

Minutes of a meeting of Dinnington Parish Council held on Wednesday 20 December 2023 at 6.30 pm.

Members Present: Cllrs P. Hitchenes, G. McKenna, J. Porter, R. Thompson, M. Wood
 City Councillor T. Campion

Minute No.	Agenda Item	Action required
103.	Apologies for Absence Apologies were received from Cllrs Phelps and Toward Wright, and from City Cllr Avaei. Members offered congratulations to Cllr Toward Wright on the birth of her daughter.	
104.	Declarations of Interest The Chair reminded members to declare any interests as they arose.	
105.	Police Report No report had been received.	
106.	Minutes of previous meeting RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council held on 15 November 2023 be agreed as a true record.	
107.	Matters Arising <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The noticeboard had been delivered and would be put in place by Les Bass. • Hedge at Fenwick Corner – Cllr Hitchenes still to action. • Updates to the website were being overseen by Cllr Hitchenes – thanks to him were expressed. He would compile some analytics of the pages which were being looked at which would inform future developments. • A response had been received from the Post Office setting out the position regarding staffing and opening hours. There would be no change of opening hours to the post office for the long-term nor any change to its core service provisions, but they were doing what they could to maintain staffing levels and opening hours. An email address had been sent to register complaints. Cllr Thompson reported that the newsagents were looking at the possibility of an external cashpoint. • Regarding the tree at East Acres, Cllr Campion reported that he had been in touch with the resident and NCC and they were going to come out and assess it. He had most recently emailed the resident on 9 December; this had not yet been replied to. 	Cllr Hitchenes
108.	Christmas Trees and Lights Competition Judging had taken place and the winners were:- 1 st - Mrs and Mrs Old 37 Sycamore Crescent Joint 2 nd - Mr and Mrs Swinburn 16 Castle Way, and Mr and Mrs Welch 15 Hutchinson Court	

	<p>Thanks were recorded to Stan Johnson and Dean Bennett for their help with the trees, and to the PC members who had also been involved. Cllr Porter was very disappointed about some of the comments which had been made on social media which intimated that this was the first year there had been any lights/trees in place, which was not the case. It was agreed that St Oswald's removal service would be contacted to remove the trees after Christmas.</p>	
<p>109.</p>	<p>Village Projects</p> <p>Tree replacement and maintenance programme The PC's marked up plan for the new trees in the village had been included in the NCC planting 2024-25 season. New NCC tree officer Rhiannon McNaughton would make contact late summer/early Autumn to arrange a village walkaround to finalise locations and numbers.</p> <p>A new village map Deferred until the GP surgery has been built and then a more detailed map sourced.</p> <p>Possible additional grass cuts If the need arises.</p> <p>Turn the area of the Old School Field remaining after construction of the Doctors into a small simple park. Although agreed in principle by NCC, this could not proceed until the Doctors land purchase and site requirements had been finalised.</p> <p>Speed Limit Reduction to 20mph on Main Road. The consultation comments were still being reviewed by NCC, due to limited available staff. It was hoped to receive an update in the New Year.</p> <p>New play park equipment in recreation ground The slide and toddler unit were still fenced off whilst the ground continued to dry out and the surfacing could be rectified. The Activity trail was in, but again the grass mat surface had not established and they were still water logged. The Cantilever and Flex were now surfaced and would hopefully be opened soon. The other 4 new bits of exercise kit would have to be fenced off for another 2 or 3 weeks to allow the ground to recover, before reinstating the turf.</p> <p>The timber trail marker posts had been installed.</p> <p>The tree planting event hopefully with the cubs/scouts would probably not now happen until March, when the ground conditions had improved.</p> <p>Improvements to Footpath down to Big Waters The Stakeholder meeting was well attended on 21 Nov and the following decisions had been made: A new gravel footpath would be constructed from the bridge adjacent to the pumping station down to the gravel farm track approx. 250m. Ramps would be constructed both sides of the bridge. 2 x New Kissing gates would be provided on the main track down to Big Waters. A new gate would be installed on the Brunswick section to allow tractor access for hedge cutting along the footpath and some minor improvement works would be carried out at Big Waters Park.</p>	

