

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held 4th November 2010-11-09

Present: Chairman Cllr C. Pratt, Cllr Foster, Cllr Hughes, Cllr Hepplewhite, Cllr Gibson, Cllr Russell, Cllr Allan, Cllr Pattison, Cllr Peacock, Cllr Holme, Cllr Parr, Cllr Howard

In attendance S. Sibbald, Malcolm Dunstone DBC

Item 1. -Apologies: None

Item 2.-Declarations of Interest: Cllr Allan Item 14 and 17, Cllr Hepplewhite Item 9 and 15, Cllr Howard Item 16. Cllr Hughes Item 13.

Item 3 -Chairman's remarks: The Chairman gave information about a letter which has been sent to the Planning Department re Croft Club. A request for a donation from All Saints Church and notification of some roadworks which could affect the community.

Item 4 – Minutes of last meeting - accepted as a true record.

Item 5 – Special Constable - Tracy Fairweather was introduced as Hurworth's new Special Constable by the Inspector responsible for "Specials". PC John Foley was introduced as the new beat officer. Cllr Pattison asked when Tracy would be at work and when we would see her. Cllr Russell asked if we could have some contact numbers for both new Constables. Cllr Allan asked if the police had received any complaints about the church youth club in Hurworth. Specials Inspector said he had been at the youth club on Fridays in the past and said he had seen no problems at all, in fact the young people had been well behaved. Any problems which were observed were from those known to the police.

Item 6 – Matters arising – Cllr Peacock raised the issue of the hedge opposite the Comet which had not been cut back at the time other work was carried out. The Parish Council had received a quote from DBC for £300 to carry out the work. Resolved that this quote be accepted and work authorised. Cllr Howard asked if the work to the public footpath opposite the Otter & Fish had been referred to DBC. DBC have responded and requested Right of Way section to check this area. Cllr Pattison asked for contributions for the

forthcoming Newsletter, ideas, articles and general input ASAP. Another print company is to be approached for costs of printing this next issue.

Item 7 – Hurworth School – Cllr Allan attended a meeting at the school with John Buxton today regarding the new use for the buildings. The Priory are the company who have taken it over, they provide education for autistic and severely disabled pupils. The school will start operating in June 2011 with 6 pupils and will grow to 35, there will be 30 staff. Transport is in place for the pupils and will use the back of the school for access so no traffic problems at the front of the school for the village. The front of the building needs refurbishment which is likely to be very costly. There is a £1m budget to adapt the buildings. The playing field was purchased by the Priory as well and Cllr Allan asked if they would be prepared to sell it to the Parish Council, the answer was no but they may be prepared to share their facilities with residents of Hurworth. The community can use the gym and theatre facilities. Cllr Foster thanked Cllr Allan for providing this information as it was something of interest to many people.

Item 8 – Public participation – Cllr Howard read the agenda to the members of the public who were present. Brian Farrell, a member of the public and allotment holder spoke in favour of making the allotments into an association. Cllr Allan said that he had applied for a grant to put water on the allotments and confirmed he would have had greater success if he was applying for an allotment association. Croft Club – a member of the public said he recalled the Parish Council saying they would assist the Ramblers Association with ROW issue. Another member of the public stated the gate on the field was always locked until 2008 as there were cattle on it. Another member of the public handed Cllr Howard a list of signatures supporting Croft Club. Another member of the public said he had marked football pitches out on the field in 1967.

Item 9 – Accounts – all items were approved for payment. The invoices relating to the Fletcher Hall ceiling are due to be paid. HCA are paying for the overspend on the project. There is a grant of £7803 held in the account, the total cost is £11,563.95 including VAT. Mr Peacock explained why the work had gone over budget. It was agreed that the Parish Council pay all invoices and HCA will reimburse the overspend. Cllr Pattison said he was not happy that it was over budget and wanted more information. Cllr Gibson also asked for

clarification on the invoices prior to paying them. Cllr Allan has extended the accounts to show 24 months expenditure and updated the figures. DBC grant was £9780 this year. It will be December before the Council know if there will be a grant this year. Cllr Holme said he thought there would not be a grant next year as DBC are one of a few who give this type of grant. Cllr Pattison suggested a committee of 3 or 4 should be formed to discuss new budget. Cllr Holme said he thought a special meeting of the Council should be arranged. A finance meeting was agreed for 23 November 2010 at 7pm in camera. The next Parish Council Meeting to be held 9/12/10.

Item 10 – Donations: - any matters already discussed at the last finance meeting should be deferred until the meeting 23/11/10.

Item 11. Highways – Cllr Foster raised the traffic calming measured near the Otter & Fish. The clerk to follow this up. Cllr Hughes asked about the footpath at Rockliffe, Cllr Pattison asked if a response had been received from Rockliffe about the golf path – not yet. Cllr Peacock stated that the footpath at Batchworth Terrace was in a bad state of repair even after repair work had been done recently. Clerk to write to the Highways Dept. Cllr Holme raised the issue of potholes at Slate Lane. Cllr Parr asked about the hedges which need trimming at the end of the Chase. Cllr Allan said there was one outstanding item from the Parish Plan. 2 monitors to view footpaths and repairs and from that a letter should be sent to DBC detailing work needed. 2 volunteers are needed to monitor the condition of roads and paths. Cllr Allan asked members of the public for volunteers, none came forward. It was agreed to put a “my street” link on the website for residents to report problems.

