

Minutes of the meeting of Hexhamshire Parish Council held on Thursday 12th December 2013 at Whitley Chapel Parish Hall at 7.30pm

12.1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Marge Rastall, Austin Iliffe and Edward Parker.

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

Colin Horncastle, Unitary Councillor and Anne Porter were also present.

12.2 Minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council held on 12th November 2013

It was agreed that the minutes were a true record with the following amendments
Under 11.11.3 – should read Hackford not Hackwood as stated in the minutes.
Under 11.1 – Alastair Stevens was present at the meeting on 12th November.

12.3 Declaration of Interests

There were no declaration of interests.

12.4 Matters Arising

11.16 Two Castles had been to investigate the problems reported regarding the septic tank at St Helens.

11.10 Andrew Nixon reported that he had attended a meeting regarding broadband but that there was not a lot of further progress.

11.13 The police were to be contacted again regarding the situation if restriction orders were ignored.

11.6.2 Alastair Stevens reported that there was not a lot that directly affects Hexhamshire regarding the Northumberland Local Plan Consultation document but it is a very important document as it is the framework for planning and is concerned with issues such as relaxation of planning for green belt areas. The plan can be viewed online at northumberland.gov.uk. There will be the opportunity to comment further when the next stage of the document is produced in the Spring. The Chairman thanked Alastair Stevens for his report.

12.5 Public Participation

Anne Porter reported that she had had a report from Alan Stephenson advising that the Dilston section of the wetlands was a mess and that he had various issues regarding the area generally. Anne Porter suggested inviting him to attend a meeting with Parish Councillors and Anne. Anne Porter advised that Dilston is not interested in the wetlands but that they may be in the future. Anne is very keen to keep the willow going as it is looking very good. Another willow day may be planned for January. Davy Short, Alastair Stevens and Anne Porter were to confer regarding a possible date for a meeting with Alan Stephenson.

12.6 Correspondence

12.6.1 Highways services in Winter had been received from NCC.

12.6.2 A letter had been received regarding speed stickers for wheelie bins. It was decided this was not applicable.

12.7 Financial Report

Treasurer's Account - £5007.26

Savings Account - £13729.21

Wetlands Account - £217.42

12.8 Matters for Discussion with the Unitary Councillor

12.8.1 Colin Horncastle reported that the positions of Chief Executive and Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Child Services no longer exist at the County Council. The budget was due out the week of the meeting. He reported that post 16 school transport charges are to be re-introduced and could be implemented from April. Council tax was to increase by 1.9%. Approximately £42m needs to be saved. Free parking is to be introduced.

12.8.2 Colin Horncastle agreed to ask Richard Stewart about the situation at Rushwood.

12.8.3 Colin Horncastle advised that he had contacted the Area Surveyor regarding the safety of trees at Dipton Mill and had been assured that this was on the list.

12.9 Planning Applications

Removal of conditions 4 and 6 of 13/02714/RENE (Proposed installation of a single Tozzi Nord TN535 domestic wind turbine to generate electricity (height up tip 21.5m) Land North of West Longlea Steel Northumberland

It was agreed to object to condition 6 as per the previous objection.

12.10 Smelting Arches

Greg Finch reported that the main conservation work has been completed. Tree felling was currently underway. Thanks were given to Colin Horncastle for his support. The Project Manager had had good meetings with local schools who want to get involved. It was reported that Anne Ported had resigned from the Steering Group which had created a vacancy from the Parish Council. Greg Finch proposed Gill Whatmough who agreed to join the Steering Group.

12.11 Broadband sub – committee

There was no report.

12.12 Highways Sub-Committee

12.12.1 The layby at Barker House needs urgent attention.

12.12.2 Andrew Nixon suggested asking Tom Kristensen for a quote to cut back the hedges in Hexhamshire by the end of March. This was agreed. The charge may have to be passed on to landowners. It may be necessary to get permission from landowners before proceeding.

12.13 Highways and Footpaths

There was nothing further to report.

12.14 BOATs

There was nothing to report.

12.15 Reports

Wetlands – there was nothing further to report.

Hall – It was agreed that Gill Whatmough would speak to Austin Iliffe regarding a flyer that was in circulation as it was misleading.

School – there was nothing to report.

Sportsfield – there was nothing to report.

12.16 Date of next meeting – Thursday 9th January 2014.

12.17 Any Other Business

The recently purchased recycled plastic bench was on display and Councillors agreed that it was good value at £348 including VAT. Andrew Nixon had paid for the seat and the Clerk had requested a cheque book from the bank to repay him.

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