

Minutes of Meeting held Monday, 11th July 2016 at 7.00 pm,
Parish Community Room, Monteith Close, West Auckland

Present: Cllr H Charlton, Chair
Cllr E Farrer
Cllr V Raine
Cllr L Rielly
Cllr M Roberts
Cllr G Smith
Cllr A Turner
Sam Scotchbrook, Citizens' Advice Bureau

16.44 TO ACCEPT APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

Apologies were received from Cllr Mairs, Cllr G Robinson, Cllr W Robinson & Cllr Wright.

16.45 DECLARATION OF INTEREST IN ITEMS ON THE AGENDA.

There were no expressions of interest declared for any agenda item.

16.46 TO CONFIRM MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING & MATTERS ARISING

- The Minutes were agreed as a true account with the exception of Minute reference 16.48 which should have read 'interviews were being held for Local Trusted Organisation' the file copy will be amended accordingly. The Clerk requested that any available Minutes from meetings councillors attend, and wish to report back on, be made available to embed in the Parish Council Minutes for information and to prevent any future misinterpretation.

Matters Arising

- A representative from the Parish Council visited the Nursery and confirmed that the bollards are not causing parking restriction or obstruction. The general state of the area was discussed and DCC will be asked to improve the footpath track where grass has been trodden away to soil. DCC will also be asked to reduce the width of grass scorch throughout the village when spraying weed killer around kerbs and posts as it was agreed it looks unsightly. ACTION: Clerk to liaise with Dave Gillett.
- A resident has asked for Parish Council support with a request to remove overgrown trees outside 9 Monteith Close and 21 Eden Grove. This issue has been raised with DCC and Dale & Valley homes as each advises that the other is responsible. Local councillors will be asked to pursue a resolution. ACTION: Clerk to liaise with Cllr Wilson & Cllr York.
- It was reported that there was no need to request a raffle prize from Tesco as sufficient donations were made to the Queen's 90th birthday event.

16.47 TO INVITE ANY COMMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC.

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It was reported that the litter picker's bag full of rubbish was dropped at the nominated place and remained there awaiting collection for over a week; in the interim dogs had ripped the bag open and the litter was spread around the area. ACTION: Cllr Turner to liaise with DCC.

It was proposed and resolved that the Parish Council will purchase 'grab sticks' to assist willing residents whilst litter picking. ACTION: Clerk to seek to purchase.

It was suggested that the Parish Council consider employing someone during the summer months to support with the tidy up of parish grassed areas; it was emphasised that any such service should enhance, not replace, DCC effort. There was no resolution following this suggestion.

A village approach area reported as an 'overgrown eye-sore' was agreed as belonging to Etherley Parish; Cllr Turner agreed to escalate the complaint to Teesdale Council.

16.48 To RECEIVE CHAIRPERSON/COUNCILLORS REPORT

- Three Parish Councillors attended the annual SLCC and reported back that the event had been very informative and recommended attendance in future years. Self-watering planters being promoted at the event were thought to be ideal for the village; a brochure was available but no resolution made.
- Cllr Roberts had attended the Neighbourhood Plan forum and advised an event is being held at Bishop Auckland Town Hall on the 'New County Plan' 4.30 pm – 7.30 pm on Monday, 18th July 2016.

Cllr Roberts requested the support of the Parish Council to progress with West Auckland's Neighbourhood Plan consultation; local businesses and residents' consultation event is to be held in the near future at Monteith Close parish room. Any volunteers to distribute invitations and attend the event should contact Cllr Roberts.

16.49 CLERK'S TABLING OF CORRESPONDENCE/ENDORISING OF INVOICE CHEQUES.

- The Clerk tabled all correspondence received and payments were checked on invoices as below:

BT line rental		£194.28
BDM Services -Christmas tree bed		£210.00
Creative Graphics		£140.00
Queens Party - Costco food		£114.03
Queens Party - entertainment & local food		£500.00
Annual Subscriptions CDALC		£307.76
Ordnance Survey - reimburse duplicate payment	£65.70	
Domestic 1 Salary		£52.14
Telephones & Broadband		£20.00
Northumbrian Water		£44.38
Clerk's Salary		£600.00
Npower electric		£58.05
Litter Pickers x 6		£30.90

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- To receive applicants' details and arrange interview of potential co-opted member.

DCC have advised that if no-one calls an election before 26th July 2016 to fill the current vacancy, that the Parish Council can co-opt a replacement after that time. ACTION: Clerk to arrange interviews, if necessary, after that date for any interested candidates.

