

Minutes of **Neasham Parish Council meeting** held 4<sup>th</sup> December 2017 at 6.30pm in Neasham Reading Room.

**Present:** Cllrs G Crute, D Dodwell, P Dunn, E. Miller, J Rumney, K Sandick, J Weighell (Chair),  
Ward Cllr J Kelley, J Walker (Clerk)

**Apologies:** Cllrs C Murray, L Tostevin

**17/111** JWe welcomed Councillors to the meeting.

**17/112 Declarations of interest**

It was agreed that any declarations of interest would be stated as arising in the meeting

**17/113 Minutes of the last meetings**

It was confirmed that the minutes of the meeting held on 6th November 2017 were a correct record.

**17/114 Progress Reports**

- **1688** Grant application for defibrillator – nothing to report on progress of application.
- **1734** Register of volunteers – an updated register was forwarded by the Chair to the clerk and this item can be removed from the progress reports
- **1755** Safety signs around Kent Beck. The EA works were completed last week (except depth gauge) and it was agreed that JWe and GC will meet on site to discuss requirements for signs. It was stated that EA would need to approve the signs and they would not accept the word “dangerous”. It was agreed that the signs would be limited to “caution steep slopes” or similar. GC queried that because of the extent of the paths on the village green and which during ice and snowy condition will not be treated, should the council display notices to this effect. It was agreed that additional caution steep slope sign would be provided as agreed between the Chair and GC on site.

**17/115 PACT Report**

The Chair reported that he had been asked to chair the last meeting but there had been little to report except three youths roaming around with air rifles, one youth wandering around with a lurcher and a “rage” incident on Neasham Hill between a cyclist and car driver which left the cyclist on the floor. At a separate Rural Watch meeting it was reported that two uninsured cars had been discovered, three youths arrested in a stolen car and a car had crashed through the hedge in Neasham Road.

**17/116 Roads and footpaths**

- The hedges concealing the speed signs in Dibdale Road had been cut back and they were now visible.
- The Chair complimented DBC on their cutting of hedges on the Neasham to Hurworth road including hand cutting around trees to prevent damaging them. An excellent job
- There had been a serious series of fly tipping on the road past Neasham Hill. A lady from Hurworth had been observed fly tipping on successive nights. She was identified, prosecuted and fined £500

**17/117 Report on Environment Agency Works**

- The remedial works had commenced 26/09/17 and were completed in the last week of November (including additional work to the uneven paving slabs but excluding depth gauge). The clerk was instructed to email the EA complimenting them on a job well done.

**17/118 Village Green.**

- The Christmas tree lights appeared to have been vandalised with all strings except one having been cut. Following the Chair's emergency request for approval of the quotation of £134.94 to purchase replacement lights, the Council unanimously approved the purchase. Upon delivery there several strands missing, which the Chair chased up and the rest delivered. The lights were put up on the 6<sup>th</sup> December and the Chair and his helpers are to be praised on such a good display at such short notice.
- The Chair thanked Cllr Crute for his hard work in carrying out extra tree pruning works, especially given the weather conditions. Cllr EM was also thanked for clearing the cuttings at short notice

**17/119 Planning**

- There were no planning applications received in the month.
- The granting by DBC of Application No 16/01236/CU -Spa Wells, was noted :-

### 17/120 Risk Management

- Following the approval of the revised Risk Management Policy and the Procedures documents at last month's meeting, the clerk had amended the reports. The clerk and Cllr Crute to review at a later date
- Cllr Dunn passed over revised planter inspection documents. Cllr Grute accepted the request for their future use. It was agreed that minor adjustments could be made for consistency>
- AA Ireson had carried out the statutory testing to the power supply installation to the tree equipment, it passed and test certificates provided. Mr Ireson said that he would not be submitting an invoice, it would be his contribution to the parish. The Cllrs expressed their gratitude to Mr Ireson
- The draft Clerk's Appraisal and Procedure Documents were presented for approval. In response to questions as to the length of the document, the meeting was informed that it was based on the NALC simplified version. The documents were approved and adopted.

### 17/121 Finance

- The clerk presented the an updated version of the draft budget incorporating suggestions from the members including a sum for a new power supply to the millennium garden and revised amount to transfer to ring fenced funds suggested by Cllr Murray. Cllr Crute expressed concern that although we had reached our target for the ring fenced village green maintenance, his proposal to increase this by a further £700 was accepted and the budget was agreed with the precept set at £6695
- Previously approved payments were confirmed as having been made DBC £10, HM Land Registry £30, Lights4fun £134.94. Payments approved but awaiting invoice CDALC £48, SLCC £59.
- The clerk was requested to leave the room for the councillors to discuss the salary for the post of clerk. It was agreed that this would be based on 120 hours per year from next financial year, with a pro-rata increase for the 4Q of this financial year.
- As advised by the Chair's email the clerk was having IT problems and it was possible that a grant for a PC could be available from the transparency fund. It was agreed that the clerk should follow this up.
- It was agreed that funds should be transferred from to current account to one which pays interest. The clerk was instructed to research alternative accounts that might satisfy NPC requirements. The clerk was instructed to liase with Cllr Murray over this.

### 17/122 Ward Councillor Matters

- JK reported that Hurworth recently had to hold a bye election and incurred considerable cost and because of this had to delay other works. Middleton St George had the same experience. JK emphasised that it was important to keep the electorate on side to avoid unnecessary costs.

### 17/123 Correspondence

- NALC Legal Briefings L05, L07, L08 and L09 had been circulated to the members. DD reported that NALC were still lobbying the Government (see CEO bulletin). DD also pointed out that the Reading Rooms may have to register separately with the ICO in respect of data protection.
- Appointment of new external auditor (Mazars), the clerk had been in contact with them over what appeared to be an anomaly and was informed that there were new procedures in place this year which would mean NPC would not need an external audit but still complete an annual return. This would be confirmed when document were sent out next year.
- Pensions Regulator, the clerk to confirm compliance and liase with Cllr Murray on the issue.

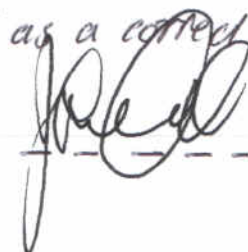
### 17/124 Other village matters

- Application for registration of title to the pump house. GC reported that he had made some minor corrections and the application was now ready to submit. The Clerk handed Cllr Crute a letter of authority for him to act on behalf of NPC together with a cheque for the fee..
- The mysterious noise heard at times though out the village remains unsolved, investigations continue.
- GC reported that the DCLG would soon be publishing a consultation document "Right Homes in Right Places" in an attempt to massively boost house building and advised the council to be prepared in case a large proposal was submitted for the village.

### 17/125 Date of next meeting

Monday 5<sup>th</sup> February 2018 at 6:30pm.

The meeting concluded at 8.00pm.

*Confirmed as a correct record and Approved by Council*  
Signed  (Chair) Date 5<sup>th</sup> February 2018