

ELWICK PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of meeting held Monday 30th September 2024, 7pm at

Elwick WI Hall

Present: Cllrs D. Woodward, A. Oliver, B. Irving, G. Hewitt.

In Attendance: Clerk, Two Resident's, Lee Adams (Enviromena) and Mark Harding (Enviromena) .

1. **Enviromena:** Lee Adams and Mark Harding on behalf of Enviromena gave an update on the current planning application regarding the solar farm at High Barnes Farm, on Coal Lane. They advised to date, no major objections had been raised. By request of Hartlepool Borough Council and the Public Rights of Way Officer the plans have been altered to accommodate the public right of way on the land, this will now go around the back of the house with a view of it connecting up with the planned bypass. As part of the process they are still working on bird surveys the findings are being analysed by a team of ecologists and they are awaiting the results, which hopefully they will have in the next couple of weeks. The Geological survey is also currently underway. A target date of the 4th December has been set for the plans going to the Planning Committee. They confirmed their current plans do not interfere with the planned bypass. Cllr. Woodward enquired if there had been any objections to which Lee and Mark advised there has been objections over concerns of the outlook of the site etc. Lee and Mark advised following the concerns being raised, Enviromena carried out additional surveys and photo montage's were created based on the plans, Lee and Mark presented the montage's to the Parish Councillors showing the predicted outlook for neighbouring properties. On Behalf of Enviromena Lea and Mark asked if anyone has any concerns or questions regarding the plans or site not to hesitate to get in touch with them, details can be found on their website and they will be happy to answer any queries etc. All the details on the website are also in line with the planning in process. Lee and Mark asked the Parish Council to continue to think about potential idea's Enviromena may be able to help the village fund, they would also be happy to work with any nominated charities on behalf of Elwick Parish Council.

Lee Adams and Mark Harding left the meeting at 19:24.

2. **The Public Forum:** Two residents present, nothing to discuss.
3. **Apologies:** Cllr. R Thompson, Cllr. H. Thompson and Cllr Andrew-Martin Wells..
4. **Police Report:** Karel Simpson spoke on behalf of Cleveland Police, he explained in recent weeks local area's including Elwick has seen an increase in rural crime. Numerous farms have been victims to this and many farms have been targeted repeatedly by cutting into fences, cutting locks to gain entry. There has also been an increase in the number of cases involving electric bikes and bikes. Karel reminded everyone present that any information regarding any suspicious behaviour be noted as much as possible, i.e. clothing, vehicles, personal description etc. Also any CCTV, dashcam footage etc is also helpful. Karel advised the Parish Council, if they could look into creating a WhatsApp group for local farmers or anyone within the rural community, this is a great way for people to communicate suspicious activity and alert others within the area. Cllr D.Woodward and the Clerk advised this was something they would both arrange, and try and build a network of people on the app. Karel asked if he could also join the group once it was set up, to enable him to monitor the activity on it, in turn this will hopefully help the police as he will be able to feed information back to headquarters. Karel advised the next Rural Crime Forum will take place on the 6th November 2024 at Redcar.
Karel Simpson left the meeting at 19:40.

5. **Minutes of 27th June Meeting:** The Clerk advised following an email from Cllr R. Thompson, the word "vested" in in the first paragraph was to be removed. All Councillors agreed this was to be amended to "...they declared interest...". Cllr. A. Oliver asked that the final paragraph be reviewed, " There is a lot of local anger..." After discussion amongst the Parish Councillor's it was agreed "...a lot of anger..." was amended to "... some local anger". Following the amendments approval of the Minutes as an accurate

record, was then proposed by Cllr A. Oliver, with Cllr D. Woodward seconding. The meeting then resolved to accept the minutes, and the Chairman signed the Minutes.

