

Minutes of the Meeting of Hexhamshire Parish Council held on Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> December 2021  
in the Malcolm Caisley Meeting Rooms, Whitley Chapel Parish Hall.

- 12.1 Apologies for Absence - Roger Rutherford, Davy Short, Lee Riley, Hilary Kristensen  
Present – Marge Rastall (Chair), Nicola Matthews (Vice Chair), Greg Finch, Gill Whatmough, Alison Tweddle, Edward Parker, Councillor - Colin Horncastle, Clerk - Gaynor Scandle
- 12.2 Minutes of the previous meeting of the Parish Council held on Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> November 2021  
It was agreed the minutes were a true record of the meeting.
- 12.3 Declarations of interest
- 12.4 Matters Arising
- 2.8.2 Rushwood – Chair received a reply from Glen Sanderson dated 19 Nov 2021. It addressed the TPO, land registry and enforcement issues.  
Welfare Officer is happy that the horses have food and water and no further action.  
Very frustrating but there is nothing more that the Parish Council can do, the deadlines for action to be taken have expired. Agreed that no point in pursuing the issue further.
- 12.4.2 Lilswood Caravan Site –  
Amended plans have been added showing low level lighting and more screening. Screening consists of trees between the vans. Caravans at front of site to be brown and the others can be cream. Planning application is waiting to go to full planning committee.
- 12.14 Lighting at the Church Gates – still ongoing.
- 6.13.2 Plaque to commemorate the WW2 Home Guard Shelter – ongoing
- 12.11.3 Councillor John Riddle, Portfolio Holder for Local Services, including roads, has been invited to attend a meeting to discuss the roads but has so far not responded.
- 12.5 Neighbourhood Plan – Cllr Colin Horncastle intends to speak to Jenny Ludman regarding Hexhamshire Neighbourhood Plan as he strongly advises that we must continue to produce our own personalized plan.
- 12.6 Public Participation – Mr Christopher Porter was present at the meeting, please see Wetlands for further information.
- 12.7 Correspondence
- 12.8 Finance
- 12.8.1 Invoice for Insurance from Jan 2022 has been received it is £645 in 2021 £673 – all in agreement to renew.
- 12.8.2 Balances as at 7<sup>th</sup> Dec 2021
- |                     |            |
|---------------------|------------|
| Treasurer's Account | £17,146.54 |
| Sportsfield Account | £3663.40   |
| Dukesfield Account  | £12,165.25 |
| Wetlands Account    | £996.30    |
- 12.9 Matters for discussion with the Unitary Councilor - After the effects of storm Arwen on Friday 26<sup>th</sup> November 2021, Cllr Colin Horncastle explained how much devastation there has been in the whole of Northumberland especially Rothbury, Wooler and many coastal towns like Blyth and Cramlington. Some areas have had no electricity for 13 days. Many residents of the shire had no electricity for 72 hours with some properties in the high quarter having no electric for 7 days. As an example, there were 100 telegraph poles down between Rookhope and Allendale and that was the problem in so many areas.  
A full investigation is to be held and NCC will be drawing a 'blue-print' for every Parish Council in the area to guide them if we do have another major incident.

12.10 Planning – none

12.11 Highways, footpaths and BOATS

12.11.1 Speeding Signs – we enquired with Slaley Parish and they have spent £4500 on each flashing speeding sign – some of this cost maybe met by the NCC small schemes grants but the maintenance must be met by the Parish Council.

12.11.2 Another meeting to discuss Slaley Forest access issues will be held on Monday 13<sup>th</sup> December in Whitley Chapel Village Hall

12.12 Reports

Wetlands –

Christopher Porter attended the meeting to try to establish the Parish Councils opinion on the fences required for his development of the wetland / Quaker Hole project.

Costs for the fence	Quakers Hole	Pony Field
Fencing / Gates	£8,670.00	£3,252.00
FIPL Contribution (Potential) Based on £4.9/m plus £1....	£3,229.00	£1,842.00
To find	£5,441.00	£1,410.00

Note - FIPL also to contribute to: • Renew steps and install handrail to assist access • Repair of Bird Hide foundation • Potential trough Quoted cost for all the above £1720.00

Total to find £6,851 (including VAT)

Everyone present agreed that these costs for a replacement fence (which includes removing the old fence and some areas needing to be done by hand) is still too high. All quotes have come from local contractors. No creosoted posts are allowed to be used in this scheme. Roger Rutherford and Edward Parker to look at other quotes to establish if this is a realistic price.

All Councillors agreed that some of the fences did need remedial work but that if not through this fund, then some of the work can be done more gradually. None of the Councilor's (and those not present had telephoned in their opinions) were happy to proceed with the project and felt it was too much money from our small precept of £8K to be spent on one project. In 2022 we know we have to replace some of the play equipment and other maintenance work.

Concerns over the cash-flow for the project as the Parish Council do not have the funds or structure to accommodate this. Ongoing maintenance costs were also a concern but would hopefully be covered by the ELM (environmental land management) scheme.

Window in bird hide requires maintenance and parish council happy to pay this cost.

Dukesfield Arches – the Council committed to underwrite the forecast cost of the required conservation works planned for the spring of 2022. Grant applications will be submitted by Greg to the Sir James Knott Trust and the Henry Bell Trust seeking contributions towards the cost of these works. On going.

Hall – 5<sup>th</sup> Dec - Xmas Fair raised £845

Main Hall Closed January for toilet refurbishment

Sportsfield – Equipment still needs to be inspected by Cllrs – GS assessed the equipment but it still needs other PC opinions on the state of the equipment. New Inspection due in January 2022 so wait until that inspection and then decide what equipment needs replacing or remedial work.

12.13 Any Other Business

12.13.1 Very big thank you to Ann Porter for overseeing all of the planting of the 90 trees which were received from the NCC 'Free Trees'. On Wed 24 Nov 21, there was a highly enjoyable planting session with Whitley Chapel Forest School lead by Chris Hilton.

- 12.13.2 Tree planting also took place on Sat 4 Dec 2021 - 3 YFC boys (Josh Heslop, Andy Harvey and William Smith) were thanked for their help in preparing the hole for the WI Crab Apple tree and assisting in the general tree planting at the Sportsfield.
- 12.13.3 We have received a generous donation of £500 to buy trees for the Parish. The donator would like Alder trees and to be purchased from Cheviot Trees. We have been advised that buying smaller (20-60cms) trees is more beneficial. There is space between the recently planted trees at the end of the Sportsfield to plant some hard wood trees.
- 12.13.4 Purchase of the new seats is to be actioned in the spring

*Meeting closed at 9.10*