

Hurworth Parish Council

Minutes

of the Meeting held on Thursday, 9th December 2010, in the Hadwin Hall,
Hurworth Grange, Hurworth on Tees.

Those attending:-

Chris Pratt, Val Hughes, Gill Hepplewhite, Peter Foster, Alan Gibson, Ian Holme,
John Howard, Jean Peacock, Peter Allan, Don Parr; also Cllr Malcolm Dunstone

101 Apologies for absence:- Jill Russell, Ken Pattison; also Cllr Martin Swainson

102 Declarations of Interest:- Val Hughes – item 12

John Howard – item 14

103 Chairman's remarks

The Chairman has received a letter from the Chairman of the Hurworth Community Association complimenting the council on the success of the new lowered ceiling in the Fletcher Hall, and emphasising how in addition to the cosmetic effect, the great improvement in heat retention.

He also received a letter from Mr John Lawrie querying the capacity in which Councillor Allan visited Hurworth House School. Mr Lawrie states that he has checked with the Planning Department at DBC, and states that they have received no planning applications for alterations to the school buildings or car park. It appears he is concerned with additional traffic using Westfield Drive as an entrance to the school. Our Chairman will respond to Mr Lawrie by letter. **Action; Letter by Chris Pratt – letter to Mr Lawrie.**

104 Minutes of the Meeting dated 4th November 2010.

The minutes, having been pre-circulated, were agreed, and signed by the Chair after a proposal of confirmation by Ian Holme, and seconded by Jean Peacock.

It was agreed that minutes, in future, would revert to the old numbering scheme, for easier reference.

105 Matters Arising from the Minutes

Ken Pattison, in absentia, requested that all councillors try to make a contribution to the next newsletter; the final date for submissions is 30th December, and he needs articles to include in this issue.

Ken Pattison, in absentia, also advised that he had received a quotation for printing the newsletter from Jack's Publishers, which looks attractive. He is getting at least one more quotation and requests permission to take the decision on which to award the next contract. Alan Gibson enquired whether the decision would result in a lower

price, and having received confirmation of this, it was agreed that Ken Pattison should make the decision without further reference to the PC. **Action for Ken Pattison – arrange printing contract.**

Jill Russell, in absentia, reported that there were still queries outstanding about the distribution and sponsorship of the dog litter bins, but that she is addressing the matter, and will soon resolve it. **Action for Jill Russell – resolve outstanding issues re dog litter bins.**

106 Public Participation

Although several members of the public attended, no person wished to address the meeting.

107 Correspondences

1. Letter from DBC Corporate Services confirming that we will receive a grant for 2011 of £9,785, same as last year.
2. Letter from DBC Corporate Services providing a detailed map of the Village Green indicating ownership. **Action – This will be passed to Ken Pattison for the village green project.**
3. Letter from Harbro offering Christmas tree lights, etc. As this is already in hand, no follow up required.
4. Report from Graham Hall, Environmental Agency regarding the status of foam on the river Tees. The situation has improved and more work is planned by Northumbria Water Board. The foam is harmless and will not adversely affect the fish or wildlife. **Action; Ken Pattison to include an update in the next Newsletter.**
5. Update from Steve Ragg, CDALC on proposed Service Delegation Scheme. Gill Hepplewhite had attended a meeting on this subject and commented that although it is interesting, it does not appear to directly involve HPC. Any input which we may wish to make must be submitted by 12th January 2011. No action planned.
6. It was confirmed that a letter had been sent to Mr Farrar, regarding the Hurworth School Academy Consultation.
7. Ian Holme had submitted a notification regarding the National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy. Peter Foster stated that he keeps himself familiar with this scheme, and therefore no further action is required at this time.
8. Many councillors have received the latest update on the Darlington Local Development Framework. Peter Allan recalled that he had attended an earlier meeting at DBC and submitted a report of our observations and suggestions. The final date for further comments is 14th January 2011. No further action is planned.
9. Report from Stephen Ragg, CDALC, informing us of the 2011/12 Green Flag Award Scheme for the nation's best green spaces. It was agreed that HPC should seek further information with a view to entering the scheme, if we find it appropriate. **Action; Clerk to obtain more details, etc.**
10. Letter from DBC informing us that the 2011 election Expenses will be recharged to the parish council. Their estimate of this cost is £4,650.

108 Accounts for Payment, Financial Report and banking update.

1. It has been ascertained that the official signatories for the HPC bank accounts are still Alan Gibson, Gill Hepplewhite and Peter Allan. Our Chairman, Chris Pratt declared that he felt he did not need become a signatory, and therefore we should let this situation continue. All agreed. No action required.
2. It was agreed, and the forms signed by the signatories, that in future the bank statements should be sent to the parish office (currently still going to John Robinson). **Action; Clerk to make arrangements.**
3. It was agreed that the clerk should have on-line access to the bank accounts, with limited services of account detail queries and inter-account transfers. Alan Gibson asked about making payments on-line, and it was confirmed that this facility will not be availed. The application form was signed by the signatories. **Action; Clerk to make arrangements.**
4. Accounts for Payment;

Gill Hepplewhite expenses	£65.50
S. Sibbald final salary + holiday pay	£795.13
BDO Audit fee burial committee	£58.75
HM Revenue	£595.26
T .Murray including back pay adjustment	£604.59

These cheques were signed.

