerk presented the reports which were accepted.

**Receipts: £ Payments: £**

**0** Bank Service charge 18,00

D. M. Ireland (Parish Meeting expenses) 59.38

Spanglefish (website hosting & domain name) 103.00

ICO (Data protection) 35.00

David Lewis (bench for bus shelter) 300.00

KOMPAN (carousel) 3,088.32

Affordable Landscapes (grass cutting) 780.00

**TOTAL 4,383.70**

The Clerk informed of a new wayleave agreement with Northern Power Grid regarding the line to the new house on Potter’s Farm in the annual sum of £1.15.

The Clerk further noted that the bank had refused to approve 2 cheques recently issued and countersigned by one of the new signatories, but had not informed her. When she had been called by one supplier affected by this, she had contacted the bank, who informed her that a form was missing which would have allowed the two signatories to be accepted and apologised for the oversight. As she had not been made aware of the missing form for over three months, Cllr R. Thompson felt the bank should compensate the Parish Council for the poor service, and proposed they be asked to repay one quarter’s bank Service Charge. This was unanimously **supported**. **Action:** Clerk to submit the completed form and request a repayment as identified.

1. **Correspondence:** Great North Air Ambulance- noted; a Martindale Close resident re: Nextdoor App – noted with concern; Chris Scaife, Countryside & Access Officer, HBC – copy letter regarding footpath at Wynyard – noted; Elan City publicity material re: road speed & road information equipment – noted; consultation by Tees Valley Combined Authority on local bus services, circulated earlier and deadline now passed – noted; email from a resident concerned about dogs being allowed to run loose on the Playing Field – noted; Safer Hartlepool Community Safety Plan consultation- noted.
2. **Planning Applications**:

**H/2021/0356 –** Amerston Close, Wynyard – ***No Objection***

**H/2021/0399** – ***No Objection*** but endorse concerns of HBC Countryside & Access Officer

**H/2021/423** - ***No Objection*** but endorse concerns of HBC Countryside & Access Officer

**H/2021/0344** – ***Support*** – Wynyard needs better communications signal

**H/2021/0282** – ***Objection*** – concerns about risk to ancient woodland and the need for better pedestrian/cycle access to the countryside – endorse concerns of HBC Countryside & Access Officer and note the concerns of Cleveland Fire Brigade about strength of roads.

**H/2021/0429** – ***No Objection***

**H/2021/0372 – *Strongly Object –*** no building until Elwick By-Pass is open.

**H/2021/0420 – *Support*** –extension and window replacements appropriate and take cognisance of Conservation status of village green area.

1. **Matters of Concern to Councillors**:

* Cllr Hutchinson informed he now has the Paris Council’s leaf blower in his possession.
* Cllr Woodward stated he had enjoyed the digital mapping training session; he would like to see all footpaths around the parish on our map. He further noted poor cell phone coverage – there are many ‘dead’ spots around the village and on the A19. The Clerk was tasked with writing to the Combined Authority about this issue. **Action:** Clerk to write to TVCA.
* Cllr Wiliamson reiterated his wish to see the EPC website updated and social media utilised.

1. **Date of next Meeting:** 7.00pm, Monday 25th October at Elwick WI Hall.
2. **Exclusion of Press & Public:** There being none present the meeting continued.
3. **Confidential Business:** This Item is recorded in a Confidential Minute.

*Meeting closed 10.05pm.*