	<p>The 2 x New Kissing Gates had already been installed. Making the footpath from the recreation ground along the back of the Trees estate to the track down to Seaton Burn into a public footpath was discussed with the footpath officer. His advice was due to high legal costs and difficulties in obtaining agreement from landowners, that it would be best to leave as is and the PC carry on maintaining the path.</p> <p>Electronic Traffic Speed signs in the Village Both back to back speed signs on Front Street were now complete and set at 20 mph.</p>	
110.	<p>Updates</p> <p>Village Hall – Pilates class was no longer taking place so this left a vacant slot. Also, “Legs, Bums and Tums” on a Monday night had ceased. Contact had been made by the City Council’s Community Wellbeing Officer regarding the activities taking place in the village hall. It was noted that the community coffee morning had been very well received and a Christmas get together had taken place that day, which had included the library volunteers. This had been a really good event.</p> <p>Newsletter – there had been some issues regarding the delivery of the newsletter this time around. The majority of the newsletters although later than requested had been delivered by 12 December. However, the delivery company claimed they had run out of copies, so some extra copies had had to be ordered from the printers. The PC had not been aware of this until reports about non delivery had started to come in, and then contact had been made with them. This was not the first time the delivery company had let the PC down with delivering late, and this time not completing at all. The most concerning issue was that they had not informed the PC that they had not delivered all of the newsletters. It was agreed that the PC revert to delivering in-house so that it could keep control over the delivery.</p> <p>Library - Nothing to report.</p> <p>Development of field adjacent to the allotments known as the Pleasure Grounds to facilitate additional Allotments - The drawings had been updated to take in NCC Highways planning concerns and returned to them for approval. Once they were approved they would be returned to the ecologists to re-check the BNG issues to check the retained meadow and recalculate requirements at the Recreation Ground, as well. Planning issues should be finalised by early February.</p> <p>Allotments – nothing to report.</p> <p>Website – The latest copy of the draft minutes had been put onto the News section and additional tidying up had been carried out as discussed at the last meeting.</p> <p>Dinnington Surgery- The new slightly larger site area had been resolved, subject to the Road Safety Audit, which was currently being reviewed by</p>	Cllr Wood

	<p>NCC planning. Hopefully this would be successful and this would then allow the NP to be revised and get it moving again with NCC.</p> <p>Neighbourhood Plan – As Argon Health required a slightly bigger plot to accommodate their building to satisfy planning constraints, the NP would have to be revised slightly to allow for this. The plan was temporarily on hold.</p>																															
111.	<p>Financial Matters The following payments were approved:-</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>K. Hadfield</td> <td>Nov Salary and expenses</td> <td>20.12.23</td> <td>£336.84</td> <td>200278</td> </tr> <tr> <td>HMRC</td> <td>PAYE</td> <td>20.12.23</td> <td>£453.20</td> <td>200279</td> </tr> <tr> <td>M. Wood</td> <td>Refund for noticeboard, xmas trees, screws and batteries</td> <td>20.12.23</td> <td>£785.32</td> <td>BACS</td> </tr> <tr> <td>L&S Printers</td> <td>Newsletter</td> <td>20.12.23</td> <td>£330.00</td> <td>200281</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Roam</td> <td>Distribution of newsletter</td> <td>20.12.23</td> <td>£300.00</td> <td>BACS</td> </tr> <tr> <td>M. Wood</td> <td>Refund members expenses and xmas lights competition prizes</td> <td>20.12.23</td> <td>£380.00</td> <td>BACS</td> </tr> </table>	K. Hadfield	Nov Salary and expenses	20.12.23	£336.84	200278	HMRC	PAYE	20.12.23	£453.20	200279	M. Wood	Refund for noticeboard, xmas trees, screws and batteries	20.12.23	£785.32	BACS	L&S Printers	Newsletter	20.12.23	£330.00	200281	Roam	Distribution of newsletter	20.12.23	£300.00	BACS	M. Wood	Refund members expenses and xmas lights competition prizes	20.12.23	£380.00	BACS	
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111.1	<p>Precept Requirement for 2024-25 Members considered the current budget position and level of reserves. This was both general reserve and CIL funding. The Clerk advised members that the council tax base had again increased this year, following information received from NCC. This meant the precept levied to each household decreased. After some consideration, it was agreed that the precept remain at £12,600.</p>	Clerk																														
112.	<p>Members Items of Concern</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cllr Hitchenes reported that the hedge on the house next to the school car park was very overgrown again. • Cllr Thompson raised Quarry Cottage rent, which was still outstanding. Cllr Hitchenes would pursue this. 	Cllr Hitchenes																														
113.	<p>Newcastle City Councillors' Items Cllr Campion reported that following complaints about anti-social parking outside schools, he was working with NCC and Sustrans to identify potential measures to solve this widespread problem. A new camera enforcement car was currently operating and he had spoken to the Headteacher at Dinnington Primary School and NCC about solutions. The consultation which had taken place recently about proposed zig zag lines outside schools had been abandoned due to a change in personnel at NCC. He had pushed for an ANPR scheme which would record non resident number plates within the school zone at opening and closing</p>																															

	times and create automatic fines. There had been a large number of complaints from Sheraton Park and Sycamore Avenue residents. The school were aware of the issues and were making all efforts to deal with it.	
114.	<p>Correspondence</p> <p>An email had been received from a resident regarding a hedge he had reported a number of times to NCC. The owner of the hedge had been contacted previously by the PC about this and it was agreed that Cllrs Wood and Hitchenes would raise this with them again direct. The resident who had raised it would be informed.</p> <p>An email had also been received regarding the bollards at the side of the school and difficulties in getting a pram through them. Members agreed this was an issue and it was agreed that Cllr Wood would speak to Noel and Allison who were working on the recreation ground to see whether an alternative solution could be found.</p>	<p>Cllrs Wood/Hitchenes Clerk</p> <p>Cllr Wood</p>
115.	<p>Items for January Meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Planning Consultations from Newcastle City Council 	Clerk
116.	<p>Date of Next Meeting</p> <p>Wednesday 17 January 2024 at 6.30 pm</p>	

CHAIR.....

DATE.....

The meeting finished at 8.35 pm.