



FISHBURN PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Parish Council held remotely via video conferencing on Thursday 10th December 2020 at 6.30 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Councillors A. Pearson (Chairman); M. Barker; K. Dowson; S. Dowson; M. Parkin; P. Pearson; S. Tinkler. **IN ATTENDANCE:** Mr. K. Murray-Hetherington (Parish Clerk).

- a) **ANNOUNCEMENT:** The chair announced that Olive Wren, a long-serving parish councillor had passed away recently and tribute was paid to her service to the local community.
- b) **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:** Mr. Garry Conway requested removal of trees from the village green to alleviate problems caused by natural and seasonal phenomena and reasons of light. On the motion of Cllr. Tinkler, it was **RESOLVED:** That parish councillors shall meet on Sunday 10th January 2021 at 11.00 a.m. for an inspection of trees on the village green whilst following COVID-19 regulations and continuing to practice physical distancing. **RESOLVED:** To authorise an application for a National Tree Week grant of £150 to replace felled trees.

Mr. Paul Howell MP gave an update regarding road safety issues at Fishburn crossroads and stated that there was a case for measures within reasonable cost bounds and confirmed that he would arrange a meeting with highways officials to get them involved in the issues.

Minute No.	Agenda item
602.	APOLOGIES: The names of members (a roll call) was read aloud by the Clerk. RESOLVED: To accept apologies and reasons for non-attendance from Cllrs. A. Dillon [family commitment] and P. McNeil [meeting]. Cllr. M. Hodgson was absent [no reason given].
603.	DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS: Cllr. Barker declared a Personal Interest (PI) in matters affecting Fishburn Football Club [treasurer]; Fishburn Allotment Association [treasurer].
604.	REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATION: There were no requests received from any member who had a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest for dispensation to participate in discussions and vote.
605.	DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL: Cllr. D. Brown has submitted an apology for absence. Cllr. J. Robinson had submitted an apology [family illness] and would send a written report.
605.1	Members discussed a request to purchase 0.55 acres of land at Fishburn Industrial Estate from a drainage company who were looking to relocate their business. RESOLVED: To request certain conditions with a focus on reinvesting the proceeds on road safety improvements at the crossroads in Fishburn (junction Front Street & Butterwick Road).
605.2	Members discussed a request by Durham County Council (DCC) to agree to the adoption of an existing footpath on the Parish Council's land as a formal right of way. Members raised issues with a focus on reinvesting the proceeds on road safety improvements at the crossroads in Fishburn. RESOLVED: That the proposal is not agreeable. It was agreed that the surveyor shall be invited to attend the next meeting to answer members' questions.
606.	MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING: RESOLVED: To approve as a correct record and authorise signing of the minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 12th November 2020.
607.	MATTERS ARISING: There were no matters arising from the previous minutes.
608.	CASUAL VACANCY: There were no expressions of interest in the casual vacancy for a councillor by co-option. The Clerk explained that a Community Governance Review would need to be conducted to reduce the number of council 'seats'.
609.	FINANCIAL MATTERS: RESOLVED: To receive the schedule of monthly expenditure and approve payment of those invoices presented to the meeting and issue cheques.

RESOLVED: To receive the most recent budget report.

- 610. GROUNDS MAINTENANCE SERVICES:** Members considered a grounds maintenance report from Mr. S. Ellwood and issues relating to an action plan and asset management.
- 610.1 Residents and some parish councillors had expressed disappointment at the size of the Christmas tree [16ft] as supplying the usual 18ft trees of good quality had been problematic. The grounds maintenance contractor had suggested ordering a taller tree [22ft] for 2021 and he had recommended renewing the tree lights as they were beginning to show signs of wear.
- 610.2 The football club had kept the water supply flowing at the pavilion and the thermostat had been set to a suitable temperature to keep the building warm in the Winter.
- 610.3 Cllr. Barker mentioned that the tenant of plot no. D1 had reportedly found fixed sheets which were not shown on the company's quotation for the cost of removal. It was agreed that the contractor should be asked to remove this if it contained asbestos.
- 611. MILLFIELD PLAY AREA:** Members considered two quotations for the cost of replacing grass matting. **RESOLVED:** To ask *S.E. Landscaping Ltd.* to provide a quotation for the work.
- 612. CEREMONIAL BEACON PROJECT:** Members received an update on the 'Queen Elizabeth Beacon of Hope'. Cllr. Tinkler had tried to contact Geoff Gibson, Managing Director at *Dale Fabrications*; Tim Girvan (gas fitter); and *Bullfinch Gas Equipment Ltd.* but no-one had been available. The Parish Clerk was asked to contact Geoff Gibson to ascertain the current position and when things might get started, preferably with the following four weeks.
- 613. CEMETERY MEMORIAL GARDEN PROJECT:** Members received a report on the memorial garden and fund-raising from Cllr. S. Dowson, who had been overwhelmed by donations via *GoFundMe Team Fundraising* with secure payments directly to the Parish Council's account.
- 613.1 **RESOLVED:** That the price for purchasing a polished brass memorial plaque shall be £100.00 per plaque including engraving, which also incorporates the cost of fitting, such price to be reassessed whenever the cemetery fees are reviewed.
- 613.2 **RESOLVED:** That the cost of installing corner marker stones and replacing the old notice board in the cemetery shall be met from any surplus from the *GoFundMe Team Fundraising*.
- 614. SOCIAL MEDIA:** Members discussed the benefits and pitfalls of setting up a parish council social media account such as *Facebook* and the cost implications within a small local council.
- RESOLVED:** That the Parish Council shall not set up its own social media account.
- 614.1 **RESOLVED:** To accept Cllr. Parkin's proposal to keep open an existing online news site.
- 614.2 **RESOLVED:** To consider a communication strategy and newsletter at a future meeting.
- 615. MEMORIAL CHILDREN'S PLAYING FIELD:** The Trustees had agreed to lease the land at the Memorial Children's Playing Field to the Parish Council with the play equipment at a nominal rent to preserve, maintain, and keep it in a good state of repair for a long lease period (99 years). The terms of the draft lease agreement allowed the Parish Council [the lessee] to carry out installation and maintenance of new playground equipment on the land. On the motion of Cllr. Tinkler, seconded by Cllr. S. Dowson, it was **RESOLVED:** To agree to authorise the signing of a lease on those terms. [Cllrs. Parkin and Barker declared a *Personal Interest as trustees and they did not vote on matters affecting the charity*].
- 616. NEXT MEETING: RESOLVED:** That the next meeting shall be on Thursday 14th January 2021 at 6.30 p.m. held remotely via video conferencing.
- 617. URGENT ITEM:** Cllr. Barker mentioned an on-going animal welfare issue at the allotment site. RSPCA and Durham County Council's Animal Welfare department had been notified.
- 618. CONCLUSION OF MEETING:** The meeting closed at 9:15 p.m. The chairman wished everyone season's greetings.