

## HEDLEY PARISH COUNCIL

**Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting** held on Monday 12<sup>th</sup> May 2014 at 7.00pm in the Feather's Inn.

1. **Present:** Councillors R J Penny, D Rodgerson, F Speak, J Douglas, D M Watkins  
Mrs M Senior, Clerk  
Colin Horncastle, County Councillor
2. **Apologies for Absence.** None received.
3. **Declarations of Interest.** None
4. **Minutes** of the meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> June 2013 were approved and signed.
5. **Resolutions.** There were no resolutions to consider.
6. **Chairman's Report.** The Chairman gave a comprehensive report dealing with parish activities in 2013/2014. A copy is attached to the minutes.
7. **Finance Report.** The clerk presented her report on the statement of accounts for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2013. A copy was circulated to those present and is attached to this minute.
8. **County Councillor's Report.** Councillor Horncastle had to leave the meeting to attend Shotley Low Quarter's Parish Council meeting for information on the Hoodsclouse Opencast Planning Application. Councillor Horncastle will email an update report on the progress of the application.
9. **Any other business.** None

**Chairman** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date** \_\_\_\_\_

# HEDLEY PARISH COUNCIL

## Chairman's Report 2013/14

A fairly uneventful year with only a small number of planning issues to deal with, and depressingly the same main issues year on year of dangerous state of the roads, ongoing threats from large scale opencast coal operations at Whittonstall which we fear could spread closer to Hedley, and an irritation with the increasing levels of administrative burden which seem inappropriate for small councils of volunteers. We look forward to receiving the support from our County Councillor Colin Horncastle on fixing this type of issue, and ensuring promises on timescales to repair our dangerous roads are upheld. Both Hedley and Stocksfield Parish Councils have been complaining about dangerous ruts alongside the West Hill route to Hedley for 2 years, and were assured that fixing this had priority status nearly 1 year ago. Still nothing has been done. Hopefully a much postponed visit by Highways Officers prior to the AGM will move this issue forward.

Our Parish precept has remained fixed at £4000, unchanged now for three years. Despite this zero change policy we still have a reasonable cash buffer which will allow for upcoming expenditure on items such as village green upkeep and drainage which are ongoing requirements, and to keep the village in good repair.

The threat of large scale opencast coal extraction at Whittonstall has been with us for nearly 5 years now. The Whittonstall Action Group continues to be active in opposing the opencast and is fully supported by the Parish Council. Whilst a date for consideration of the application by the planning committee has not yet been fixed, we believe it may be imminent. Other planning issues we have dealt with concerned installation of two separate single wind turbines close to the village to which we objected, and a stable development at Leadgate Cottages which was accepted and has much improved the overall look of that area.

A community fund has been set up by EDF to compensate for the Boundary Lane Wind Farm. Hedley falls within the area designed for benefit from the fund, and we have a nominated representative (Councillor Speak) as a member of the fund panel which can allocate money to community projects.

The grass cutting of village green for 2013 was very poor, but a new contractor commenced work in April of this year and has already made a considerable difference to improving the look of the village.

For some years we have been complaining to BT about the dreadful phone and broadband service to the village. Following a campaign by the village, and the support of our local MP Guy Opperman we have finally had a new copper cable installed to the village which should at the very least improve the reliability of the phone lines.

Finally, as in previous years we conducted a successful litter pick from the roadside verges in the Parish in April. A welcome reduction in the amount of litter was noted. Our thanks to all those from the village who attended.

**Dr R J Penny**  
**Chairman**  
12<sup>th</sup> May 2014

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INCOME & EXPENDITURE FOR FINANCIAL YEAR 1.4.2013 - 31.3.2014

EXPENDITURE		£	INCOME		£
Aviva Insurance	General	278.95	Precept		4,000.00
			VAT		0.00
Northumberland Assoc of Local Councils		53.05	Refund		
			Grant		0.00
Campaign to Protect Rural England		29.00	Donation		0.00
Audit Fees		20.00			£4,000.00
Grass cutting		900.00			
Clerk salary - 2.5 hours per week		2,260.00	<b>Accounts Book</b>		<b>£</b>
Clerk's expenses		305.00	Brought forward 1.4.13		6,246.58
Training		5.00	Income		4,000.00
Website		35.79	<b>Sub Total</b>		10,246.58
			Expenditure		3,964.30
<b>Donations:</b>			Carried forward 31.3.13		£6,282.28
Slaley Riding for the Disabled		50.00	<b>Bank reconciliation</b>		<b>£</b>
			Current Account		6,282.28
VAT		27.51			0.00
		£3,964.30			6,282.28
			Less outstanding chqs		0.00
			<b>Total</b>		£6,282.28

