

Hurworth Parish Council

Minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council held at Hurworth Grange, Hurworth – on-Tees, on Thursday 5th September 2013 starting at 7.00pm.

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

Also attending: Cllr Joe Kelly, Cllr M. Swainston, Andy Walker (Press) and Peter Allan (Parish Clerk)

59. Apologies for Absence

Norma Kyle (Unwell), Ian Home (Holiday), Margaret Williams (Holiday)

60. Declarations of Interest

Tony Winnett – HCA

Val Hughes – HCA

Jean Peacock (HCA)

61. Chairman's Address

- a. The Chairman was pleased to inform the meeting that Mrs Margaret Williams has been duly inducted to the council, having won the recent by-election. Margaret is on holiday at present.
- b. The cost of the election was £3200, and we have received a bill for this amount from DBC. The council has the option to pay the bill now, or to recoup this amount by adding it to next year's precept, and paying it at that time. This will equate to a ten percent increase in the 2014 precept. Ken Pattison proposed that we should pay it now, and consider the precept increase before the next financial year. This was agreed.
- c. The DALC AGM will be held at Durham County Hall on 26th October. The Chairman, Clerk, Peter Foster will attend, and Jeff Kemp also expressed an interest in attending. **Clerk to arrange.**
- d. The August newsletter has been printed and is being distributed. The Chairman informed that a mistake has been made, which stated that the number of FoI questions received was 2195. But should state 195. An errata message has been put on the web site, and the Chairman has requested the Northern Echo to make a similar announcement in the papers. A correction note will be contained in the next edition of the Parish Chronicle.
- e. Project Report
 1. The exercise equipment has been installed at Hurworth Grange, completing this project. The council thanked Val Hughes for her efforts.
 2. The speed monitors are still pending, awaiting the installation of the posts by DBC. There may be a further delay caused by electricity connection requirements.
 3. The Strait Lane parking project has been turned down, as DBC have refused to consider a meshing solution.

4. The resurfacing work on the Village Green internal roads has been completed.
5. The installation of the monument on the Village Green has been completed. It was agreed that a surround should be constructed, to allow grass cutting in the area. **Clerk to arrange.**
6. The survey of the trees within Hurworth Grange has been ordered, but the work has not been started, due to a delay by DBC Arborist Department.
7. The new water system has been installed in Hurworth Grange.
8. The refurbishment of the cenotaph at All Saints Church has been completed, and the surround will be done this month.
9. Jeff Kemp has obtained two quotations as guideline costing for the resurfacing of the internal road at Hurworth Grange. The meeting agreed to make a further study of the requirements, and to carefully consider whether the council can afford to do this work.
The council agreed that, in principle, the project was worthy, and that if funding is available, and the work specification is confirmed, and three quotations received, then the project will be considered at the next PC Meeting, or upcoming Finance Meeting. Certainly the road badly needs attention. **Action the Clerk to talk to HCA about this project.** A sub committee may then be formed to ensure that this project is professionally implemented.
10. HPC has made a contribution to the village youth club initiative.
11. It was agreed that the contingency fund for future flood problems should be maintained.

No new projects were introduced at this meeting.

62. Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 5th July: The Minutes having been distributed were accepted, Proposed by Val Hughes, Seconded by Jean Peacock.

63 Matters Arising,

- a. The bus shelter roof still requires repair work... some work has been carried out, but it is still not completed. **Action Martin Swainston will follow up.**
- b. The tree at Bank Terrace still requires attention -...This tree is on private property, and this needs to be resolved. **Action Martin Swainston will follow up.**
- c. Discussions with Priory Hurworth House School have not yet been raised. It was agreed that **the Clerk will arrange a meeting, and he and the Chairman will attend.**

64. Minutes of the Emergency Meeting held on 12th July 2013: The Minutes having been distributed were accepted, Proposed by Jean Peacock, , Seconded by Jeff Kemp..

65. Public Participation

No subjects were raised.

The Chairman congratulated Cllr Joe Kelley on his successful campaign to re-instate a daily bus service in Hurworth and the surrounding villages. A timetable will be published very soon.

66. Planning Matters

- a. Jeff Kemp made the following report;

Planning Applications Submitted since last Meeting

Plan App No 13/00591/FUL

Extension to existing agricultural barn

Sunnyside Belgrave Terrace Hurworth Place

No Comment

Plan App No 13/00587/FUL

Conversion of stables/squash court into residential property

The Old Stables Newbus Grange Hurworth

No Comment

Plan App No 13/00650/FUL

Erection of single storey extension to front elevation

1 Burma Road Hurworth Moor

No Comment

Plan App No 13/00613/FUL

Erection of a detached self contained annex

Meadowbrook 2 Roundhill Farm Roundhill Road Hurworth

The building is of wood construction not really in keeping with other buildings.
The building is for a carer looking after an **invalid, presumably** 24 hours. During the night **presumably** the carer would be in the main residence.
New buildings keep going up on the old farm it is becoming a little **village. Can** services cope?