Item 12 – PACT - Crime is going down, no major concerns. PC Foley is now the new beat constable. Speedwatch, Sadberge have done their own speedwatch but it was not effective. Neighbourhood Watch is being promoted. Next PACT meeting is at Middleton St George 24/11/10 at 6.30pm.

Item 13 – Allotments – Cllr Hughes said there is to be an initial meeting to discuss an allotment association. DBC rent their allotment land for £1.00 Cllr Foster raised a point of order.

Item 14- The Village Green – Cllr Pattison said this should be on the agenda for 23/11/10 meeting now and not discussed at this meeting.

Item 15 – Trees – Chairman mentioned the trees near Cllr Pattison. Cllr Foster said this is a strip of green belt land with no more development allowed. A phone call has been received from a resident about a beech tree at Bryan Close. Phil Haynes DBC to be asked to inspect, Cllr Howard to liaise with DBC on this. Cllr Pattison asked the clerk to ring Dr Williams to ask who the land belongs to, send letter to 2 Chase End. Letter from 16 Eden Close re trees, Cllr Howard to investigate this matter. Cllr Hepplewhite stated they have raised queries before.

Item 16 – Croft Club ROW – The Chairman said that it had been proposed that the Parish Council approve the resolution 12/09 made by the previous clerk. Cllr Pattison said we need to endorse the actions of the parish clerk. Cllr Holme said all members of the Council had voted in support of the application made in December 2009. Cllr Howard gave further details on the matter. Chairman gave the clerk a copy of the proposed wording for a preamble and a Minute and asked that it be included in the minutes;

“An application dated 8 December 2009 was made to Darlington Borough Council by the Parish Clerk under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 for the adding of a footpath on land owned by the following (as copied from the Land Registry record)

CROFT & DISTRICT WORKING MEN'S CLUB INSTITUTE
LIMITED (Industrial and Provident Society No. 7213r)
of 6 Hurworth Road, Hurworth Place, Darlington DL2
2DA.

to the Definitive Map. At the Parish Council meetings in December 2009, February 2010 and September 2010 the matter has been considered by the Parish Council but it is not clear from the Minutes that appropriate authority had been given the Clerk to make the application. Following queries made by solicitors representing Croft Club the Parish Council needs to clarify that the application was properly made by the Clerk.

John Buxton has been providing advice and guidance to a number of people who have put forward evidence in support of the creation of a public right of way alongside the river Tees on land owned by Croft Club.

John Buxton is willing to continue to offer advice and is also willing to represent and support the Parish Council at any stage of the process that has to be followed for the creation of a public right of way subject to the Council having agreed that they are the applicant. As this is being offered on a voluntary basis then the right to withdraw would be at the discretion of John Buxton but he has offered that this would be on the expiry of two months notice by either himself or the Parish Council (or with less notice by mutual agreement).

Resolved:

The application made by the Parish Clerk, as described above and dated 8 December 2009, is approved.

The offer by John Buxton to advise and represent the Parish Council as described above is approved."

Cllr Pattison stated that the Parish Council clearly supported this matter. The clerk at the time interpreted this as the Council being the applicant and sent the paperwork in. HPC are the applicant in this case at present.

The minutes from then as they stand may not be sufficient. We can amend them by stating that the Council endorse the clerks application. To endorse the clerks action won't do any harm as the Parish Council do support the ROW. DBC have advised that it is very unlikely that any cost will be awarded against the Council. Cost might be given if the Councils behaviour was deemed to be unreasonable. We are not acting unreasonably and would not do so. Cllr Holme stated we are not making a decision on the ROW the Panel will do that, we are simply supporting it, so he was happy to go along with the original paperwork. Cllr Russell mentioned DBC Martin Swainston who supported the original process. Cllr Allan said as the path is a yard wide on the riverbank what is the objection. Cllr Howard said that as Croft Club own the land they can choose who can use it. The owner is concerned that members of the public would be able to steal from caravans and that dog walkers would allow their dogs to foul the land. Cllr Gibson then spoke saying that others will make the

decision on the ROW not the Parish Council and it was right that the Council supported the significant number of residents who wish to use it. It was proposed we continue to support the action and the proposed amendment. - Cllr Howard voted no and Cllr Hepplewhite abstained. All other members agreed to adopt the proposal which John Buxton had designed. Resolved – The Parish Council officially adopt the wording of the amendment.

Item 17 – Matters for Information – Cllr Allan gave a letter from the Friends of Rockliffe Hall asking for a donation. HCA have written proposing to add a bar facility in the Fletcher Hall. It was agreed in principle that this was acceptable. Any structural alterations to be approved by the Council as landlord. Cllr declared an interest in this matter and proceeded to give more details and costings for the bar facility which he ~~deed~~ had

Meeting Closed at 9pm.

Next Meeting to be 9/12/10