

Hurworth Parish Council

Minutes for the Parish Council Meeting held at Hurworth Grange on Thursday, 12th May 2016, starting at 7:45pm.

1. **Those present;** Margaret Williams, Jean Peacock Carol Paylor, Wilma Campbell, Peter Foster, David Wood, Simon Coultas, Elaine Hedley, Janine Forster, Richard Lawley, Graham Wylie, Paul Walters, Cllr Joe Kelley, Cllr Lorraine Tostevin, Parish Clerk RFO, and 38 members of the public.
2. **Chairman's address**
Margaret Williams welcomed all the new councillors and members of the public. She thanked them for electing her as Chair for the coming year and promised her commitment to the challenges ahead.
3. **Apologies for absence.** The Northern Echo reporter had sent his apologies, but he will be attending the Annual Assembly.
4. **Declarations of Interest** Jean Peacock – HCA
 Wilma Campbell – EPICH and HCA
5. **Minutes of PC Meeting dated 31st March 2016** The Minutes were accepted by the council, Proposed by Jean Peacock, Seconded by Paul Walters.

6. Public Participation

A resident advised against the motions (which had not yet been put before the council) on the grounds the committee would be too large and unwieldy, and non-councillors should not be required as a new council has just been elected to represent the public.

The Chairman of the Darlington Association of Parish Councils said that the council should be wary of 'group' approaches against planning applications, as individual objections usually carried more weight.

A resident asked the council to postpone the project of the second playground, until the current property development issue has matured, and more information is divulged. The council agreed in principle.

A resident spoke about purdah, citing two examples of Borough Councillors speaking out about planning matters in the local media during this time and asked why Hurworth Parish Council candidates chose to remain silent over the development issue during the election campaign. The Clerk replied that the Parish Councillor candidates had behaved appropriately.

The same resident asked whether the Parish Council had been informed of a crucial policy change by Darlington Borough Council which had in fact highlighted the 'Roundhill Road' site for development. The Council said they had not been informed.

A resident queried the 'only 2% of residents are opposed to the development' figure used by some candidates in their campaign literature. The clerk answered that it was not a matter for the Parish Council to respond to as this was individual candidate literature and not a Parish Council matter.

Another resident wanted to understand how the Parish Council gained a Gold Award citing 'transparency' as an area of strength and he expressed his view that the Parish Council had not kept residents informed and had not asked for his views as a village resident on this matter of the Banks Development.

The Parish Council stated that they will respond to these concerns with greater transparency and further updates regarding development issues.

Jean Peacock read a statement of the council's activities to date, and stressed that no actions could be taken during the five weeks of purdah. Her statement is as follows:-

REPORT FOR INFORMATION TO NEW COUNCILLORS

Bearing in mind there was no Parish Council for about 6 weeks from the 1st April and we were in purdah from that time.

First reported to Planning Officer John Anderson DBC Planning at a DAPC meeting on 10th February – nothing to report from them.

Rang DBC Planning Dept to enquire about information on this site – the answer was until a planning application came in nothing to report.

Parish Meeting on the 3rd March – still nothing to report.

During the week after our meeting various residents sent me E Mails including Land Registry details, where for the first time Banks were mentioned.

15th March first meeting with Banks, requested by Banks, mainly to say they were investigating to see if land was suitable for building – which was minuted by Parish Clerk. A further meeting was held on the 29th March, requested by Banks, to confirm that they were going to put forward an outline planning application

At our meeting on the 31st March it is recorded in the minutes as to the progress of the matter.

On the 15th March there was an article in the Northern Echo stating what was happening. This was followed by various articles in the Northern Echo 1st April 11th April and 20th April.

Banks again requested a meeting with the same people as before on the 20th April at this point the Parish Clerk telephoned HADD and ask if they would like to attend the answer was yes and three people attended. (we attended but not as Councillors)

The leaflet sent out by the eight original Councillors were distributed during the week ending 24th April which gave an article on the back page about the housing development. Also the Church magazine had an article on the housing development.

Banks held an opening meeting in the Village Hall on the 5th May.

11th May Banks contacted the Parish Clerk to inform that they were carrying out further explorations on the site.

Various suggestions and comments were made by members of the public, and these will be addressed by the Working Party who will be elected to deal directly with the Banks development issue.

7. **Accounts Payable** The schedule of payments made during April, having been circulated to all councillors prior to the meeting, was accepted. Simon Coultas asked for details of the two Section 137 payments, and the Chair provided the details.
8. **Financial Report** The Financial report as at 30th April having been distributed to all councillors prior to the meeting was accepted. Simon Coultas raised two questions, and it was agreed that the details will be discussed at the forthcoming Finance Working Party Meeting on 19th May
9. **The following motions were tabled before the council:-**

Statutory Motions

1. We acknowledge as members of Hurworth Parish Council our responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control, including the preparation of the accounting statements. We confirm, to the best of our knowledge and belief, with respect to the accounting statements for the year ended 31st March 2016, that the figures submitted to the auditors are accurate and the controls have been applied.
2. The council as a body, and the individual councillors accept the responsibilities as detailed in the Risk Assessment 2016.
3. The council confirms that they accept the NALC Model Standing Orders and conform to these guidelines.
4. The council confirms that they accept the Financial Regulations as defined within the Standing Orders, Section 18, and further detailed in the HPC Procedures.

The Chair read out each motion, and the council voted unanimously to accept each of the four motions.

