**ELWICK PARISH COUNCIL**

**Minutes of Meeting held at 7.00 pm on Monday 28thFbruary2022**

**at Elwick WI Hall**

**Present:**Cllrs. H. Thompson, P. Hutchinson, B. Irving, R. Musgrave, D. Woodward, R. Thompson from 7.32pm.

**In Attendance:** M. Ireland, Clerk, 2 residents

***Councillors noted with sadness the death of Ward Cllr Brenda Loynes.***

1. **Apologies:** None received
2. **Public Forum:** One of the residents present had raised concern with the Clerk the previous week, about the ancient limestone wall in front of her house, on the village green, which belongs to the Parish Council, and which had developed a dangerous horizontal crack near its foot and several vertical cracks approx. 2m from the corner. The Chairman and Clerk had requested J. Thompson examine the wall, which he had done and reported it to be in a very dangerous condition and a public safety hazard. The Clerk had used her authority to request Mr. Thompson to demolish the dangerous section as soon as possible and immediately informed the HBC Conservation Officer. The wall had been taken down and the stone preserved for reuse as requested. A response had been received that afternoon from the Conservation Officer, who advised it would require a stonemason skilled in the use of lime mortar to repair the wall. The resident wished to have confirmed that the Parish Council had appropriate insurance cover and wished to have written confirmation that any damage to her own wall, during the renovation, would be covered by EPC. This was unanimously **agreed**.

**Action:** Clerk to send written confirmation of insurance cover.

*The resident left the meeting at 7.12pm.*

1. **Declarations of Interest:** None declared.
2. **Police Report:** No apologies or report received. It was noted that stolen car reported the previous month had been recovered. Cllr Irving reported three men had been approaching residents, following recent storms, offering roof repairs –she was concerned these might be the same men who had been reported previously for poor work and aggressive behaviour. The Chairman wished to remind residents they should not deal with traders who called uninvited at their door.
3. **Minutes of 31st**January 2022: Cllr Musgrave proposed, with Cllr Irving seconding, acceptance; all being in agreement, it was **resolved** to accept the minutes as a true record.

The Chairman requested that a new item: **Wynyard Garden Village Visioning Document consultation** (circulated to all Councillors prior to the meeting), be taken at this point as this would save the Wynyard resident present having to sit through the rest of the agenda, all concurring the Chairman opened the floor for comments. Points raised included:

* In essence Wynyard is to be a small town, with 6,800 dwellings and industrial/business parks;
* 1200 of the proposed dwellings, those by Homes England at North Burn, would be in Elwick parish even after Wynyard (Hartlepool) parish came into existence;
* No role for parish councils in Governance;
* Wynyard residents are concerned about the woodlands – some ancient woodland has already been cut; the Forestry Commission require it to be left for 4 years to regenerate, but the stumps have already been dug out unnecessarily – the fear is this site will be developed as housing;
* Where are the community facilities? Wynyard needs a community centre urgently – after 20 years of development and with 1700 homes already occupied there is still nowhere for the community to meet other than the school on the Stockton side, which is only available out of school hours and at a high cost;
* The plan provides for 3 primary schools with 2 intake classes each year, but no secondary school;
* There is no public transport provision – the increase of traffic to/from Wynyard goes against all current thinking on low carbon emissions and climate change;

*Cllr R. Thompson joined the meeting at 7.32pm.*

* Much of the development is based on the 2014 outline planning application by Chris Musgrave, but none of the amenities included in that application have yet been delivered;
* There are no doctors' surgeries proposed; the Clinical Commissioning Group have informed Wynyard residents that Wynyard cannot have a surgery;
* Section 106 monies from Wynyard have been diverted to Sedgefield;
* Cost of footbridges over the A689 is prohibitive – already at over £3.2m each at today’s prices, this will only increase – better to have pelican crossings;
* There is no extra provision for shops etc in the Hartlepool side of Wynyard, the nearest shops are in Wynyard village beyond walking distance for many residents of The Pentagon or The Meadows;
* No future-proofing in the plan – residents who purchased homes in Wynyard 20 years ago are now becoming elderly/infirm/disabled and unable to walk to amenities;
* There is need for a footbridge/cycle path across the A19.

