

Minutes of the Meeting of Hexhamshire Parish Council held on Thursday 8th December 2022
in the Malcolm Caisley Meeting Rooms, Whitley Chapel Parish Hall

- 12.1 Present –Nicola Matthews (Chair), Roger Rutherford, Greg Finch, Edward Parker, Davy Short, Gill Whatmough. Colin Horncastle (Councillor).
Clerk - Jonny White.

Apologies for Absence – Marge Rastall, Hilary Kristensen, Alison Tweddle, Lee Riley.

Councillor Riley tendered his resignation this month. He will be greatly missed on the council.

- 12.2 Minutes of the previous meeting of the Parish Council held on Thursday 10th November 2022

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

- 12.3 Declarations of interest – No Declarations of Interest.

- 12.4 Matters Arising

- Information board: funding unavailable from county council, other avenues being investigated.
- Saplings/alders: Tim has given a quote for clearing out the top area on the roadside. With the approval of said quote, he should begin work before the next meeting. Christopher Porter will dig up the Alders before the end of January and give them to whoever claimed them. Davy Short agreed to take 40, Jonny White to take 20 and Gill Whatmough 30. The willow group will also receive 30.

- 12.5 Northern PowerGrid Grant

The Hall Trustees are fine with the Parish council using the hall as a resilience hub, but for public liability insurance reasons, the trustees require volunteers to be in attendance, if or when the resilience hub is in use. The trustees also want the Parish council to pick up any extra energy costs. The grant will be reapplied for, to reflect altered costs following the acquisition of specific quotes, with the additional cost of a generator.

- 12.6 Public Participation

- Christopher Porter emailed, informing the council about a cheque from the Henry bell Trust, which was not cashed. This was seemingly due to technical reasons with the bank. Another cheque has been given, which will be cashed accordingly.

- 12.7 Matters for discussion with the Unitary Councillor

Largely due to the economic climate, the County Council has been hit with high utility bills and wage increases, amongst other rising costs. Consequently, they need to make £18 million savings and efficiencies. £16/17 million has been found without effecting front line services. However, there may be a possible fire service strike. A voluntary redundancy scheme is also in place at the council and the procurement department is under review. Parking charges are also under review; town centres won't be affected (for now) but coastal car parks may see an increase. One big area in which savings have been found is highways, though the maintenance budget has been largely unaffected. Funds have also been found

via selling off unused properties. Further funding will likely come from council taxes increases. These cost cuttings may also affect how much of a precept the Parish council gets.

12.8 Correspondence

A letter of objection to the proposed caravan park at Hill Road.

12.9 Finance

- Matthew Hope Invoice. £2830.00 Approved
- Bill for group picture from jubilee. £85.45. PAID.
- Zen online £11.99 ex. VAT. For renewing the domain name for the website. Approved.
- The Precept form was received. Decision needs to be made before January 27th.
- A quote for the council's insurance renewal was received: £777.66. Approved, though invoice has not been sent yet.

Regarding the RPA payment for the wetlands: we normally get £323.81 every December. Alastair says he has renewed the payment (under his own name, on the council's behalf) for another five years, and that the payment should arrive at the usual time.

12.9.2 Balances as of 5th December 2022

Treasurer's Account	£13,524.89
Sportsfield Account	£4,794.27
Dukesfield Account	£3,366.07
Wetlands Account	£996.60

12.10 Planning

- 22/04182/FUL: Embley; two-storey side extension, single-storey rear extensions, new front porch, roof alterations including dormer windows, and internal alterations to detached dwelling. Support
- 22/04129/FUL: Rowley Head; new porch to front, replacement gable extension, and basic landscaping. No objection.

12.11 Highways, footpaths and BOATS

Footpaths: Duncan Lovatt has been contacted, regarding the repairs to footpaths located around Moss House, but he is yet to reply.

Two road closures in December:

- TTRO 131015226: between Dalton and Dipton Mill, from 7th to 9th December for carriageway overlay.
- TTRO 131024130: the majority of the racecourse road is closed between 5th and 9th December for resurfacing.

BOATS: Large amount of rubbish seen in forests. Bikers still using the BOATS, despite the gates being in place.

Davy Short represented the Parish Council at a meeting about BOATS and the trashing of Slaley forest. Thoughts are that the county council should be forced to close the BOATS that run through the forest. There will be another meeting in January to look into getting the police involved. They propose a total ban of vehicles in Slaley forest for two years.

A rotten gatepost at the access road onto the common at Lord's Lot needs fixing, the county council are to be informed.

12.12 Reports

Wetlands:

Northern Power Grid require access to trim down some trees that are getting too close to the powerlines.

Dukesfield Arches: -

School: - Nativity coming up. Raffle tickets being sold at the nativity.

Hall:

Christmas fair was a success. Panto starts this weekend.

Sportsfield: -

12.13 Any Other Business:

Another request was made to John Riddell to come and speak to the council about the general condition of the roads in the area. We await a response.

Meeting closed at 9:00pm.