Signed.....  
 Chairman 14.04.14

Signed.....  
 Clerk to the Parish Council

## HEDLEY PARISH COUNCIL

**Minutes** of the Annual meeting of the Parish Council held on 12<sup>th</sup> May 2014 at 7.30pm in the 'Feathers Inn'

**Present:** Councillors R J Penny, F A Speak, DRM Rodgerson, D M Watkins, J S Douglass ` Mrs M Senior (Clerk)  
County Councillor Colin Horncastle.  
Amanda Cryer, NEAT Manager, Highways and Neighbourhood Services, Northumberland CC

**205. Highways and Neighbourhood Services, Northumberland CC.** Amanda Cryer, NEAT Manager, Highways and Neighbourhood Services, NCC attended the meeting to discuss issues in Hedley Parish. Amanda advised that her department has a budget of £600K for the whole of the rural area however had secured extra funding to employ external contractors to carry out repairs to pot holes and drainage issues. NCC has a jet patcher which carries out larger repairs. She advised that on roads where constant pot holes are being seen then this would be put forward as a capital scheme for resurfacing. The following issues were discussed which Amanda Cryer will take back to look into and report back to the parish council:-

- **West Hill** – The ruts on the West Hill had been outstanding for 2 years. The road had been resurfaced however the kerb stones had never been laid therefore deep ruts had appeared at the side of the road. Amanda Cryer is to approach the project manager for this scheme to see if there are any plans for the work to be carried out. She advised that work is prioritised and will be completed when funds available. When the Stocksfield and Rothbury landslips occurred all funds were diverted to those schemes.  
The junction of Modigar's Lane and the West Hill resurfacing work had not been finished off. This needs attention.
- **Paths** – The pavements around the village are in a dreadful state with the surface breaking away. The Parish Council had obtained quotes in the past from Debmatt for repairs to roads and pavements however were told by NCC that they were not allowed to do the work. Amanda Cryer advised that highways can give authorisation for the work to be carried out and NCC is very keen on working with the parishes. NCC has no issue with a contractor carrying out work on the highway as long as they meet all criteria i.e. health and safety, road closures, traffic management etc. If the Parish Council wishes to employ a contractor to carry out repairs then a quote would need to be provided. Amanda would then look at the work required to see what is planned for the area.
- **Ditches** – Problems with blocked ditches are often experienced in the rural areas. Amanda advised that if a ditch needs clearing to obtain authority from Highways to do so as basis traffic management may be needed and this is a legal requirement.
- **White Lines** – The white lines on the road to Prudhoe had still not been re-instated and this should have been carried out as a matter of course.
- **Signs** – Damaged chevron sign on the West Hill had been damaged and needs repairing.
- **Broadoak Quarry** – The road at the entrance to Broadoak Quarry needs to be repaired.
- **Cats Eyes.** The road from Hedley to Leadgate Cottages was very dangerous in foggy conditions and cats eyes would improve this. Amanda will pass this to the NCC Safety Team to look into.

Amanda Cryer offered a walk around the village with representatives of the Parish Council, the Highway Inspector, Andy Olive and herself to inspect the defects. This could be arranged on a quarterly basis, with a meeting to update on progress. NCC is looking for more flexible working arrangements with Parish Councils. A response is expected from Amanda within 7-10 days. If a response is needed from another department this may take longer.

**206. Election of Chairman.** It was proposed by Cllr Speak, seconded by Cllr Watkins and AGREED to re-elect Cllr Penny as chairman of the Parish Council. Cllr Penny accepted and took the chair.

