

FISHBURN PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Parish Council held in Fishburn Youth Club, Butterwick Road, on Thursday 9th November 2023 at 6:30 p.m.

PRESENT: Councillors S. Dowson (Chair); V. Anderson; A. Pearson; R. Pedlow; S. Tinkler. **IN ATTENDANCE:** Mr. K. Murray-Hetherington (Parish Clerk); Cllrs. C. Lines and D. Brown (DCC).

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: Mr. Macauley Underwood outlined his request for permission to use the football fields for Fishburn Live on 15th June 2024. He was advised that comments from the Coal Industry Social Welfare Organisation (CISWO) were awaited and the matter would be considered at the next meeting. He agreed to forward to the Clerk alternative options. He then left the meeting.

Minute
No.

Agenda item

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: RESOLVED:** That apologies and reasons for non-attendance shall be accepted from Cllrs. D. Dowson [work]; M. Barker [family commitment]; M. Hodgson [health]. Cllr. C. Welsh was absent with no reason given.
2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS:** There were no declarations of interest.
3. **DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL:** Cllr. Chris Lines had submitted a detailed written report on matters affecting DCC and he gave an update on matters covered in the report including additional litter bins and dog fouling bins; bike racks; verge-hardening scheme; speed survey.
4. **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING:** Cllr. S. Dowson queried the accuracy of minute no. 11.2. She was advised that payment of the remaining balance for drainage work at the football fields had been agreed on the understanding that a representative of the Football Club had confirmed that any concerns had been actioned by Turfcare Specialists Ltd. and it had been generally agreed that withholding payment longer could result in a claim from the contractor.
 - 4.1 On the motion of Cllr. Pearson, seconded by Cllr. Anderson, **RESOLVED:** To approve as a correct record and authorise signing of the minutes of the meeting held on 12th October 2023.
5. **MATTERS ARISING:** Cllr. Tinkler confirmed that the wooden bench had been removed from near the memorial garden in the cemetery would be painted/re-varnished before Christmas. The wooden crown from the hanging basket on the village green had been delivered to him.
6. **BUDGET SETTING:** The Clerk advised that the official precept request form was required to be returned by Friday 19th January 2024 at the latest. On the motion of Cllr. Tinkler, seconded by Cllr. Pedlow, it was **RESOLVED:** To defer approval of the annual budget and the setting the precept requirement for the 2024/25 financial year until the next meeting to enable absent members to participate in reckoning any percentage change and Band D equivalent created.
 - 6.1 On the motion of Cllr. Pearson, seconded by Cllr. Anderson, it was unanimously **RESOLVED:** That the rent payable for each garage plot from 1st April 2024 shall be £120.00 per annum. It was hoped that a committee of garage plot holders would take over the entire management of the garage plots, including rent collection, with an agreed Service Level Agreement (SLA).
7. **REPORTS:** Cllr. Anderson gave a report on Sedgefield Charities and the rationale behind the refusal of a grant to Citizens Advice Durham to continue operating a face-to-face service in Fishburn. The charity was facing its own difficult financial situation and there had reportedly been no engagement from the charity following a request for a breakdown of cases dealt with.
8. **CORRESPONDENCE: RESOLVED:** To order an additional Christmas banner at the price quoted [£74.00]. Cllr. Anderson volunteered to collect it from the supplier in Darlington.
 - 8.1 **RESOLVED:** To delegate to the Chair a decision on which set of festive lights to use on the Christmas tree (old or new or both). She agreed to meet the grounds maintenance contractor

- to test the lights before the tree is installed in case any issues should arise.
- 8.2 **RESOLVED:** To press Fishburn Band for a decision regarding their attendance at the switch-on event and, if necessary, to offer a financial contribution which was agreed at £100.00.
- 8.3 Members were asked to respond to a special guest invitation from Haswell and District Mencap to attend a Nativity Service in Durham Cathedral on Saturday 16th December 2023.
- 8.4 **RESOLVED:** That the Parish Council shall not enter the main Northumbria in Bloom competition in 2024, but the cemetery shall be entered as a stand-alone special entry.
- 8.5 **RESOLVED:** To light the beacon for Holocaust Memorial Day on 27th January 2024.
- 8.6 Co-operative Funeralcare's insurer's had completed their investigation into damage to tarmac in the cemetery and had confirmed that they were happy to agree settlement at £1,300.00.
- 8.7 On the motion of Cllr. Tinkler, it was **RESOLVED:** To purchase a Marks and Spencer gift card worth £150.00 to present to Kay Atkinson as a token of thanks for her work as a volunteer guardian, regularly checking the defibrillator machines.
9. **PLANNING APPLICATIONS:** There were none. On the motion of Cllr. Tinkler, seconded by Cllr. Anderson, it was **RESOLVED:** That the pre-application planning enquiry fee [£250.00] for the proposed extension to the sports/football pavilion shall be paid by the Parish Council.
10. **FINANCIAL MATTERS: RESOLVED:** To receive the schedule of monthly expenditure and approve payment of all those invoices presented to the meeting and issue cheques.
- 10.1 **RESOLVED:** To receive the most recent budget monitoring report.
- 10.2 Members discussed the need to open a second bank account taking into account the Financial Services Compensation Scheme's maximum payout of £85,000 if the Parish Council's bank were to fail. The Clerk had compared a range of accounts available such as Virgin Money's Business Access Savings Account as a simple standalone online account and members mentioned other providers, including Starling Bank, but no decision was made.
11. **GROUNDS MAINTENANCE SERVICES:** Members discussed Mr. Macauley Underwood's request for permission to use the football fields for Fishburn Live on 15th June 2024. **RESOLVED:** To request alternative options and to place an item on the next agenda for a final decision, subject to comments from CISWO as the landowner.
- 11.1 Members considered the poor state of the football pitches after the wet weather. It had been reported that they could not even be walked on. **RESOLVED:** To request a meeting between the Director of Operations at Turfcare Specialists Ltd., the grounds maintenance contractor, and representatives from the Football Club and the Parish Council to discuss the situation.
- 11.2 **RESOLVED:** To confirm the purchase of two metal 'Tommy' figures to commemorate veterans, which Cllr. Tinkler volunteered to install in time for Remembrance Sunday.
- 11.3 **RESOLVED:** To install two metal hanging basket trees at each side of an existing public bench near the site of the former colliery gates, and to organise a site visit at Fishburn Colliery area on a date close to Easter 2024 to consider installing similar street furniture.
- 11.4 On the motion of Cllr. Anderson, seconded by Cllr. Tinkler, it was **RESOLVED:** To re-name the lights on the trees on the village green 'Trees of Inspiration'.
- 11.5 Cllr. Anderson mentioned a problem with an invasive type of weed in the churchyard. The grounds maintenance contractor would be reminded to take a look with a view to applying a strong weed killer in Spring 2024 for which the church would be willing to pay half.
12. **D-DAY 80 ANNIVERSARY:** Cllr. Tinkler proposed entertainment from about 8:00 p.m. including Fishburn Band; and a fire performer. Cllr. Anderson agreed to contact a local singer.
13. **NEXT MEETING: RESOLVED:** To confirm the date and time of the next meeting: Thursday 14th December 2023 at 6:30 p.m. On the motion of Cllr. Anderson, congratulations were recorded on the occasion of Cllr. Tinkler's recent marriage to Tracy.
14. **ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING:** The following items were agreed for inclusion on the agenda:
- a) **RESOLVED:** To discuss arrangements for Holocaust Memorial Day 2024 [Cllr. Tinkler].
- b) **RESOLVED:** To ascertain ownership of the Beehive public house [Cllr. S. Dowson].