Plan App No 13/00641/FUL

Convert existing bungalow into a two storey dwelling house with **detached** garage.

18 The Wayside Hurworth

This comprises the building of another floor on top of the Bungalow. Looks a well thought out project and will look nice.

However the residents either side may not be happy with the new look

No Comment

Plan App No 13/00566/FUL

Erection of a two storey **side** extension to property.

3 Lych Gate Hurworth

No Comment

Plan App No 13/00506/TFC

Work to Tree with a Tree Protection Order at No 1 Blind Lane Hurworth

Subject DBC approval. No Comment

Plan App No 13/00513/FUL

Development of 5 Gypsy/Traveller pitches at the back of Lygon House

Lygon House Neasham Road/Sraight Lane Hurworth.

Objected to by HBC at an earlier meeting. The development has now been refused by DBC on the grounds of being visually intrusive to the eye in a rural area.

Recent approvals of application Nos 13/00447 and 441 for a total of 5 pitches for resident van, touring van, hard pitches and utility blocks brings the number of pitches to a level that cannot be exceeded on the order of the Highways Commission due to the number of entry / exits from and onto the A66 trunk road.

- b. A request has been received from two residents who wish to install a gate at the entrance to Knell Gate. DBC has stated that planning permission is not required, but it is on Listed property, and will require permission for this. The council understand that this is an established right of way, and hence are opposed to a gate being installed. **Action: Clerk to contact DBC Countryside to establish the current status of this pathway.**

- c. **Parish Policy on Gypsy Planning Applications in Hurworth.**

John Howard recommended that the council should not raise another objection about further applications at Snipe Lane, as these were already 'approved' and the location is full. Only pending applications will be considered, and our objections will not be helpful. He advised that HPC concentrate on issues, which can be influenced, and principally on leveraging DBC to proceed with the new development of the site adjacent to the Arena, where 22 sites will be installed. The hold up is due to DBC not accepting the conditions set out by HCA (The gypsy Council) who have offered to provide £1.5 m in funding to create this site. He went on to say that 30 sites on Snipe Lane have been approved.

After discussion, it was agreed that HPC should seek a meeting with John Anderson, who is Head of this Department, and is an integral part of the scheme and decision process.

Action Clerk to arrange a meeting. Jeff Kemp confirmed that he has many conversations with John Anderson, and will prepare suitable questions and an agenda for the forthcoming meeting

Cllr Swainston addressed the meeting and stated that this is a very emotive situation, and agreed that DBC are holding the process up. It is necessary for the HCA and DBC to find common ground, and agree on a panacea to allow the creation of the new sites as quickly as possible.

Ken Pattison said it is important that HPC find out all the facts, and make the residents aware of the exact situation.

The Chairman related to the press article reporting that Cllr David Lyonette is taking a strong stand to try to expediate an acceptable solution to the Gypsy situation within Darlington Borough.

65 Accounts for Payment

The Schedule of accounts for payment having been previously distributed to all councillors, was accepted by the council:-

<u>Payment of Accounts</u>			<u>Aug-13</u>
<u>Name</u>	<u>Cheque No</u>	<u>Details</u>	<u>Amount</u>
W. Allison & Sons	102331	Monument	629.16
Sue Webster	102332	August Salary	442.00
P.D.Allan	102333	August Salary	502.04
Inland Revenue	102334	August Salary	116.40
Fosters	102335	Tree work	785.00
M. Powles	102336	Open spaces clearing	40.00
Vikings	102337	Stationery	148.88
DBC	102338	Grange car park	3318.00
Nat Allotment Society	102339	Annual Subscription	66.00
Cumbria Clocks	102340	Annual service	150.00

Barclays Bank	DD	Bank Charges	4.60
Talk Talk	DD	Comms	18.60
Talk Talk	DD	Comms	14.29

66. Financial Report

- a. The financial Report to 31st August 2013, having been previously distributed to all councillors was adopted by the council.
- b. We have received a letter from our external auditors, BDO, advising the council that the audit has been completed and we have a clean bill of health. The notices informing the public of this, along with the Final Accounts for the year ended 31st March 2013 have been displayed on the three Parish Council notice boards and the Parish web site, for four weeks. We received no enquiries to inspect the accounts.
The council formally approved and accepted the Financial Return, through a unanimous vote.
- c. The Clerk advised the council that the money which had been in a bond has now matured, and he recommended that we should place a similar amount on a new 12 month bond. After discussion, it was agreed that £20,000 should be placed with Yorkshire Bank on a 12 month bond, this being the assessed contingency HPC is recommended to carry. This does at least mean that the Parish gains some benefit from what is effectively dead money.
- d. It was agreed that we also place a contingent amount of £3,000 in the budget under Election Expenses.