Signatories: The council agreed that Jean Peacock, Margaret Williams and the Clerk should be the three signatories. **Action Clerk to arrange the change of bank instructions.**

10. **Annual Assembly on 27th May 2016.** The agenda was discussed and agreed, along with the format of the meeting. After speculation, the council concluded that a buffet and refreshments should be provided for 120 people. **Action Clerk to arrange.**
11. **Correspondence**
 1. A letter of thanks has been received from Friends of Rockcliffe Court thanking the council for their award of £300,
 2. A letter has been received from the Play Group thanking the council for their award of £150.

12. Motions before the Council

David Wood tabled three motions, as follows:-

Motion 1

That this council confirms its policy of vigorously opposing larger developments that could damage the rural aspects of the village. This being in line with the 2010 village plan, as created following the Public Consultation Survey.

Motion 2

The Proposed Roundhill Road development is an example of a large development which will have a significant impact on Hurworth. To ensure that this matter receives proper attention without detriment to other activities of the Council, this Council agrees to establish a committee to deal with all

developments over 10 units. The committee will consist of (12) members of whom (6) shall be members of the council. This committee will report directly into the Parish Council.

Motion 3

That this Council in conjunction with the community prepares a full new village plan to be agreed by DBC.

David Wood made a presentation, which was followed by a question and answer session with varying views being advanced.

The Chair proposed an amendment to Motion 1, that the wording be altered to be in line with the Parish Plan wording, and this was passed unanimously by the council, reconfirming the councils commitment to oppose large property developments within the parish.

The amendment read that the council reconfirms its commitment to discouraging further new housing developments, other than small individual homes, extensions or conversion of redundant buildings.

The wording was of motion 2 was changed by David Wood to change it from a Committee to a Working Party, and this was recorded. An amendment was put forward by Paul Walters to reduce the Working Party of a maximum of five people and that all should be members of Hurworth Parish Council. The amendment was Seconded by Jean Peacock and put to the vote and carried unanimously.

David Wood withdrew Motion 3, for consideration at a later date.

Through the Chair, the Clerk briefly explained the difference between a council 'Committee' and a council 'Working Party'. A committee needs to convene a meeting with due notice and publicise it: the public have the right to attend. A working party can arrange their own meeting at a venue, and need not publicise the meeting. The public are not invited to attend, and the meeting can be held in camera.

On both cases non-members of the committee or working party can be invited to join or to act as a substitute. These non-members can be either councillors or non-councillors, as the team may wish to bring in 'advisors' or specialists.

A committee can only make 'decisions' if the full council has given them the specific right. A working party has no powers to make decisions, and cannot be authorised to do so.

Decisions should always be taken by the full council, unless specific authority has been granted to a committee.

Selection of five members of the "Resistance to large development Working Party".

Eight candidates offered their services, so a ballot was held. The following were duly elected:-

- David Wood
- Carol Paylor
- Jean Peacock
- Margaret Williams

- Richard Lawley

13. Matters of Interest

1. Banks Group Development

Cllr Tostevin read out a statement that Banks Group has encouraged community groups to apply for funding for local projects as soon as possible, in case Banks decide not to proceed, in which case applications for funding may be withdrawn.

Also Banks intend to do further research on the fields, following comments received at their Open Day in the Village Hall. This will commence next week.

Letters are being sent by Banks to all visitors to their Open Day, who left their addresses.

2. Traffic Report. Margaret Williams reported as follows:-

Highways report March/April 2016

On Tuesday 10 the May John Angus conducted speed monitoring on Hurworth Rd nr the Academy at school start times and stopped and warned 6 motorists who were exceeding the speed limit parameter of 35 mph-all were local residents

On Wednesday 11 th May the Community Speedwatch team also conducted speed monitoring at the same time and place and 7/8 motorists were recorded as speeding- one doing 60 mph- they will all be receiving letters

Traffic analysis- March/April 2016

Hurworth Rd nr Academy- towards Spar shop -46% vehicles exceeded speed limit Ave speeder speed was 33.7 mph -max speeds recorded 75 mph on Thurs 3/4 @ 16.45 and 80 mph on Fri 18/4 @ 1.20

The Green towards Spar- 28% vehicles exceeded speed limit - Ave speeder 33.1 mph - max speed recorded 75 mph @ 20.15 on Sunday 27/3

Roundhill Rd towards Spar shop - 28.5% vehicles exceeded speed limit- Ave speeder 33 mph -max speed recorded 60 mph monday 30/3 @ 18.55 and Sat 19/4 @ 14.30

The pole for speed monitor at Croft is being wired up ready for the addition of a monitor soon.

Yellow parking restrictions on Roundhill Rd at school entrance have been renewed, some verge potholes on Roundhill Rd have been filled in and also some 'repaired' near the Spar but this still is a problem- DBC are applying the 42 mm rule.

14. Project Reports

1. **Disabled entrance to Hurworth Grange** Jean Peacock reported that this work is complete apart from finding a suitable solution to the large doors automatic entry.
2. **Hurworth Grange main road entrance.** Margaret Williams reported that the grant has been received and that work would commence within about two months.
3. Paul Walters reported that the survey to measure the interest and need for a **second playground** had indicated that a playground nearer the east end of the village would be welcomed. It was agreed that details of the survey would

be provided at the Annual Assembly, with statistics also being provided by John Hedley.

15. Planning Applications

Ten applications have been received, and studied initially by Jean Peacock. Each application was reviewed at the meeting, and the council agreed on 'No comment' on all of these applications.

16. Association Reports

No associated reports were made, as meetings had not been attended during purdah.

17. Any Other Business (non-financial

None

The meeting closed at 10:20pm