- Cllr Farrer advised that he hand delivered an allotment holder an eviction letter as he had been reported as breaking the conditions of his allotment rental agreement. Cllr Farrer was subject to an outburst from the individual and felt it was inappropriate to put him in this position; he relayed back the allotment holders' complaint that this decision was taken without allowing him any opportunity to defend himself. It was advised that the individual has had previous warnings and has not yet removed his belongings as requested. It was advised he had been on holiday and therefore it was resolved that an extension to 31th July 2016 be granted prior to re-letting the plot. ACTION: Clerk to write to allotment holder advising on this decision with the letter being hand delivered via the allotments' secretary.
- The Clerk had circulated an email complaint from a resident about the amount of traffic through the village during the times the Kynren event is being held. From responses received, the Parish Council's view is that the event should be supported as much as possible and traffic management will be handled and reviewed by DCC.
- Cllr Wright's suggestion of a miners' banner was raised in her absence. It was confirmed that the original banner is at Beamish and a request will be made for it to be returned to the village. ACTION: Cllr Roberts to liaise with his Beamish contact initially.

16.50 TO RECEIVE ENVIRONMENT/PLANNING WORKING GROUP UPDATE.

(i) To consider Christmas tree railings and obtain site meeting feedback

Concerns were raised about the state of the Christmas tree and it was suggested that a replacement should be considered. It was proposed that an expert opinion be sought prior to removing the tree. Cllr Smith agreed to seek guidance from a local expert in the next week and their opinion will determine the outcome. If the tree is deemed beyond acceptable recovery, it was resolved that it will be replaced whilst under guarantee and the Parish Council will finance a maintenance and watering package for the new tree. In view of this, tree railings will be deferred until a future meeting.

16.51 TO RECEIVE FINANCE WORKING GROUP UPDATE.

(i) To consider financial support to Citizen's Advice Bureau

A Citizen's Advice County Durham representative attended the meeting to provide some background on the work of this voluntary organisation and gave statistics on attendees from the West Auckland area. She advised that although there have been recent restructure and mergers with an 18% funding cut, the organisation is still bound by DCC to deliver agreed Service Level Agreements (SLAs) until 2020. The Parish Council agreed to consider some funding and following discussion it was resolved that £3,500 be included in the 2017-2018 budget to provide a 3 hour Citizens Advice session to be held in Monteith Close Parish on alternate weeks. This will commence as soon as can be arranged after the October 2016 Budget Setting meeting when the funds can be ring-fenced from

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reserves for this year and a potential budget agreed for future years. ACTION: Clerk to liaise with CAB representative.

(ii) To review room use charges for Monteith Parish Room

Sessional payments from groups towards the utilities at Monteith parish rooms were reviewed and it was resolved that there is no need to increase the rent as the income received exceeds all premise's utility costs.

(iii) To consider quote for children's events and arrange supervision as required

It was agreed that the Purple Bus will be booked 1.00 pm – 3.00 pm for toddlers up to 9 years old. There will be 4 sessions arranged during the school summer holidays at a cost of approximately £800. Cllr Charlton, Cllr Farrer, Cllr Rielly and Cllr Roberts agreed to attend to marshal only by advising children that they must attend with a parent. For assurance the bus owner has provided proof of relevant current child protection police checks and insurance in addition to the Parish Council's Public Liability Insurance.

In addition to the 4 sessions for toddlers up to 9 year olds, it was resolved that one double session, at a cost of £750, be booked for a laser quest and penalty shoot- out for older youths aged between 10 – 16 years old. ACTION: Dates to be advertised on receipt of providers' confirmation.

16.52 TO DISCUSS CURRENT LOCAL PLANNING ISSUES

Cllr Roberts updated on the Parish Council's progress to date and again requested support to hold an event to promote the Neighbourhood Plan. The Clerk volunteered to support as required.

16.53 TO RECEIVE ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING BEING HELD MONDAY, 12TH SEPTEMBER 2016

- To consider defibrillator training. Cllr G Robinson
- To consider additional picnic tables.
- To consider adding wooden slats to the stone seat. Cllr Roberts to provide a specification and Clerk to obtain quotes.
- To consider obtaining the Miners' banner back from Beamish
- To consider bollards on green area at the Earl of Warwick former public house
- To consider funding support for the youth club
- To consider future management of quarterly Westlife newsletters

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