6. **Matters Arising: (i) Red Gap potential ideas for future submission:** Cllr. D. Woodward advised most of the ideas to date have come from the Playing Field Committee, due to the amount of equipment degrading due to age, wear and tear. Cllr. D. Woodward also discussed the idea of approaching the W.I to see if the Parish Council can assist in upgrading the central heating etc, this would hopefully reduce the noise of the current heating system and encourage the community to use the hall more for events etc. Cllr. G. Hewitt suggested replacing and revamping the plant tubs on the Village Green, all Councillors agreed we would need the residents help and volunteers to maintain them in the future. Councillors agreed the Playing Field Committee is to get ideas and quotes together and present them for discussion at the next Parish Council Meeting. **(ii) North Farm Development:** The Clerk and Cllr. D. Woodward advised there had been no further update regarding the North Farm Development. Cllr. D. Woodward and the Clerk are to chase this up with John Beddoes to see if there are any further updates. **(iii) Parish Council Shed:** The Clerk, reminded the Parish Councillors in May it was discussed the possibility of purchasing a shipping container to use as a storage unit for the Parish Council, all Parish Councillors agreed this was something to consider and Cllr. D. Woodward advised he would look into the different options that maybe available. **(iv) Bonfire's on the Village Green:** The Parish Council has not received any requested, nor does it give permission for, a bonfire on the village green. It was further noted that any organisers or participants would not be covered by the Parish Council's insurance as any such bonfire and/or accompanying fireworks were illegal. **(v) Resident Parking signs):** Cllr. D. Woodward advised this is still something he is looking into and is aiming to have the signs up as soon as possible.
7. **Chairman's Report:** (i) Cllr. D. Woodward advised he attended the Parish Liaison Meeting on 30th October 2024 at Hartlepool Civic Centre. The meeting was led by HBC's leader Brenda Harrison who is keen to see more engagement with the Parish Councils and if Elwick Parish Council have any meeting held on any night other than a Monday evening, she herself would like to attend our Parish Council meeting's. (ii) Cllr. D. Woodward advised on the 10th October 2024, Hartlepool Borough Council are hosting the annual get together for Parish Councillors and Parish Clerks, he himself will be unable to attend but asked for any Parish Councillors available on the 10th October 2024, if they could attend to represent Elwick Parish Council. (iii) Cllr D. Woodward, advised Parish Councillors on the 23rd October 2024, Hartlepool Borough Council are holding an Emergency Planning briefing which is open to all Parish Councillors, he asked if any Parish Councillors are able to attend if they could register their interest with HBC by the 11th October. (iv) Cllr. D. Woodward advised he is going to enquire with the other Parish Councils in the area as to which committee each Parish Council would like to participate in at future meetings. He will also enquire if different Councillors from each Parish Council can represent their respective chosen committee. All Councillors agreed one of the committees to be represented by Elwick if possible was to be Adult Services.
8. **Ward Councillor's Report:** No Report Received. The Clerk advised, Cllr. A. Martin Wells advised there was nothing to report. The Clerk advised an invitation had been sent to all three Ward Councillors, Cllr. A. Martin Wells, Cllr. M. Young and Cllr. S. Reeve, to see if they would be able to attend any of the Cuppa and Cake events held on a Tuesday afternoon, to enable residents to raise any issues or concerns they may have, directly with the Ward Councillors.
9. **Playing Field Equipment Committee Report: (i)** The Clerk on behalf of the playing field committee advised the last meeting was held on the 10th September. Representatives from Streetscape and Sovereign Play had met with the Clerk and Minna Ireland from the committee to discuss potential new play equipment to replace the items which are showing signs of wear and tear. Natalie Connor is in the process of arranging consultations with the School to get idea's from the children on what they would like to see in the playing field. Darren Thomas is in the process of looking into setting a QR code up which can be used to capture the ideas of the other children in the village. The Playing field now have two quotes in relating to the dog walk and these are to be discussed at the next meeting on the 8th September 2024.
10. **Social Activities Committee Report: (i)** Minna Ireland presented the Social Activities Committee report and advised their last meeting was held on the 17th September 2024 were the recent Gig on The Green event was discussed, i.e. what worked and did not work for the event. Footfall for the Gig on the Green

