

In a statement, Cllr Howard stated that these were smaller chalets than the Eco Park development, and that they are for leisure homes. He also made it clear that this development is nothing to do with gypsies, and should not be treated as a further extension of the gypsy community.

It was agreed that the council request a postponement of the hearing until mid-September, as the PC do not have another formal meeting until 5<sup>th</sup> September.

**c) Planning Policy for Hurworth Parish**

The Chairman outlined his concerns that DBC had undertaken, or been assigned a disproportionate number of gypsy sites, as compared with all the other parishes within the Tees Valley area. There appears to be a complete lack of balance, and this has caused pressure on DBC to allocate a continuous flow of new sites to Hurworth Parish.

Out of a requirement of 142 sites within the Tees Valley district, Darlington accepted 97. The bulk of these appear to be being assigned to Hurworth Parish, and in addition to the Hurworth 'share', new windfall applications are also being granted.

The council has a Duty of Care to advise residents, in detail, of recent developments, and an Action Plan is now required.

It was agreed that a Press release be prepared by Cllr Kemp and Cllr Holme, which should be given to the Northern Echo as soon as possible.

Following this, the council will consider holding a public meeting to provide further awareness and generate people power, to fight against further expansions of the gypsy community, beyond the DBC Cabinet Report details, which indicate that the current allocation numbers have been fulfilled.

Snipe Lane is now a very large enclave of gypsy residences, and there is some concern that these are not 'travellers', in the true sense of the gypsy legislation, but rather the forward planning of a residential estate. Whereas the council accepts the unique laws of the European Gypsy fraternity, it would not like to think that this exceptional legislation was in any way being abused, when making applications for 'travellers' sites.

**Action: Council to prepare and publish a formal Press Release.**

Meeting ended at 8:30pm.

# **Hurworth Parish Council**

## **Minutes of the Emergency Meeting**

held at Hurworth Grange, Hurworth –on-Tees, on Friday 12<sup>th</sup> July 2013 at 7.00pm

**Those present:** Tony Winnett, Tony Needham, Ken Pattison, John Howard, Jeff Kemp, Peter Foster, Chris Pratt, Jean Peacock

Also attending: Joe Kelley and Peter Allan (Parish Clerk)

1. **Apologies for absence** – Ian Holme, Norma Kyle, Val Hughes

2. **Declaration of interests**

John Howard – Item 5 b.

3. The Chairman thanked the councillors for attending this meeting, at fairly short notice, but some business requires discussion, before the September meeting. This is principally Planning Applications which ‘expire’ before the next council meeting.

4. **Forthcoming Election**

a. The leaflets distributed by the two candidates were perused, and the content briefly discussed.

The council had been considering including a detailed report in the August Newsletter, scheduling the achievements of the council to date, and the projects and objectives which have currently been identified. A discussion ensued as to whether it may be beneficial to distribute this information prior to the election on 25<sup>th</sup> July, so that residents have a clear picture of the prevailing council strategy.

It was decided that this may be inappropriate, as it could be construed to favour one candidate more than the other. It was agreed that this should wait until August.

**b. Freedom of Information Requests**

The council has now answered approximately 180 questions, mainly to one person.

The responses now go through the Vetting Committee. The volume of questions, plus the apparent trivial nature of the questions appear to be becoming vexacious, and are certainly time-wasting for all concerned.

The council agreed that it will continue to answer the questions, once true identity is established. The council is already in consultation with our legal representatives, and will supplement this with further dialogue with the ICO.

The chairman suggested and the meeting agreed, that the council will write and invite the originator of the FOI'S to an informal meeting with council representatives, to discuss their anxieties.

5. **Planning Applications**

Jeff Kemp reported:-

a) **Strait Lane/Lygon House Application resubmitted.**

The application which had been withdrawn has been re-submitted, for five caravan standing places on Strait Lane corner.

The council will object to this application on the grounds of traffic congestion, highway dangers and potential problems with loose horses.

b) **Burma road/Skipbridge 13/00490/FUL Revised Application**

This is an application to build 30 holiday chalets on Burma Road. Cllr John Howard is named as the agent for this project, and therefore has both a personal and prejudicial interest in this development.