

Hurworth Parish Council

Minutes

of the Meeting held on Thursday, 1st March 2012 in the Hadwin Lounge,
Hurworth Grange, Hurworth on Tees.

The Meeting was to have been preceded by an address by Mr Dave Coates, Head of Planning, DBC. Unfortunately, Mr Coates was unwell, and his visit will have to be re-arranged.

358. Those attending:-

Ian Holme (Chairman), Jean Peacock, Peter Foster, Val Hughes, Tony Winnett,
John Howard, Chris Pratt, Jill Russell, Norma Kyle

also in attendance: - Joe Kelley (DBC Councillor), Peter Allan – Clerk

Lauren Pyrah, Northern Echo.
Martin Swainston (former DBC Councillor)

359. Apologies for absence:-

Ken Pattison, Tony Needham, Jeff Kemp;

360. Declarations of Interest:-

With regards to Hurworth Grange: personal interest, Ian Holme, Jean Peacock and Val Hughes

361. Minutes of the Meeting dated 2nd February 2012

The minutes, having been pre-circulated, were agreed, and signed by the Chairman after confirmation by the council. Proposed by Jean Peacock and seconded by Val Hughes.

362 Matters Arising

1. The chairman reported that some progress has been made about the secondary school bus service. The present service will continue until 2014, allowing a 12 month period for further negotiation on the level of service for subsequent years.
2. The Clerk reported that we have rejoined the Darlington Association of Parish Councils. Peter Foster was elected as our representative, and a donation in lieu of subscription, of £50, will be sent. Proposed by Norma Kyle and seconded by Peter Foster.
3. DBC are posting notices about the Right of Way appeal along the Croft Club perimeter. This is due to a procedural error by DBC in the appeal documentation, and has caused a delay in the process.
4. Tony Winnett has visited Eurojag and reported that after a congenial and frank meeting, the following points arose:-
 - There is room at the roadside to hard-surface parking areas, where at present there is a mud quagmire. Action Clerk to pursue with DBC.
 - Eurojag have outgrown the site, and are seeking a new larger site within the Darlington area.
 - The management are going to promote the concept of staff car-sharing, to reduce the number of cars on site.

363 Skateboard Project

Jill Russell gave a comprehensive report of the progress being made to reinstate the skateboard facility, viz:-

- HiP have had two recent meetings to discuss and plan this project.
- Jill Russell and Norma Kyle have had discussions parents who support the project and are prepared to participate in fund-raising and managing the rink. Martin Cllr Swainston has actively supported these initiatives.
- There have been two meetings with HCA, and the Management Committee have agreed to the project, in principle.
- Both Hurworth schools have agreed to hold 'Uniform Days' to raise funds for the project.
- Some pupils from the schools are washing cars to raise funds.
- A specification of the surface requirements is being compiled, and will go out to three contractors. The surface will be concrete, and is likely to cost circa £10,000. The current fund of £4000 is insufficient.
- The area required for the skateboard will not impinge on the tractor access to the allotments, or the scout hut.
- Lighting is not required, as late night activity is to be discouraged.
- The skateboard area should be a 'no car' zone, as this will reduce health and safety risks.
- Jill Russell and Norma Kyle will continue to liase with HCA and the parents

364. Public Participation

The meeting was well supported by members of the public, who had come to discuss a variety of topics.

1. **Martin Swainston.** The Chairman invited Cllr Swainston to read a statement to clarify the situation regarding his disqualification from the Borough Council. HPC thanked Mr Swainston for his extensive work in the Parish to date and he received a round of applause from meeting.
2. **Skateboard.** A group of twelve young boys and girls made a presentation requesting the re-instatement of the skateboard rink. They stressed they did not ask for a massive amount, but enough to make the rink safe and become a good secure facility for the young people. Their experiences at South Park had not been good, with equipment having been stolen. Also with the recent reduction in the bus services, it was difficult to commute to South Park. They have started to raise funds, and will contribute to the project. They suggested holding 'fun days' and using a bouncy castle to raise funds. The youngsters were given a round of applause.
Parents also spoke and added their support to the project. They are prepared to commit to actively participating in this community event.
The council said they they are investigating sourcing grant aid, and are hopeful of obtaining funds within a three month period.
3. **Westfield Drive clean-up project**
Mr Peter Richardson expressed his very deep concerns about the work that has been done to tidy up Westfield drive. He stated that the trees have been reduced to a height of three feet, and the resident wildlife environment has been ruined. He has contacted the RSPB to gain support for the remaining trees and blackthorn bushes to be spared, as tree sparrows, which a rare and endangered species, are nesting there. A stay of execution has been put in place for fourteen days to allow a re-appraisal of the situation.
The council has received several other complaints in the form of letters and E Mails; these will receive a response, and notice of the re-appraisal.
However, many of the Westfield Drive residents are very happy with the results of the clean-up, and some want the remaining tress and bushes removed.