**207. Apologies for Absence** – None

**208. Declarations of Interest** – None

**209. Minutes** of the meeting held on 14<sup>th</sup> April 2014, having been circulated, were approved and signed as a true record,

**210. ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN.** It was proposed by Cllr Douglass, seconded by Cllr Watkins and AGREED to re-elect Cllr Speak as vice chairman of the Parish Council.

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211. **Matters Arising**
- a) **Memorial** – Minute 182 refers. The memorial is due to be erected within the next few weeks. Cllr Mrs Speak will obtain a date for erection from Mr Johnson.
  - b) **Litter Pick**. Minute 201 refers. It was noted that there was no additional litter after the barrel race. An early litter pick is beneficial before the grass starts to grow.
  - c) **Septic Tank**. Minute 202 refers. Cllr Mrs F A Speak advised that Northumbrian Water had carried out the work to install a cement container at the site of the old mine workings as a temporary solution to overflow effluent running into the shaft workings. Northumbrian Water is to provide an update.
  - d) **Hollins Hill Quarry**. Minute 203 refers. Cllr R J Penny advised that a sign had been erected at the Hollins Hill Quarry stating 'Ebchester Landfill Site'. NCC will be contacted for an update.
212. **Correspondence**. All correspondence since the April meeting had been listed on the agenda and was noted. All relevant items had been distributed to all councillors.
213. **Great North Air Ambulance**. Letter from the Great North Air Ambulance requesting financial support for the forthcoming year. It was agreed to give a £50 donation towards their work.
214. **Northumberland County Council Questionnaire**. The Locality Development Team at NCC is developing a new website dedicated for the use of town and parish councils within Northumberland. In order that the website is designed to best meet the needs of the Town and Parish Councils NCC request that a short questionnaire is completed by all councillors and clerks. The survey can be found at [http://survey.northumberland.gov.uk.tandpc\\_website/tandpc\\_website.htm](http://survey.northumberland.gov.uk.tandpc_website/tandpc_website.htm).
215. **Public Footpath Diversion No 12**. The diversion of public footpath number 12 had been confirmed by NCC on 16<sup>th</sup> April 2014..
216. **Finance**

a) **Invoices for Payment.**

PAYEE	DESCRIPTION	CHEQUE	VAT	NET	CHQ NO
Mrs A Senior	Clerical Services	£100.00		£100.00	SO
HMRC	PAYE	£25.00		£25.00	010638
R Snaith	Grass cutting	£320.00		£320.00	010639
Great North Air Ambulance	Donation	£50.00		£50.00	010640

- b) **Bank Balance**. The bank balance of £7667.28 as at 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2014 was noted (Statement 29).
  - c) **Annual Return for the Year Ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2014**. The Annual Return for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2014 was accepted and approved by the Parish Council. The return will now be sent to be internally audited.
217. **Planning Applications**. Nothing to report.
218. **Grass Cutting** – It was noted that the grass cutting was still going well.
219. **Dry Stone Walling** – Some repairs had been made to walls in the village.
220. **State of the Roads**  
It was hoped that improvements would be made following the meeting with Amanda Cryer.
221. **East Tynedale Parish Councils Forum** – It was noted that the next meeting will be held on 15 July 2014. Adrian Hinchcliffe will be standing down as chairman at this meeting due to him moving from the area.
222. **Minerals Workings** – An update will be provided by Colin Horncastle.
223. **Mickley Moor Farm** – Nil.
224. **Village Green** – It was noted that Cllr Rodgerson had planted fox gloves on the village green.
225. **Information Items**  
All relevant items had been distributed to councillors by email.
- Clerks and Councils Direct – May 2014
  - Community Action Northumberland – CANNY News – April 2014
  - NALC eNews – April 2014
  - Came and Company – Parish Matters – Spring 2014
226. **NE43 News**. It was suggested that NE43 News be delivered to all households in Hedley. It was agreed to advertise on the notice board for people to distribute. Cllr Watkins and Cllr

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Douglass agreed to write an article or list of events for 1 issue of NE43 news and submit to Margaret Williams by the deadline.

227. **Dog Fouling.** It was agreed to write to Mr Nixon thanking him for his assistance in helping to alleviate the dog fouling problem.
228. **Date and time of next meeting.** The next meeting is to be held on Monday 9<sup>th</sup> June 2014 in The Feathers Inn.

Chairman \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_