

Minutes for the Monthly Parish Meeting of Croxdale and Hett Parish Council
Wednesday 08 February 2017, 7.00 pm

Parish Council Members Present:

Councillor J Anderson (Chair), Councillor R Burton, Councillor L Griffiths, Councillor J Garner, Councillor M Ord, Councillor K Summerson, Councillor I Watt and Councillor W Watt.

178/16. Apologies for Absence:

Apologies of absence were received from Councillor A Watt and also County Councillors J Blakey and M Plews.

179/16. Declarations of Interest:

There were no declarations of interest.

180/16. Policing:

There was no Police attendance at the meeting and no report was received on the number of incidents for the period 12 January 2017 – 08 February 2017.

181/16. Public Participation

Michael Graveling and Gavin Bestford were in attendance. Mr Bestford was invited to attend the meeting in relation to Part B on the agenda.

182/16. Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on the 11 January 2017 were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

183/16. Matters Arising

i. Fencing at Hett Lane:

County Councillor Blakey was to progress on behalf of the Parish Council, no response received to date, Clerk to follow up in advance of the next meeting.

Resolved: County Councillor Blakey to progress.

ii. Policing:

A response was received from Ron Hogg's office offering to attend a future meeting to discuss policing matters, which Members accepted. However, a response from the Police regarding the incident at Croxdale inn car park and the reported parked vehicles at the Citroen garage remains outstanding and progressed further on 3 February 2017.

Resolved: Clerk to arrange for Ron Hogg to attend a future meeting of the Parish Council and to also relay concerns that we have had no Police attendance at meetings since September 2016.

iii. Pond at Hett Village:

Clerk has contacted Hamsterley PC, Upham PC (Hampshire) and Ellisfield PC (Hampshire) for advice in relation to health and safety matters in respect of their village pond. A response was received from Hamsterley PC, whereby they had not yet considered health and safety matters due to their main issue is with-holding water in the pond.

Resolved: Full consideration was given in relation to health and safety matters following the restoration works and due to the works not altering the depth or overall size of the pond significantly, a risk assessment was felt unnecessary at this present time. However, this would be re-visited in the future if deemed appropriate.

iv. Litter Pick:

Clerk reported again on 12 January and followed up on 5 February; DCC confirmed on 6 February that this was carried out on 20 December, however they have since re-opened due to high volumes of litter.

Resolved: Clerk to follow up with the County Council.

v. Hett Fencing:

Cllr Summerson is yet to inspect fencing at Hett cemetery.

Resolved: Councillor Summerson to action.

vi. Street Lighting Repair:

Clerk reported to DCC on 17 January and was subsequently closed due to it being already reported. Members confirmed this has since been resolved but another street lighting is now not working – reference S60.

Resolved: Clerk to report to DCC accordingly.

vii. 2018/19 Allotment and Garages Fees & Charges:

Agreed 2018/19 fees and charges would be reviewed in due course in the new financial year.

Resolved: For Members' Information.

viii. Road Closure – Thinford Works:

Following numerous email exchanges and concerns from residents as well as the Parish Council, a meeting was held on 20 January 2017 with Officers, Parish and County Councillors, which resulted in a temporary road closure at Hett Mill Lane/Leeman's Lane from 30 January for 9 weeks.

Councillor I Watt requested a formal complaint be issued to the County Council in respect of Leeman's Lane as a result of additional traffic causing road damage to grass verges and to the road itself.

Councillor Griffiths was disappointed that communications weren't managed with residents or the Parish Council in the first instance and the County Council didn't see the significant impact this had on local residents from the start.

Councillors Burton and Ord raised complaints from residents of Front Street regarding cars that detour around the back of Front Street (the Colliery) when traffic is at a build-up on the

main road during peak times. Clerk has raised with the County Council on what measures could be put in place and is currently awaiting a response.

Resolved: Clerk to progress with the County Council.

184/16. Parish Clerk Update / Correspondence

i. DCC Road Closure:

Clerk informed Members' that Hett Mill level crossing would be closed from 10.00 pm on 18 February 2017 until 8.00 am 19 February 2017 due to maintenance works.

Resolved: For Members' Information

ii. Quotes for Fencing at Croxdale Inn Car Park:

Clerk gave an update in relation to the quotations she had requested from fencing companies for the new fencing that is required at the Croxdale Inn car park. All quotations to be reviewed at the next meeting.

Resolved: For Members' Information.

iii. Councillor Michael Ord's Garage:

Councillor Ord requested permission to erect a new increased size d garage (0.5m wider and 1m longer) on his existing plot which is owned by the Parish Council.