John Howard explained the situation of land ownership, and the process which the PC has followed. Residents of Westfield Drive have received four letters and the residents of Mowbray drive one letter, alluding to the problem, the land ownership and the solution intended. He continued by stating that it is intended to plant some new trees and hedgerow to fill the gaps.

The chair conceded that although the Westfield Drive residents had received a continuous flow of information, and the subject was in the newsletter and PC web site, perhaps the Mowbray Drive residents had not been directly informed of the final plan. This was probably because they have not claim upon this land.

Norma Kyle informed that the Big Tree Scheme, which she is working on, will encompass the planting of new trees along Westfield Drive. **Action PC to reappraise the project status by 15th March.**

4. Croft House

Mr Ian Bell spoke on behalf of the residents around Croft House. The party of residents who attended had hoped to listen to David Coates, Head of DBC Planning, who had taken ill. The residents expressed their thanks to Mr Swainston for the massive help and support he has given them as their Cllr throughout this campaign. They hope he will be re-instated soon.

The PC informed the residents that there appears to have been no further progress, and no correspondence has emerged.

The residents are concerned about the state of the wall around Croft House, which could fall down at any time; also the mess in which the site has been left. **Action the Clerk to write to Yuills' to seek action to remedy these concerns.**

5. Planning application

Mrs Christine Mills raised her concern about the large house extension applied for at 32 Friars Pardon. The extension is considered too large and disproportionate to the bungalows around it. Also the plans have reversed the north and south aspects. **Action the PC will express their objection in a letter to DBC Planning Dept,**

365. Correspondence

The Vice Chairman had reviewed the month's correspondence, and there were a few items which needed to be placed before the council. It was again pointed out by Cllr Holme that anybody who wished to read other correspondence have access to all letters, etc in the Parish Office.

1. Tees Valley Rural Community Seminars

Ken Pattison has been enrolled for the seminar in Hartlepool on 14th March.

The Clerk attended the funding and grants seminar at Loftus on 1st March.

2. Letter received from Rockcliffe Court, thanking PC for their donation, and confirming they will receive matched funding.
3. HCA has responded to the letter expressing our concerns about animals on the premises compromising health and safety standards,
4. There has been a dialogue of meetings and correspondence relating to the Primary School, Mr Schoon and also Mt Fulton about tidying up the pathways and dog fouling concerns.
5. Flood Risk concern and request for a gate at Church Row, is being progressed through DBC.

366. Accounts for Payment

Accounts for Payment 1st March 2012

The schedule of accounts for payment had already been circulated to all councillors, viz:

Accounts for Payment 5th January 2012

Sue Webster	Salary	£410.15
H.C.A.	Photocopying	£19.14
P. D. Allan	January exs	£132.77
P.D Allan	January salary	£522.70
DBC	5 Salt bins	£1346.11
DBC	1 Dog bin installed	£204.26
David Parker	Open spaces work, Gibson plot	£75.00
Bailey's Blinds	Fletcher Hall Project (Grant)	£1566.00
Darlington Assoc of P.C.	Donation / Subscription	£40.00
Peppercorn House	Office furnishings	£150.00
DD. Barclays bank	Charges	£4.60
Direct Debit	Talk Talk	£12.73
Direct Debit	Talk Talk	£18.60
Hurworth Country Fair	Award	£500.00
Hurworth Grange Senior Citizens Assoc	Award	£200.00

DBC Work at Church View, Hurworth £2241.60, - withheld as the invoice did not arrive in time.

The Clerk reported that we have not actually received the invoice, which has been requested, from DBC for the work at Church View, which will fall due within two weeks. The Council did not agree that this should be paid before it is approved at the next meeting.

All the other accounts were accepted and the cheques were duly signed.

367. Financial report

In accordance with the council's practice, the financial accounts had already been distributed, showing the financial position as at 28th February 2012. The report was accepted by the council.

368 Request for Awards

1. **Hurworth Grange Senior Citizens**, to assist cost of minibus service. £200 awarded
2. **Hurworth Country fair 2012**, letter of request accepted by the council, £500 awarded, as per the budget.

369 Allotment report – Norma Kyle

Norma Kyle reported that she had attended the 'Allotment Association' formation meeting at the Emerson Arms, on 13th February. A presentation was made by the Clerk outlining the current status and procedure for the formation of an independent Association.

George Lawman informed the meeting that, unfortunately both the designated Treasurer and Secretary had withdrawn from accepting their roles.

The meeting was attended by sixteen allotment holders and each was invited to speak. Opinions varied, but several agreed the principle of an Association, and will be prepared to join. A 'substantial majority' will be required.

A committee, not dis-similar to the existing committee will be formed and hold six meetings per year. Norma Kyle will represent the PC.

The Clerk reported that all rents have been received, and the Waiting List for first time plot holders at Strait Lane has been fulfilled, leaving two persons requesting second plots. There are two people on the Grange allotment waiting list, since 2009.

