

Minutes for the Monthly Parish Meeting of Croxdale and Hett Parish Council
Wednesday 25 September 2019, 7.00 pm
Croxdale Community Centre

Parish Council Members Present:

Councillor L Griffiths (Chair), Councillor K Summerson, Councillor R Burton, Councillor J Garner, Councillor P Kerrison, Councillor M Ord, Councillor A Watt and Councillor I Watt.

Also Present:

County Councillors J Blakey, S Dunn and M McKeon.

43/19. Apologies for Absence:

There were no apologies of absence. The Clerk notified Members of the resignation of Councillor W Watt with immediate effect. The vacancy will be reported accordingly to Durham County Council in the first instance.

44/19. Declarations of Interest:

There were no declarations of interest.

45/19. Policing:

The next PACT Meeting is to take place on Friday 05 October 2019, 7pm, Croxdale Community Centre.

The Parish Council was notified that the AAP Police representation will be progressed with Inspector Edwards and Michael Wilkes of the AAP. Regarding recent allotment break-ins, the Police confirmed there was no reported incidents re thefts at allotments in Croxdale. The only reported issue was a garage burglary reported on 9 July 2019. Residents are encouraged to report matters via the 101 system. A poster has since been circulated on social media and on noticeboards to try and encourage residents that incidents should be reported.

It was suggested in next year's annual letter to all allotment holders to include reference to the break-ins and suggest to the tenants to mark their equipment with smart water. Clerk to note.

Resolved: For Members' Information.

46/19. Public Participation

One member of the public was in attendance.

47/19. Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on the 31 July 2019 were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

48/19. Matters Arising:

i. Hett Lane:

County Councillor Dunn progressed further with DCC on 1 August 2019 and has yet to receive a response.

Resolved: County Councillor Dunn to progress further with DCC.

ii. Team Solan:

Clerk had forwarded relevant contact details for the room bookings for Hett Village Hall and Croxdale Community Centre to Team Solan for the coffee mornings. Dates being 20 September (Croxdale) and 25 September (Hett).

Resolved: For Members' Information.

iii. Youth Provision:

Clerk confirmed she had met with the youth workers and Croxdale WMC on 22 August 2019 to discuss the toilet damage. A checklist was agreed when vacating the premises to make sure the lights are switched off and to report any defects etc.

Regarding the multi-sports activities that took place on 30 July, 6 August and 27 August 2019, feedback was received from DCC and unfortunately no one attended any of the sessions. However, if DCC has the opportunity in the future to hold free sports sessions for young people, then they would like to try again.

Resolved: For Members' Information.

iv. Re-location of Memorial Bench:

Works now complete and was carried out 13 August 2019.

Resolved: For Members' Information.

v. Hett War Memorial:

Councillor Garner confirmed she had raised with the PCC in the first instance the possibility of a new war memorial at Croxdale to be located at St Bartholomew's Church. These preliminary discussions were to seek their views on a location, to which they agreed to a traditional stone feature within the Church grounds. However, the Parish Council would need to seek official permissions from the Diocese. The Clerk is to check relevant permissions along with any funding streams that may be available prior to consultation with residents.

With regard to Hett's memorial, an article has been included in Hett Happenings to inform residents of the project. It was agreed to progress with the Research facility at DCC to assist in locating the names of residents of Hett who served in both World Wars.

Resolved: Clerk to progress accordingly.

vi. Hett Litter Pick:

DCC confirmed August's litter pick took place on 28 August 2019 and September's will take place on 26 September 2019.

Resolved: For Members' Information.

vii. Refuse Bins / Recycling – Hett:

Clerk confirmed a response was received on 3 September 2019 from DCC stating the bins in question are on the curtilage of resident's properties, therefore DCC has no enforcement powers to deal with this. Further cards have been issued to the properties on two occasions advising residents to place the bins in their rear yards. However, the area in question is a

public footpath and a rubbish bin has been placed outside for several weeks and will not be emptied by DCC due to contamination.

Resolved: Clerk to escalate issue to DCC accordingly.

viii. Flooded Footpath – B6288:

Clerk confirmed a response was received from DCC on 1 August 2019. The request was forwarded to the Clean & Green Team regarding the overgrown vegetation/encroaching onto the highway. With regard to the worn surface and standing water (flooding), DCC confirmed the footpath is structurally sound although the appearance could be improved, therefore the footpath will be considered as part of the resurfacing programme for 2020/21. In the meantime, DCC will continue to monitor the condition of this footpath in accordance with their safety inspection regime.

Councillor Kerrison raised further concerns on this issue and the Clerk and County Councillor McKeon agreed to progress further with DCC.

Resolved: Clerk and County Councillor McKeon to raise further with DCC accordingly.

ix. Cars Parked on the Footpath:

It was noted the footpath in question is not within the Parish.

Resolved: For Members' Information.

x. Artificial Poppies:

Councillor Ord confirmed he has yet to inform the resident following their recent enquiry.

