

Hurworth Parish Council – Finance Committee

Minutes of the Meeting held at Hurworth Grange on Thursday 26th April 2012

1. Those Present:

Ken Pattison (Chairman), Val Hughes, Jean Peacock, Tony Needham, John Howard, Peter Foster, Ian Holme. Jeff Kemp, Tony Winnett. Also in attendance Peter Allan – Parish Clerk

2. Apologies for Absence:

Chris Pratt, Jill Russell.

3. Declarations of Interest

Reference HCA; Ken Pattison, Ian Holme and Jean Peacock declared a personal interest.

Val Hughes declared a personal and prejudicial interest.

4. This meeting was held in camera, due to the sensitivity of the financial matters due for discussion.

5. **Minutes of the Meeting dated 18th January 2012.** The minutes having been previously distributed, were accepted and signed. [Proposed by Peter Foster seconded by Jeff Kemp.

6. Correspondence:-

All correspondence items are listed on this agenda.

7. Financial Update

The Clerk circulated the updated financial accounts up to 31st March 2012; these were the final accounts, as submitted to the internal auditor.

Jeff Kemp raised a question about the longer term projections; the two year budget to 31st March 2014, includes a potential increase in the precept of £10,000, which is offset by the same amount as available for projects in the year 2013-14. A decision on this **will** be discussed in November 2012, when the picture with DBC is a little clearer.

There were no comments regarding the accounts, and they were accepted as distributed.

In summary, there is cash available for projects in 2012-13 totalling £19,000, plus the £4,000 already ring fenced for the skateboard project, and a further £8,000 for 2013-14, without the need for a precept increase. This will ensure that the recommended safety reserve of £12,000 at the end of the projected period is in place.

8. Skateboard Project

The Chairman summarised the current position, highlighting the public support which this project is receiving. There is concern that some residents and youths are expecting a designated rink, which simply cannot happen, due to insurance and health and safety regulations. The regulations state that if this is a designated skateboard rink, then two adults must be in attendance every time a youth is using the facility; furthermore one of the adults must be first aid competent. To date no parents or other adults have offered their services to take on this role.

The council agreed the following:-

- 1. An immediate meeting with the HCA to reach agreement on the conditions and usage of the refurbished area. Action Clerk to convene the meeting for Monday 30th April at 6:30pm**

2. The council will not accept any donations or contributions from the public towards this project.
3. A grant has already been applied for, and a response is due imminently.
4. In the event of a grant not being obtained in a reasonable timescale, then the council agreed to allocate an additional £4,500 to this project. This was proposed by Jean Peacock and seconded by John Howard. The vote was 6 in favour, 2 abstentions and 1 against.

9. Project Suggestions

The original list of projects has been reduced to those which passed the discussion stage on 18th January 2012.

1. Exercise equipment, for adult use should be purchased and located in the Grange playground area. Jill Russell had not provided any further information, so this project was eliminated.
2. a. The internal road to the Grange requires totally resurfacing. A letter has been received from the HCA stating the very poor condition of the internal road, and that initial cost estimates from DBC are in the region of £21,000.

The council had mixed views on this topic, as the cost represents a high proportion of the total precept value.

John Howard, as promised, reported back on the state of the road, and the remedial options to repair it.

Jean Peacock stated that the HCA did not raise this request; it had come from the possible projects for 2012. This statement was corrected by the Chairman by giving a chronological summary of events.

Jeff Kemp opposed the spending of this amount of money on a single project, which would only benefit a small percentage of the residents.

The project was put into abeyance, and the £10,000 taken out of the allocations.

It was agreed that the Clerk should write to the HCA stating that the council acknowledge their concerns, and will be looking into the various options which could be addressed. **Action Clerk**

2 b. The construction of a pathway from the road in the Grange to the main entrance. The HCA have received a grant of £4250 to do this work, so the project was removed from the list.

3. The purchase and siting of traffic speed devices within the parish, to be located at: outside Comprehensive School, centre of the village on Green, Roundhill Road.

This was discussed further, and the following points were raised:-

- The cost of on-going maintenance, raised by Jeff Kemp
- Moving the units may be more effective than static units, raised by Tony Needham
- John Howard suggested we look at a leasing agreement.