It was **agreed** that the Chairman and Clerk should draft a formal response to HBC and circulate to Councillors before 7th March deadline for comments to HBC. It was further proposed the Clerk should submit a Freedom of Information request to HBC for both the number of dwellings built in Hartlepool since 2016, and the number of dwellings with planning permission agreed but not yet built.

**Actions:** Chairman and Clerk to draft response; Clerk to make FoI request.

*The Wynyard resident left the meeting at 7.50pm.*

1. **Matters Arising*: (a) Jubilee Tree*–**The Chairman noted that she had already informed colleagues that she would not wish to stand as Chair following the May elections and would like to donate the Copper Beech tree on her retirement as Chairman. Councillors expressed warm appreciation for the generous offer. ***(b) Playing Field Bins*** – The Clerk informed the bins had now been emptied. ***(c)Environment Agency –***Cllr Woodward suggested that the EA be asked to send someone to physically inspect the drain, from the stream up the bank to the village green, and offered to accompany them. ***(d) Replacement of bench*** – the Clerk reported HBC had installed a new bench though she was not certain the memorial plaque had been reinstated. Cllr~~s~~ Hutchinson proposed a bench on the outskirts of the village, at the North Lane entrance, be made by placing a plank of wood across two large stones. Cllr Woodward agreed, but felt the wood could be set in to the stone. ***(e) Memorial Tree*** – the Clerk informed that she had purchased an Amelanchier as agreed and it was now at 6, The Green ready for planting. ***(f) Woodland Trust*** – the Clerk reported there were no free trees now available until the spring. ***(g) Banking*** – the Clerk reported that the banking issue had now been resolved and the bank had returned 6-months’ charges to the PC account. ***(h) Tofts Farm*** – Cllr Hutchinson thanked the Clerk for the information she had acquired at his request, but noted he had given the wrong farm, it was in fact High Burntoft Farm, next door to Tofts Farm, that he was enquiring about. The Clerk noted that this farm was identified in the Wynyard Garden Village Visioning Document as a Scheduled Monument. **Action:** The Clerk to request the EA to send someone to physically inspect the drain; to check if memorial plaque for bench had been installed; to arrange planting of memorial tree; to ask Sarah Scarr for information on High Burntoft Farm.

Cllrs Mike Young and Cameron Stokell had not attended any Parish Council meeting since April 2021 and those present wondered how they knew of residents’ concerns/issues when neither did they hold Ward surgeries. It was noted however, that Cllr Stokell had recently followed up a complaint about a dog running loose, reported by the Clerk.

1. **Chairman’s Report**: The Chairman gave a verbal report as follows:
   * She and the Clerk had attended the Civic Funeral of Brenda Loynes, Mayor of Hartlepool, at All saints Church, Stranton. The church had been packed; HBC Managing Director, Denise McGucken and former Cllr, Ray Martin-Wells had given good eulogies.
   * Jubilee Tree and village wall covered earlier in the minutes.
   * Vote of No Confidence in HBC- an article had been published in the Hartlepool Mail that day relating to the open letter to Cllr Shane Moore, which had been sent by the four rural parish Council Chairmen. Councillors agreed that the original Vote of No Confidence letter and the open letter should both be placed on the parish council website and Notice Boards, with a note to the effect that further information was available at request from the Clerk.
2. **Social Activities Committee Report:** Cllr R. Thompson gave a verbal report as follows:

* An Easter Egg Trail was to be held on Monday 18th April (Easter Monday)
* Planning is in full swing for the Queen’s Platinum Jubilee 2-5 June; the Committee had agreed to focus efforts on the Thursday and Sunday.

Thursday 2nd – A Hog Roast and games for both children and adults, with recorded music

Sunday 5th – An ecumenical service of Thanksgiving for the Queen at 2.00pm followed by a ‘Royal Garden Party’ (a shared tea) with the GT Silver band and Rising Stars providing musical entertainment. The pub landlords were to be invited to a brief meeting at 1.30 tomorrow to discuss plans and ensure no conflicting activities.