67. Correspondence and Matters of Interest

- a. Rockcliffe Hall Hotel are staging a professional golf competition on 4th to 6th October, and could expect up to 10,000 visitors to the village. The Managing director of Rockcliffe Hall, Mr Nick Holmes has requested a meeting to discuss the arrangements, and this has been set for Monday, 9th September at 3:00pm. The Chairman, Jeff Kemp, Joe Kelly and the clerk will attend.
- b. **Vetting Committee.** Ken Pattison addressed the council to update them with the recent activities of this committee. The Vetting Process has been an HPC Procedure for some time, but has never needed to be applied until the recent bombardment of Freedom of Information requests from one family. The Clerk normally responds to FoI requests, but as the intensity of the demand has risen, a Vetting Committee has taken overall control of the situation. The Vetting Committee comprises the current and immediate past Chair, Vice Chair. The meeting formally accepted and approved this as the correct and appropriate practice.
The council is, at present, receiving advice from DBC Legal team, and have established a meaningful dialogue with the ICO, who oversee any complaints regarding the Freedom of Information act 2000.
- c. **DBC Service levels**

Tony Needham expressed concern that HPC and other rural communities are not receiving the usual level of service from DBC. He feels that the town is continuing to enjoy a high service level, while cutbacks are adversely affecting the parishes. Several examples were quoted, and it was decided that HPC should arrange a meeting with Mr Dixon, Chief Executive of DBC, to 'talk things through' and see how we get reach a way to help our parish to achieve their goals. Action: **Clerk to arrange a meeting with Mr Dixon.**

d. Mr Scott, a resident of Grange estate, whose house borders the Grange, has written to Phil Haynes, DBC Arborist, regarding his continuing concerns about the oak tree on the Grange land. Our previous attempts to find a solution to this complaint have not brought a resolution, as Phil Haynes states clearly that the oak tree is in good health and there is no danger of it falling down. Our attempts to get DBC to accept this responsibility have not been accepted.

68. PACT Meeting

Tony Winnett presented the PACT Meeting report, as follows:-

Hurworth PACT Meeting

Police & Communities Together
Hurworth Methodist Church Hall

Meeting 25/7/2013

Attendees

PC Foley

Tony Winnett (Chair)

8 members of the public. No apologies

Police Report

Crimes

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1 | Burglary – Baxby Terrace. Person went into house unlocked. Stole car keys and car. Persons arrested later. |
| 0 | Burglary others. |
| 0 | Violent crimes. |
| 0 | Thefts from motor vehicles. |
| 0 | Criminal damage. |
| 1 | Theft of Motor vehicle. Westfield Drive. Car burnt out. |
| 1 | Theft Dale Close. Item stolen. Person arrested. |
| 1 | Anti Social behaviour. Blackwell Golf Course. Youths on Green. |

Speedwatch 25 July – Roundhill Road. 08.30 to 09.30. 133 cars.
4 Speeding.

Open Discussion

Speeding on Neasham Road.

Residents not happy with comments from last PACT meeting that insufficient evidence of incidents on this road. Police requested to increase their presence and surveillance on this road. Details of particular cars and motor cycle high speed activity reported by residents. Parish Council to approach Highways for consideration of reduction in permitted speeds. Danger to pedestrians using Neasham Road to access Tawny Owl and youth hostel. Need for proper path that allegedly considered by DBC some years ago. Request that Neasham Parish Council be again invited to attend our PACT meetings as both parishes have likely common problems.

PACT Priorities

Speeding issues and usual “common sense” approach to parking and traffic in general.

Next meeting will be on Thursday 26th September 2013 – 6.30pm at the Methodist Church Hall.

The meeting expressed considerable concern about the potential danger of accidents at the corner of Roundhill Road and Neasham Road. This is an almost blind entrance road, and vehicles speed along Neasham Road. The suggestion is that a sign is erected stating ‘Beware Blind Corner’, on Neasham Road. Action.

Clerk to pursue.

Next meeting

The next meeting will be on Thursday 26TH September, 6.30pm at the Methodist Church Hall

68. Association Reports

Peter Foster reported that he had attended the DALC meeting. Items discussed included:-

- a. The cost of local elections were crippling to some small parish councils. This is caused by the 10 resident rule, which can decree an election takes place. It was agreed that HPC should challenge the high cost of bye-elections, in particular requesting that such elections be resolved by HPC interviewing candidates and the selection being made, which is the case if 10 resident rule is not applied. This would avoid the very high cost involved. Any complaints candidates might have could be resolved democratically at the four yearly elections. **Action Clerk.**
- b. Parish councils in County Durham are not satisfied with the police participation in their parishes.
- c. ‘Grants’ to councils in County Durham are going to be reduced or abolished; this has already been executed by DBC this year.