Resolved: Members agreed to the proposals outlined above.

iv. Big Spring Clean:

Clerk notified Members this year's Big Spring Clean would run from 27 February until 16 April 2017. The aim is to improve local environments by encouraging and supporting residents and volunteers to organise litter picks throughout County Durham. Councillor Burton volunteered to be project lead with assistance from the Parish Clerk to organise a litter pick for the Parish.

Resolved: Clerk to sign up to the litter pick campaign accordingly.

v. County Durham & Darlington Fire & Rescue Service Public Consultation:

A public consultation is taking place to help County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Service plan for the future provision of services. The consultation will run for 12 weeks until 20 February 2017 comprising of three consultation questions. Following discussion, it was agreed to respond to the consultation and the three questions were answered and agreed at the meeting.

Resolved: Clerk to respond to the consultation accordingly.

vi. Parish Election - Nomination Forms:

Clerk notified Members that nomination forms to stand as Councillor in the forthcoming elections in May will be available at the next meeting.

Resolved: For Members' Information

185/16. Financial Matters:

i. Financial Report for the Period 1 April 2016 – 08 February 2017

A financial update prepared by the Clerk was circulated to Members which included a detailed schedule of receipts and payments for the financial year to date and bank reconciliation to 08 February 2017. The current net bank balances totalled £6,025.74.

The following cheque payments was approved:

Cheque Number – 400282 - Miss C Maddison – Clerk’s Wages January - £258.00
Cheque Number – 400283 – HMRC – Tax & NI Contributions – £64.40
Cheque Number – 400284 – Miss C Maddison – Broadband Subscription - £31.49
Cheque Number – 400285 – Miss C Maddison – Cemetery Plan Printing - £39.90

The following monies was received to the Clerk by Michael Graveling with regard to 2016/17 allotment and garage rents:

Garage rents (cash) = £270.00
Allotment rents (cash) = £1,005.00
Allotment rents (cheques) = £60.00 (£x2 - £30.00 each)

Total = £1,275.00

Resolved: For Members’ Information.

186/16. Cemetery Update

i. Grave Plans:

Clerk brought to the meeting the new cemetery grave plan for Croxdale following conservation works. This will now be the new plan going forward with the original now being stored by the County Archivist.

Resolved: For Members’ Information.

ii. Cemetery Fencing:

Clerk gave an update in relation to the fencing issues. A further letter was issued recorded delivery but has not been delivered nor collected from their local post office. Text messages was received from Ryan Bell to the Clerk on 18 January 2017. R Bell claims he has moved house so has not received letters, email address is no longer valid and received an anonymous phone call stating the caller made threats to him and his family in connection to the fencing works. A new email address has since been provided but no response has been received to date, and are unwilling to provide a new business address.

Resolved: Clerk to continue to start the process of the particulars of claim based on the existing business address that is associated to Companies House.

187/16. Planning Issues:

No planning matters was discussed.

188/16. County Councillor Reports

There were no County Councillors in attendance; however, County Councillor Maria Plews had provided a briefing to Members which was circulated via the Parish Clerk.

Resolved: For Members' Information.

189/16. Exclusion of the Public - Former Parish Clerk

That under Section 100(a)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the above item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely discussion of exempt information as defined in paragraph 2 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

Having now sought independent legal advice and exhausted all avenues with the Crown Prosecution's Service: Victims Right to Review; that no further action with regard to the former Parish Clerk will be progressed further.

190/16. AOB:

i. Cricket Field Byelaw:

Councillor Summerson queried if there is a Parish Byelaw which prohibits dogs from entering the ground, commonly known as the cricket field, at the rear of Front Street East, Croxdale. As a result of this Byelaw, the sign located at the entrance of the cricket field, may be required to be re-worded.

Resolved: Clerk to check old Parish records in the first instance.

ii. Puppy Farming – Allotment Land:

Councillor Garner reported she had received concerns from a resident regarding puppy farming that may or may not be taking place at one of the Parish Council owned small holdings. Councillor Summerson agreed to speak to the respective allotment holder for further clarification on this matter.

Resolved: Councillor Summerson to progress.

iii. Hett Green – Land Ownership:

Councillor Garner reported she had been speaking to Brian Ogden of Hett Village Hall Association who queried the transfer of land regarding Hett Green.

Resolved: Clerk is to check previous correspondence on this matter and update Councillor Garner.

vii. Rogerson Terrace – Highways:

Councillor Ord raised a number of cars are using the back of Rogerson Terrace (next to Chapel) as a shortcut and making U-turns.

Resolved: Clerk to report to DCC in the first instance.

191/16. Date and Time of Next Meeting:

It was agreed that the next meeting would be held on Wednesday 08 March 2017 at 7.00 pm.