was significant lower than previous years, the event was also in competition with other events being held on the same day. The Spotted Cow and Coopers of Elwick Shop reported no significant increase in trade despite the event, unlike they have in the past. The event ran this year on a financial loss. It was agreed by all members of the Social Activity Committee, due to the work involved in organising an event of this scale for very little return, the event will not be held in 2025, the Social Activity Group will review it again for 2026. Cllr. D.Woodward suggest maybe the Social Activity Committee could look into holding a Village Fete potentially earlier in the year for 2025 as weather is usually better now in May / June. **(ii)** In order to establish if the Village will be interested in an amateur dramatics group, the Social Activity Committee have been in contact with a Yorkshire based professional self-contained theatre company called “Bad Apple”. They have availability to bring to the Village their new theatre show “Polaris the Snow Bear” on Thursday evening 5th December. The Social Activities Committee, would like permission to go ahead with the booking and asked if the Clerk as the RFO could sign the contract of agreement. The Show will cost £550 or 80% of the total ticket sales (whichever is greater), plus the W.I Hall hire. To help fund the show on top of ticket sales, the SAC are proposing we run a tuck shop, raffle etc on the evening. All Councillors agreed, this was an opportunity to see if the Village would like to see a professional show with a view to starting an amateur dramatics group in the near future and asked if the Clerk could sign the contract. The Councillors all agreed the ticket prices should be sold at the price recommended by “Bad Apple” but the Clerk is to enquire if they will allow the tickets to be sold for a limited time at a cheaper price to offer an early bird discount. **(iii)** The Christmas Fayre has been planned for 15th November 2024 with The Spotted Cow kindly offering to allow stall holders to use space in the bar and The Cow Shed, Coopers of Elwick has also kindly offered to decorate the shop to accommodate Santa for the children to visit. The committee are in the process of arranging a Santa and stalls for the event. **(iv)** Due to the planned theatre night and Christmas fayre, the SAC committee have decided not to run a Halloween party this year and will review this for next year.

- 11. Village Maintenance Group Report:** **(i)** Cllr A. Oliver advised nothing to report. **(ii)** Cllr. G. Hewitt advised the shrub / bush next to the access to the walk had been successfully trimmed back and the cobbled area had also been sprayed for weeds. **(iii)** The Clerk advised, HBC had advised staff and vehicle permitting they would be attending the Village on Thursday 10th October with the road sweeper. **(iv)** Cllr. D. Woodward advised as per the July meeting there was a bad smell coming from the drains outside the shop along with vegetation growing out the drain near the bus stop. HBC attended the village with the gully cleaning vehicle and hopefully this has now resolved the issue as there has been no more complaints regarding the odour.

Finance: Finance reports supplied by Clerk. The Statement of Financial transactions 27th June 2024 to 29th September 2024 tabled below:

RECEIPTS:	
HMRC – VAT Reclaim from 2022/2023	1818.86
TOTAL	1818.86

PAYMENTS:	
Affordable Landscapes Ref invoice K515 – Grass Cutting	890.40
WM Fortune & Son – Internal Audit	96.00
Julian Fawcett – Repairs to bus shelter bench. Labour and Materials	77.63
P S Lavelle Joinery Services – Replacement Key for Comp Cab, Replacement locks supplied and fitted with keys for Parish notice board	45.00
M. Davies – Internet and Phone reimbursement – 1 st Feb – 31 st July	120.00
M. Davies – Clerks Salary July 2024	419.10
Spanglefish internet hosting and domain	108.00
Bank Service fee charge	18.00

Affordable Landscapes Ref Invoice K584	890.40
Elwick W.I Hall – Hire from Sept 23 – July 24 (PC meetings)	185.00
Greatham Community Association – Rural plan meeting, room hire	15.00
H.Thompson – Expenses Greetings Cards	4.00
Elwick W.I Hall – SAC meeting hall hire	30.00
M. Davies – Clerks Salary August 2024	419.10
ICO – Direct Debit	35.00
TOTAL	3352.63

The Financial reports were unanimously approved.