Jeff Kemp has attended the Small and medium Councils Meeting, and reported:-

- a. Changes in legislation have been mooted, which would effect parish councils; more details to follow.
- b. Speed controls were becoming popular and parish councils are sharing the equipment.

- c. It is possible to pay a subscription to ensure that councillors personal details are protected.
- d. There is a catalogue which enables smaller councils to purchase items at the bulk price which large town councils receive.
- e. Many of the parishes in County Durham are concerned by Gypsy activities. This year several councils have reported that fences and barriers have been torn down and Gypsies moved in, albeit, temporarily.

69. Highways

Tony Needham reported as follows:-

- a. When the road outside the Spar grocer was resurfaced, the double waste bin was taken away, and replaced with a smaller bin. This is inadequate, and we have requested a second bin.
- b. The stile on footpath 12 has been repaired.
- c. We have received complaints about the DBC resurfacing of the road from Hurworth to Neasham. DBC did not remove the weeds and growth in the curbs and gutters, and hence these have been impregnated with tar. This has been reported to Steve Brannen.
- d. Somebody has painted illegal yellow lines on the road outside Croft Club. DBC have been informed and they will be removed.
- e. The sewage leak on the road in the middle of the Green is being attended to.
- f. The white lines on the Hurworth to Neasham Road are being done this week.
- g. Tony advised that the outside wall along the Grange boundary is in poor conditions and requires some new bricks and pointing. **Action Clerk to investigate.**

70 Allotments In the absence of Norma Kyle, the Clerk gave the following report:-

- a. There are 9 people waiting for allotments at Strait Lane, and 3 on the Waiting List for the Grange.
- b. The HPC shed, which houses the mower has been moved from Bob Illes allotment to Maureen Powles allotment.
- c. The next meeting of the Allotment Committee will be on Thursday 19th September.
- d. No complaints have been received.

71. Tree Report

Peter Foster reported as follows:-

- a. There are trees on Hurworth Road which are blocking the street lights and have grown too broad and are protruding onto the pavement. These are resident's trees. Action: **Clerk to write to the residents drawing their attention to the problem.**
- b. A number of problems with trees have been discovered, and several dealt with in the last two months. The Clerk has been advised of several, others, and these are pending.
- c. A sycamore tree is damaging the wall at Grange allotments. **Action Clerk**
- d. A resident reported that a tree in Emerson Road had become a danger to properties in the immediate area. A survey was immediately carried out, and confirming the imminent danger, the tree has been removed. HPC will try to recoup the cost of £185 from DBC.

The Clerk advised the council that with the work pending, the budget for tree expense in 2013-14 would go over budget. After discussion, it was agreed that the Budget figures for 'Trees' and for Parks and 'Open Spaces' should be amalgamated. **Clerk to perform this.** It was also pointed out that HPC are committed to carrying out a survey of all the trees in the parish that are on HPC land.

It was agreed that once HPC get the appropriate clearance from DBC Planning Dept. we will carry out the required tree work at Lych Gate. Foster's are applying for the planning permission, as part of the land is in a conservation area.

71. Flood action Update

A meeting arranged by HPC was held on 27/8/13 in Hurworth Grange to discuss flooding in Hurworth, in particular the Glebe area, Friars Pardon and West End. It was attended by representatives from DBC, SBC, EA, and Arups together with some residents plus Tony Needham, Ken Pattison and Joe Kelley. Finalised Minutes will be placed on the HPC web site. A summary of agreed actions is;

1. DBC to chase Bedburn Trust re work on ditch at the bottom of the Glebe.
2. DBC agreed to commission Arup to look at cheaper alternatives (circa £25K) to the failed grant request of £170,000 to create a dam. Possible alternatives included tapping off directly from the ditch or an additional larger soakaway at the bottom of the Glebe, and the possibility of turning the Glebe lane into a directed watercourse to prevent seepage into the rear of residents properties on West End. The investigation would also attempt to identify watercourses on and off the Glebe.
3. DBC to arrange meeting at HPC request with NWL to discuss the confluence at the monument at the beginning of Blind Lane.
4. DBC to submit a Local Levy bid for property level protection along with EA and SBC. Also offered Arup assistance to local residents to help in last ditch attempts to protect their property.

72. Any Other Business (Non Financial)

- a. Ken Pattison reported that items had been stolen from a supposedly secure shed on the Grange allotments and he had requested HCA to consider an extension to their CCTV coverage. HCA agreed to get a price. **Action; clerk to remind Keith Sandick.**

Date of next meeting: Thursday, 3rd October 2013

The meeting closed at 10:30pm