370 PACT Meeting – report by Ian Holme

The following PACT Report was given to the PC:-

PACT Meeting : 23/2/2012 at Hurworth Grange

Rob Turnbull of Durham Fire and Rescue gave a presentation to the meeting as part of their Consultation on Funding Cuts for 2012/13

This equates to an overall funding cut of 25%

They have already implemented a 25% cut in back office staff levels.

4 options were presented and attendees were requested to fill in their preferences

Documents available on-line, closing date 2nd March

Hurworth Crime Figures

Total of 7 crimes.

1 Burglary (1 arrest)

2 criminal damage

2 Thefts (bicycles from Rockcliffe)

2 Also (20 youths on the Green, + quadbike on Stressholme golf course)

They have seen big fall in metal thefts generally

No speedwatch in Hurworth this month, but will be in March. A member of the public asked for one in Hurworth Place and PCSO John Angus will oblige.

A Special Constable has been shown the area by the PCSO, but it is unlikely that much of her time will be spent in the villages.

Special Branch

Officers from Special Branch, based at the airport were in attendance and available for further discussion.

None Emergency Phone Number

The new none-emergency phone number of **101** is being rolled out and leaflets were distributed.

General

Neasham bridge is now open to traffic (single file at present)

Next PACT meeting is Wed 28th March at Middleton St George

371 Priory Hurworth House

Cllr Swainston convened a meeting at the Priory offices, and this was attended by residents, with Ian Holme and Jeff Kemp, representing the PC.

John Anderson, Head Master, referred to the recent problems and outlined the actions which the school had taken and were planning to take, to resolve these difficulties. Weaknesses had been identified, and he assured the meeting that adequate steps would be taken to address the issues.

The meeting accepted the plans, and it was agreed that review meetings would be held on a regular basis, to monitor the ongoing situation.

372 Newsletter and PC web site

Ken Pattison conveyed to the meeting that as he has prepared the firth six Parish Newsletters, he would like somebody to takeover the mantle. The meeting expressed how well the newsletters have been produced, and offered a vote of thanks to Ken for his diligence and efforts. All agreed that he should be asked to continue his role, as most councillors lack the required IT skills to undertake this task. It was suggested that Jeff Kemp could be a worthy editor, and should be approached.

Ken also requested that somebody should take on the role of updating the parish web site. After discussion, Norma Kyle offered to become involved, and would work with the Clerk, to undertake this work. The Clerk admitted his lack of knowledge to do the updating, but it was agreed that with Norma's assistance, they would try. **Action Norma Kyle and Clerk**

373 Bus Services

Jeff Kemp, in absentia, provided the following information for the meeting:-

50 replies from people concerned with the loss of the bus services, summarised as follows.

Interfering directly with college	10 names	+
„ with getting to and from work.	25 „	+
transport to clubs etc within the village	12 „	
General social problems, hospital visits,		
Senior citizens inability to visit friends and relatives.	100	
Getting about on summer evenings.	100	
Having to return early after visiting		

Problems marked + are also costing money, working shorter hours or taxis.

Cllr Joe Kelley reported on his findings, viz:-

- 20-30workers at Rockliffe Hall hotel and complex cannot get home without private, and costly transport.
- Staff who works at the Croft Hotel cannot get home, as their hours also extend after 7:00pm It is costing £18 per day for a taxi to get home, and makes the job almost unworthwhile.
- 40 responses have been received from the school.
- People can no longer visit Croft Club, for bingo or early evening refreshments, then get back to Darlington of Hurworth.
- A total of 300 names have now been collected.

Cllr Kelley has had meetings with Sue Dobson and Mark Ellis at Arriva. They say the daytime service is financially viable, although almost marginal, whereas there is no financial justification for the evening service.

The cuts in the urban area will be announced in June 2012, but no more rural cuts are planned at this time.

The meeting concluded that it is vital to develop a plan which would provide a service which is *sustainable*, and that the *community fully engage* in the solution. It is thought that money could be made available if an appropriate business plan is developed.

It was suggested that we investigate the minibus service which the Senior Citizens use. **Action Clerk to get details.**

374. Highways

In the absence of Tony Needham, there was no formal report.

1. It was noted that a letter would be sent to Yuill's about Croft House tidy up.
2. Peter Foster reported that the chevrons and traffic signs on the road to Neasham have been damaged and their positions moved, due to the large contractors vehicles. **Clerk to draw attention to DBC.**

375. Trees

John Howard reported that things were quiet, and there were no current problems. Several requests for trees to be trimmed, have been received, and John Howard has these in hand.

376. Planning

12/00020/FUL 4 Croft Road, Hurworth - no comment.

12/00010/FUL Change of use at Snipe Lane gypsy site. We wish to draw your attention to our previous letters of objection, these still apply to this site.

12/00050/FUL 1 Croft Road, Hurworth - no comment

12/00092/FUL 32 Friars Pardon - separate letter of objection will be sent.

Action letter to be sent with objections to the Planning Application for 32 Friars Pardon. **Action Ian Holme and Clerk**

357. Any other Business

None

Meeting ended at 8:30 pm.

Date of next meeting Thursday 5th April 2012 at 7:00pm.