The Clerk also provided a report detailing the cheques awaiting approval, the payments were unanimously approved and the cheques were signed by Cllr. D Woodward and Cllr. B. Irving.

Cheques to be approved

PAYMENTS:	
Affordable Landscapes Ref invoice K671 & K687– Grass cutting and work on church bank	1160.40
H. Thompson – Expenses flowers for M Carswell 90 th birthday	35.00
M. Davies – Expenses CCTV Equipment for Play field, stamps, paper	25.75
M. Davies – Clerks Salary September 2024	419.10
TOTAL	1640.25

The Clerk also provided the Parish Councillors with an actual against budget report as of the 29th September 2024.

12. **Correspondence:** (i) The Clerk advised during the month of August concerns from residents were communicated to her and an email was received from a visitor to the Village, regarding the overhanging trees outside the school, which covered the signage. The Clerk contacted the School, the school were quick to respond and arranged for the trees to be trimmed back and the matter was resolved. (ii) The Clerk advised a resident had contacted her to advised four bags of rubbish had been fly tipped in the stream up by North Lane, the resident had reported this to HBC, but is concerned due to the recent heavy rain some of the waste may have been washed down stream as one bag is still visible. The Clerk is the chase this with HBC.
13. **Matters of concern:** (i) Cllr B. Irving asked if the Parish Council could look into finishing the bus shelter. Following the arson attack, the bus shelter has had the bench repaired but the shelter still requires painting to remove the fire damage. Cllr. D. Woodward suggested we put a post on Facebook asking if there would be any volunteer's willing to repaint it. (ii) Cllr G. Hewitt asked if there would be another big Village Clean up before the end of the year and the weather turns as we head into the winter, all councillors agreed due to the bad weather forecasted for the upcoming weekend this was to be confirmed at a later date. (iii) The Clerk advised Cllr. H.Thompson had asked it be communicated to the Parish Council The Reading Group met on Wednesday 25th September, the kiosk book exchange is going really well, especially the children's books. The Kiosk is being supplied with plenty of books thanks to donations and these are being stored in the back of the shop. There is now 9 people in the original reading group with another group which has just started with 7 members. The Reading Group meet on the last Tuesday of each month at 4:30pm at Coopers of Elwick Shop. (iv) Cllr. B. Irving advised the Parish Councillors we have a resident in the Village approaching their 90th birthday in November, it was agreed by all Parish Councillors Cllr. B. Irving would look into getting a card and something would be arranged with the Cuppa and Cake group.

Planning applications: (i) *Reference H/2024/0179 – Notification of a planning application: Construction of an agricultural track, new access and associated gate. Location: Land at North Farm, The Green, Elwick. Hartlepool. TS27 3ED.*

All Parish Councillors discussed and agreed there is still concern regarding the ongoing flooding issue which HBC have previously advised they have in hand and are dealing with the landowners concerned. It was noted that there is still water flowing onto the road, and would like to see the flooding issues are resolved.

(ii) Reference

H/2024/0180 – Notification of a planning application: Installation of ground mounted photovoltaic (solar) farm and battery storage facility with associated works, access and landscaping. **Location: High Barnes Farm, Coal Lane, Elwick. Hartlepool. TS27 3HD.**

All Parish Councillors discussed and agreed, the Parish have no objection to the planning application, however the Parish Council would like to see any concerns raised by neighbouring farms / properties are resolved.

(iii) The Clerk brought to the attention of the Parish Council an email received from Cllr. R. Thompson and Cllr. H. Thompson relating to planning application H/2024/0146. Following discussion between the Parish Councillors it was agreed this matter is to be discussed with Cllr R. Thompson and Cllr H. Thompson at the next convenient opportunity, directly and confidentially.

17. Date of next meeting: 28th October 2024, 7pm at Elwick W.I Hall

Meeting concluded at 9:41 pm