* He had information on possible funding available for Jubilee activities and had forwarded the information to the Clerk; the Clerk had already downloaded the application from and **agreed** to submit an application.
* The next SAC meeting was to be at 7.00pm at Holmlea on 9th March.

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

**Tasks completed:**

* Majority of perennials planted, wildflower meadow cleared and shrubs pruned in Wildlife Garden
* Bench replaced on North Lane by HBC
* Amelanchier in memory of Chris Banks purchased

**Tasks not yet completed:**

***Playing Field:***

* New soft-fall to be installed – EPC
* Bench to be installed – EPC
* Entrance fence to be repaired, stained and notice attached – EPC
* Seat missing from zip-wire – EPC (held by Cllr Woodward, to be replaced before Playing Field reopened)

***Wildlife Garden:***

* Pond needs stocking with water plants and rocks – EPC
* Further tidying-up needed, shrub prunings to be removed and new shrubs planted- EPC
* Rough grass areas around shrubs need strimming - EPC

***General Village:***

* Overhanging branch on Church Bank footpath to be cut back - EPC
* Fence on Church Bank to be repaired -EPC
* Tree in memory of Chris Banks to be planted – EPC
* Large stones to be installed around greens – EPC
* No Parking sign on top green to be replaced – EPC
* Sanding & staining of exterior woodwork on bus shelter – delayed due to Ian having had an accident – will be completed in March
* Repair, sanding & staining of benches – awaiting Ian in March
* Exterior of bus shelter to be painted – EPC
* Pavements in Manor Close in very poor state- HBC
* Street light outside WI hall permanently on – HBC
* Partial road collapse on main road through village opposite Holmlea – HBC
* Hartlepool road into village, between bend after Craddon Bank and village entrance, rapidly deteriorating - HBC

Cllr Irving noted that more volunteers were badly needed to help with regular Wildlife Garden maintenance. The Clerk suggested an application to the Red Gap Fund for gardening tools, including a strimmer and wheelbarrow.

Cllr Irving further noted that all the signs and barriers at the Playing Field had been removed without permission, leaving the area as a safety risk. Cllr Woodward agreed to replace the signs and barriers immediately. The Clerk noted that she and Cllr Woodward had seen garden waste dumped along Church Bank and Cllr Woodward informed that heavy vehicles were causing damage to the banks at the sides of the road. Cllr R. Thomson informed that he had requested the supplier to provide replacement fence poles for those damaged by the tree fall in January.

**Actions**: Cllr Woodward to replace signs and barriers at Playing Field; Cllr R. Thompson to obtain the replacement fence poles; Clerk to inform HBC of issues raised and obtain CCTV signs for erection on Church Bank, either side of the Playing Field.

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

The Clerk informed that she had enquired with Starling Bank but they did not provide services to Parish Councils. As the issue with Unity Trust bank was now resolved and they had refunded 6 months’ charges as compensation, she felt it was best to remain with them for the time being, as no other bank would allow double authorisation on internet banking.

**Receipts: £ Payments: £**

EES (repayment - concrete bench) 418.80 Anonymous (repayment of balance of donation for bench) 49.00

Unity Trust Bank (bank charges) 36.00 Affordable Landscapes (Playing Field – clearing soft fall area) 3,240.00

David Ogilvie (Engineering) Ltd. (2 x benches for Wynyard) 2,344.80

Kompan (Scotland) Ltd. (carousel top and installation) 1,168.68

SLCC Enterprises Ltd (Climate Change Summit fee x 2) 108.00

Elwick WI Hall Account (room hire) 80.00

**Total: 454.80 Total: 6,990.48**

1. **Correspondence:** Email from resident at 10, North Lane, requesting the gate and fence damaged in the recent storms be repaired as land belonged to EPC; Clerk had informed them this was not the case.
2. **Planning Applications**:

**H/2021/0549** – 2, Mount Pleasant, Elwick – Amended plan for erection of detached summerhouse – No comment

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

Cllrs Hutchinson and Musgrave noted that there was now rubbish in the ditches down both sides of Coal Lane and potholes along its length. **Action:** Clerk to inform HBC.

1. **Date of next Meeting:** 7.00pm, Monday 28thMarch 2022 at Elwick WI Hall.

*Meeting closed 8.50pm.*