5. The Minutes of the Financial Committee meeting dated 23rd November 2010 were distributed and accepted.
This allowed the meeting to raise the cheque to All Saints Church, being a donation of £1,000, to help with essential roof repairs.
It was also agreed that the clerk should place the order for the ordinance survey map, as previously discussed and agreed. **Action; Clerk to order and pay for this document.**

The meeting confirmed that the precept for 2011 shall remain the same as 2010. This was proposed by Ian Holme and Seconded by Gill Hepplewhite. **Action; Clerk to inform the DBC at Town Hall of this decision.**

6. Peter Allan presented the revised PC Budget for 2010 and 2011. After a general discussion, the following points need to be recorded:-
 1. It was agreed that the contract for the curbs around the village green area will be awarded to Darlington Borough Council. It was further agreed, that Ken Pattison is appointed Project Manager for this project, and he will submit final designs and final meterage to the PC prior to the signing of the contract. Cost agreed at £6,000
Action: Ken Pattison.
It is noted that John Howard strongly opposed this decision, as he feels the solution will not solve the stated problem.

2. It was unanimously agreed that we should proceed with the purchase and deployment of (approx. twenty) tubs around the village green area. This will form part of the same project. An amount of £2,000 is included in the budget for this item. **Action Ken Pattison.**
3. Although several items scheduled for expenditure in the near future are likely to be delayed, it was agreed that they should remain in the budget, as we enter 2011.
4. It was agreed that we should purchase and install a second hard disc drive in the office PC. **Action: the clerk**
5. It was agreed that new councillors require training; however Gill Hepplewhite informed the meeting that there will be no training available until after the May 2011 elections. The cost allocation of £2,000 in the current budget will be carried forward.
6. A proposal by Ian Holme, seconded by John Howard was carried stating that the PC should address the serious state of the internal roads in the parish with regard to gritting and salting. The clerk was asked to obtain costs, and to place this topic on the January 2011 agenda. **Action Clerk to obtain details and costs.**
On the same subject Peter Foster suggested that we should tender for local farmers to provide a pavement gritting service; some may own their own gritting machines. This may be discussed further next meeting.
Alan Gibson expressed his concern about third party risk and insurance cover.
Cllr Dunstone provided a contact name in DBC, Mr Alan Ward, where the Clerk can start the investigations.
7. The Senior Citizens have asked for a donation towards the cost a providing a bus or transport to get their older members to the Grange meetings. This will be reviewed when we know how much they require. **Action clerk to get more details.**
8. John Howard referred to the position of the Acting Clerk, who will not be paid in accordance with Council Regulations. (Section 116). He suggested that the PC pay an honorarium as a gesture for the work performed.
The clerk expressed the opinion that this is likely to be illegal, and the meeting agreed that we should not consider this approach.

109 Village Green

This subject had been discussed in the previous agenda item, and no further comments were recorded.

The letter from DBC enclosing the 'ownership' details will be passed to Ken Pattison, the Project Manager

110. PACT Report

Ken Pattison, in absentia, filed the following report:-

1. The overall crime in the parish has dropped by 36 percent, as against one year ago.

2. There has been no Speedwatch sessions in the last month, as John Angus was not available for this duty. It is hoped our new Special Constable will be taking part in future activities.
3. The next PACT meeting will be at the Hurworth Grange on 26th January 2011.

111. Highway Matters

The following issues were raised:-

1. Peter Foster – The parish council should try to improve snow and ice problems in the future. This is on the agenda for the January 2011 meeting.
2. Val Hughes commented that only part of the resurfacing has been done in Friars Pardon. The meeting felt that, with the current cutbacks in DBC costs, it unlikely that the whole area will be resurfaced.
3. Jean Peacock expressed concerns that parking opposite the Primary School has not improved, and congestion is still prevalent. **Action: Clerk to speak to police to try to improve the situation.**
4. Don Parr reported that a drop curb is required near the Hurworth fish shop, as disabled persons have serious difficulty crossing at this location. **Action; Don Parr to provide details to Martin Swainson, who is already involved in this process.**

112. Allotments

Val Hughes reported that a meeting has been arranged in the Hurworth Village Hall on 29th December, and that all allotment holders have been invited. Thanks were expressed to Gill Hepplewhite (and husband) for hand delivering all the letters. Only six letters, at this time, had not been delivered, due to address difficulties. Mr Doherty will be addressing the meeting, on the benefits of forming an Allotment Association.

The next Allotment Committee Meeting will be held on 20th January. **Action: Clerk to announce the Allotment Committee Meeting.**

113 Trees

1. This refers to Correspondence item 9, the Green Flag Awards. It was confirmed that Hurworth PC will investigate this further, particularly to see whether grants will be available to us. **Action: Clerk to investigate and obtain the application forms.**
2. John Howard reported on the status of the trees in Eden Close and Bryan Close. No further complaints have been received.

114 Planning Applications

There were four applications, each was perused and it was agreed that the Clerk should record 'No Comment' on them all. **Action: Clerk to record 'no comment and return the forms to DBC.**

115. Position of Clerk

1. Gill Hepplewhite read the statement to the council:-

The Interview Panel

In November 2008 as Vice Chairman of HPC, the interviews for a new Clerk for our Parish took place.

There were four members of the HPC on the interview panel of which I was one member under the leadership of Ian Holme, chairman HPC on that date.

Due to declaring an interest I therefore took no part in the interview of one candidate, John Robinson as I had worked with him in a professional manner ten years previously.

I make a request that this is recorded by minute in today's business and hence be available for future reference.

Statement dated 9th December 2010

2. Two applications have been received for the next appointment, as at this date.

The meeting closed at 9:35pm., and Chairman thanked all councillors and wished them seasonal greeting.

Date of Next Meeting

Thursday, 6th January 2011 at 7:00opm.