It was agreed that Ken Pattison will undertake a full study, and if the project goes forward he offered to project manage it. **Action Ken Pattison.**

An amount of £6,000 was allocated to the project. Proposed by John Howard, seconded by Ian Holme.

Project Action Ken Pattison.

4. Pursue the feasibility of installing a **MUGA** in the parish.

It was agreed that further investigation will be made into the feasibility of this project. The location is the primary consideration. The Comprehensive school, Hurworth Grange and the enclosed area on Grange estate were all mentioned as possible sites.

The project will rely heavily on the availability of grants.

£ 5,000 was allocated to this future project. **Action Ian Holme, Jean Peacock, Ken Pattison and Clerk.**

5. Funding for more trees. No progress yet, but project remains. This is dependent upon a grant from the Big Tree Fund. **Action Norma Kyle with assistance from John Howard/Chairman.**
6. Memorial trees and plaques for Alan Gibson and other notable residents. Val Hughes has this in hand and will be within the budget of £800 **Action Val Hughes.**

10. Awards

- a. Letter from **HCA** about the internal road; this has already been discussed.
- b. Request by **Hurworth Village Hall** for an additional £500 to cover the expenses of the **Queen's Diamond Jubilee.**

The Clerk reported that a detailed budget has now been composed, and that he is satisfied that the cost is accurate.

The council agreed to the £500 award, but stressed the need for the event to be widely publicised within the parish.

- c. All Saints Church requested the council to make a donation towards their bulb planting campaign to celebrate the Queen's Diamond Jubilee. The council rejected this request. **Clerk to respond.**

11. Any Other Business and ancillary comments

- a. Jeff Kemp made a report relating to his attendance at the meeting at Harrowgate Hill, with Tony Winnett, to review and comment on the DBC Gipsy Site Strategy. Herewith the report:-

- They have talked with DBC and got 7 day extension
- Full council meeting September to give final complaint etc.....talk to our DBC member.....end Oct doc. will be finalized

- DBC is only one to attempt enforcement of rules others Stockton Middlesbrough etc are not at this time? Tees Valley is not taking up their share!
- DBC have £1/12 m ring fenced for this enforcement. Without the money would they enforce or have to enforce anyway?
- Meridian Road is a site set up to fight gypsy sites apparently. network rail need to be informed of sites set up alongside railways as they apparently would object
 - It would appear DBC are not informing all parties affected even the farmer who is losing part of his field. (non compliance with legislation)
 - Visual is a valid objection
 - Consultation doc summary to go out to village in our magazine?
 - A lot of other heated objections but not relevant/acceptable...

Ian Holme commented that Bill Dixon has already commented that this initial strategy document will be largely rewritten.

Ken Pattison recommended a neutral response, and **Ian Holme agreed to draft it.**

Peter Foster requested the Gypsy Site report should be discussed at the next full PC meeting.

- b. **Croft House.** The situation may be moving a little, and it was agreed that the PC retain their status quo.
- c. An E Mail has been received from Mr John Buxton, requesting that the minute recorded at the last PC Meeting be changed, so as not to state his resignation from his advisory post with the Croft Club RoW.

His message had been distributed to all council members, prior to the meeting.

Jill Russell, who could not attend this meeting, asked that the minute should be changed to thank John Buxton, and better explain why he had changed his view. The council voted that the existing minute was a true representation of the circumstances, and should remain unchanged.

- d. It was reported that there was little movement with the Neighbourhood Plan initiative, but a meeting has been convened with DBC with other parties to be invited i.e three other local councils plus CPRE, ACRE and DRCC reps (via Lesley Millgate/Steve Ragg) . **Action Clerk to liaise and confirm.**
- e. Ken Pattison suggested, as advised by Luke Swinhoe, that the council should consider removing the 'all repairing' clause from the HCA Lease. This would

remove concerns about declarations of interest and persons being integral parts of both organisations. Val Hughes stressed the need for the HCA and alluded to the situation which arise, if they ceased to function.

- f. Mona Rhodes requested that reference be made to her recent book entitled 'Hurworth Memories, thoughts and Poems'. The council agreed that it could not be placed as an advertisement, but reference could be made to it within an article in the Newsletter. Action Tony Winnett/Ken Pattison.

Meeting finished at 8:40pm.