

Minutes of the meeting of Hexhamshire Parish Council held on Thursday 15th December 2017 at 7.30pm in the Malcolm Caisley Meeting Rooms at Whitley Chapel Parish Hall.

12.1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Marge Rastall and Davy Short.

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

Andrew Patterson was also present.

12.2 Minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council held on 9th November 2017.

The minutes were approved as a true record of the meeting.

12.3 Declaration of interests

Hilary Kristensen declared an interest in the Gairshield planning application.

12.4 Matters Arising

10.6.4 John Boardman is to come to speak to the Parish Council at the next meeting regarding Neighbourhood Plans.

11.6.3 One of the properties at St Helen's Gate has been rented out to a local person.

11.9 It was reported that the wording of the planning application to reduce one Ash tree at Crossfield, Ordley had been altered by the planners to a maximum of 30% and the application had been approved.

12.5 Public Participation

12.5.1 Andrew Patterson thanked the Chairman for being offered the opportunity to speak to the Parish Council regarding the School.

12.5.2 Andrew Patterson reported that Whitley Chapel School currently has 31 on the roll which will rise to around 37. He advised that a Baby and Toddler group had been started last year with approximately 20 families involved which establishes links with the school.

12.5.3 The early years provision at the school was reported as being particularly good. Mr Williams the sports coach was reported as being a great asset to the school. It was also reported there were numerous extra activities after school. Andrew Pattinson advised that there was also a breakfast club which was very well supported.

12.5.4 The summer fete had raised £900, the pop up restaurant made approximately £1000 and the Christmas Fayre £400.

12.5.5 Andrew Patterson advised that the school's finances are sound and that the school does not accumulate a large surplus. There is a policy of recruiting more staff if there were to be a surplus.

12.5.6 It was agreed that Andrew would request that the Headteacher forward a copy of her report to the Parish Council.

12.5.7 Andrew Patterson referred to the recent consultation regarding education provision and confirmed that there is uncertainty regarding the future of smaller schools in Northumberland generally.

12.6 Correspondence

12.6.1 Notice had been received regarding the external auditor for the next financial year which will be P K F Littlejohn.

12.6.2 Notification was received advising that the County Council is organising a tender for the purchase of interative speed signs.

12.6.3 The domain name was due for renewal at a cost of £6.99 plus VAT. It was agreed this should be renewed.

12.6.4 The playground inspection was due and it was agreed that this should take place in the New Year.

12.7 Financial Report

Treasurers Account - £5984.76

Sportsfield Account - £12776.63

Wetlands Account - £137.98

Dukesfield Account - £11920.00

12.7.1 It was advised that 10 copies of the Ian Forbes book had been sold at the Christmas Fayre and proceeds banked to the Dukesfield account.

12.8 Matters for discussion with the Unitary Councillor

There were no issues raised.

12.9 Planning Applications

Proposed erection of 3 polytunnels, Land South West of The Lee, Hexham, Northumberland

It was agreed that there were no objections to this application.

Proposed work to moorland tracks. Land west of Westburnhope Moor, Hexham, Northumberland.

Following the receipt of further information it was agreed that the Parish Council would respond to advise that the objections raised by the Parish Council remained the same. The question was raised whether the estate could prevent the use of the tracks by other vehicles.

The proposed development involves the refurbishment of the original farm dwelling including a new extension to the rear with conversion of the adjoining outbuilding to a self catering holiday unit. Gairshield Farm Hexham Northumberland.

It was agreed that there were no objections to this application.

12.10 Broadband

12.10.1 It was reported that the foundations for the aerial were in place.

12.10.2 The power supply at Kiln Pit Hill had not yet been started.

12.11 Highways and Footpaths

12.11.1 It was reported that water was running down the road from Barker House.

12.11.2 A report of the location of potholes had been sent to the Highways Department.

12.11.3 Some grit heaps had been replenished.

12.12 BOATs

It was reported that there had been activity on Broadway.

12.13 Reports:

Wetlands: An application was to be submitted to the Community Chest for hard standing by the Basketry group.

Hall: It was reported that the Health and Safety policy was being revised. Conrad Dickinson was reported as coming to give a talk regarding his South Pole expedition. There were problems with who holds the title to the land in connection with old trustees. A letter had been sent to the Charities Commission to trace the trustees.

Sportsfield/Play Area

It was agreed that a tender for grasscutting be put out next month.

Smelting Arches

It was reported that the stock of books was currently approximately 200.

12.14 Any Other Business

It was reported that there had been a verbal complaint made against the Parish Council regarding the planning application at Blackhall. The comments made were noted by the Parish Council.

As there was no further business the meeting was declared closed.

