

Minutes of the meeting of Hexhamshire Parish Council held on Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> January 2014 at Whitley Chapel Parish Hall at 7.30pm

12.1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Marge Rastall, Colin Horncastle (Unitary Councillor) and Mandy Charlton (clerk)

Present: Andrew Nixon, Gill Whatmough, Hilary Kristensen, Alison Tweddle, Alastair Stevens, Davy Short, Edward Parker, Austin Iliffe and Greg Finch.

12.2 Minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council held on 12<sup>th</sup> December 2013

It was agreed that the minutes were a true record of the meeting

12.3 Declaration of Interests

There were no declarations of interests.

12.4 Matters Arising

11.13 It was agreed that we must persevere with all enforcement orders

11.16 The septic tank at St Helen's Gate was emptied on 16 January.

12.8.1 It was agreed to write to NCC objecting to the implementation of post 16 school transport charges

12.8.2 Rushwood enforcement order: Colin Horncastle to be contacted again

12.9 No response has been received from Robin Dodwell regarding the change to his planning application

12.12.1 The layby at Barker House still needs attention: Austin Iliffe to press the Council to take action

12.15 The misleading leaflets regarding renting the hall are no longer in circulation

12.5 Public Participation

There were no members of the public present

12.6 Correspondence

12.6.1 The planning application for an arena at Peacock House has been approved

12.7 Financial Report

Treasurer's Account - £4,755.00

Savings Account - £13,792.00

Wetlands Account - £217.06

Precept: last year the precept was set at £8,380 and thus far £4,900 has been spent. No major expenditure is foreseen for next year with the exception of purchasing another seat. It was therefore agreed to keep the 2014 precept at the same level as last year.

## 12.8 Matters for Discussion with the Unitary Councillor

There were no matters for discussion

## 12.9 Planning Applications

There were no new planning applications

## 12.10 Smelting Arches

The Lead Road Show publicising the project is commencing in January and will be at Blaydon, Allendale and Hexham

1. tree thinning around the arches nearly completed. A few stumps to be ground out yet, brash to tidy and logs to move – should be done by contractor within next couple of weeks
2. although the original plan for the noticeboard was for it to be present only for the duration of the structural conservation works it has proved very popular, so it will be remounted on a fencepost in the near future
3. because the chimney are has been revealed as of some heritage importance consideration is being given to putting in stepping stones across the Hall Burn and steps up the bank to that corner. This will be dealt with along with other aspects of interpretation planning for the site. Current thinking is for 3 explanatory boards at different locations, and a simple directional sign at the road-end gate
4. a project 'roadshow' giving information on various activities for people to take part in this year will be in Hexham Library in w/c 3rd Feb.

## 12.11 Broadband sub – committee

Austin reported that Briskona are currently finalising the network design and have identified the master transmitting sites, and are submitting requests to use them .

The identification of suitable locations for repeater sites to provide the localised coverage is starting w/c 20 Jan and Hexhamshire is on the priority list. Once these sites have been identified they will be in contact with us again for assistance in identifying and contacting the relevant land owners.

## 12.12 Highways Sub-Committee

12.12.1 There is a blocked drainage pipe on the Lee road

12.12.2 The roads are generally in an appalling state, with blocked gullies, ditches dug but not cleaned out.

- There are potholes at the Dipton Mill corner and on Dotland Park Road
- The cattle grid between Gairshield and Westburnhope needs emptying
- the gate at Hackford has still not been repaired.
- the road to Mollersteads and Whitley Mill is in need of attention

Austin will request a meeting with the Highways Committee

12.12.3 Stotsfold Hall road end: there has been no action by Northumbrian Water to repair the pipe

12.12.4 The roadside outside the hearse house at Whitley Chapel is used by churchgoers for parking but is in a very poor state. It was proposed that it be repaired using hoggin once the weather has improved

12.12.5 Hedges: Tom Kristensen has quoted £20 per hour for his time and machine but at this stage is unable to say how long it will take. Andrew Nixon will drive round the Shire with Tom to assess the work required, and the Parish Council will contact certain landowners about cutting the hedges back on their land.

#### 12.13 Highways and Footpaths

The boardwalk on the footpath by Moss House has still not be fitted with chicken wire to minimise slipping. It was agreed to write to the Footpaths Division

#### 12.14 BOATs

Motor bikes are still a major problem and members of the public have been subjected to riders speeding past them in an intimidatory manner, causing distress. A community policeman is to be invited to the next Parish Council meeting to discuss the matter.

#### 12.15 Reports

**Wetlands** – Dilston Hall wish to relinquish responsibility for their section of the Wetlands and wonder if we would be interested in taking it over. They would however still bring students to clear the land.

At present responsibility for the road is divided equally between the Parish Council, Alan Stevens and Dilston Hall. A further meeting is scheduled for February. A local resident has expressed an interest in purchasing the land, and it was therefore agreed that the Parish Council would not wish to take it over.

**Hall** – The Christmas fair had been very successful and raised over £300  
The Burns night has been cancelled.

The grant application from the Community Foundation has been rejected, with no reason given.

Grant applications have been made to the Henry Bell Trust and the Sir James Nott (?) Trust. The cost of repairing the flat roof is estimated at £10,400: it was agreed to approach Colin Horncastle to see if a grant was available, as this work is not maintenance, but improvements to the insulation.

Septic tank: no action is required for the moment.

**School** – the current part time (2 days per week) teacher has taken a full time position elsewhere and consequently there is a vacancy: the post has been advertised in the Courant. Pupil numbers should increase next September to 30

**Sportsfield** – there was nothing to report.

12.16 Date of next meeting – Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> February 2014.

#### 12.17 Any Other Business

Hospital parking: it was agreed that the Council should write to the NHS trust to protest at the way in which Parking Eye enforce the parking rules.

Hexham bus station: it was agreed that the Council should write to NCC and Hexham Town Council objecting to the proposed development of the bus station

As there were no other issues the meeting was declared closed.