Resolved: Councillor Ord to inform resident accordingly.

xi. Cycle Paths – A167 / B6288:

Councillor Garner reported the sign entitled 'end of cycle lane' is encroached with greenery and is not visible to pedestrians/cyclists. The sign is located opposite Rogerson Terrace bus stop.

Resolved: County Councillor McKeon agreed to report to DCC.

xii. Financial Assistance - Hett Goal Posts:

A donation of £100 was given by the Parish Council with the new goal posts now in place.

Resolved: For Members' Information.

xiii. Grass Cutting Complaints - Hett:

Councillor Griffiths confirmed this has now been resolved.

Resolved: For Members' Information.

xiv. BT Post – Hett:

Clerk reported the overgrown tree/bush to DCC in the first instance with the works being carried out on 3 September 2019.

Resolved: For Members' Information.

xv. Croxdale Play Park – Logs and Fencing:

County Councillor Dunn reported to DCC on 1 August 2019, to which an engineer confirmed the logs would be replaced and the fencing repaired. However, Councillor Kerrison reported further damage to the equipment in the play park which may have been caused by a grass cutter.

Resolved: County Councillor Dunn agreed to further report to DCC and to chase progress on the logs and fencing.

xvi. Removal of Phone Box:

Clerk informed Members of an enquiry received from Croxdale Residents Association (via Councillor Kerrison) regarding the purchase of a defibrillator for the colliery area of Croxdale. Croxdale Residents Association would purchase the equipment and queried if the Parish Council would be responsible for insurance/maintenance going forward. The suggested location of the defibrillator is in the phone box at Front Street East, Croxdale. Clerk is to contact DCC in the first instance to ascertain if this is still possible to adopt as formal consultation on the phone box has now closed. It was also suggested to gather annual costs for the maintenance/insurance/replacement pads etc for the defibrillator in order to make an informed decision at the next meeting.

Resolved: Clerk to progress accordingly.

xvii. Croxdale Beck:

County Councillor McKeon reported further to DCC and is currently awaiting a response.

Resolved: County Councillor McKeon to chase progress.

49/19. Parish Clerk Update / Correspondence:

i. St Bartholomew’s Church:

Clerk informed Members of a request received from St Bartholomew’s Church; now their church hall has been refurbished, they would welcome the Parish Council to use the hall for our Parish Meetings. It was agreed the Parish Council would consider using the church hall when developing our meeting schedule for 2020/21. Clarification would be required if there would be any associated costs for the venue and suggested to possibly arrange a visit to investigate any concerns from residents i.e. would car parking cause any issues.

On a separate note regarding the church hall, Councillor Garner is to make preliminary enquiries if the church would consider hosting the youth club in the church hall, in the event Croxdale WMC is no longer trading next year. Further discussions on the youth club and venues will be considered later in the year.

Resolved: Clerk to progress accordingly.

ii. Issues re Sunderland Bridge Grass Cutting:

Clerk informed Members of correspondence received from a resident in Sunderland Bridge regarding grass cutting which resulted in an FOI request. A response was issued immediately and explained the Parish Council is not responsible for grass cutting at Sunderland Bridge. The resident also raised concerns regarding a cherry tree on the village green which requires attention. Councillor Griffiths spoke to the resident concerned to which the Parish Council is not responsible for the grass cutting and is not responsible for the cherry tree. It is believed Salvin Estate has overall responsibility.

Resolved: For Members' Information.

iii. Insurance Renewal 2019/20:

Clerk gave details of the Parish Council's annual insurance renewal which is due on 27 October 2019 at a cost of £410.32. It was noted the renewal for 2018/19 was £351.23. However, our insurance now includes the youth provision equipment, as well as the memorial benches and Tommies/interpretation panel.

Resolved: For Members' Information.

50/19. Financial Matters:

(i) Financial Report for the Period 1 April 2019 – 31 August 2019:

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 31 August 2019. The current net bank balances totalled £23,918.80.

Resolved: For Members' Information.

51/19: Cemetery:

(a) Cemetery Pointing Works:

Clerk provided a schedule of quotations received for the above works to be carried out at Croxdale and Hett cemeteries. Three contractors were contacted initially regarding the works; however, two quotations were received. Following discussion and consideration of each proposal, it was agreed to appoint contractor 3. However, it was noted some preparation works are required to be undertaken at both cemeteries before the works can commence. Clerk is to contact the Council's cemetery maintenance contractor for an indication of costs in the first instance.

Resolved: Clerk to progress with the above works accordingly.

(b) Grave at Croxdale Cemetery:

Clerk informed Members that kerb edging/surround had been installed on a grave at Croxdale Cemetery. As per the Parish Council's Policy, it was agreed to contact the family in question and to advise that kerb edging/surrounds are not permitted within our cemeteries and request the surround is removed. It was noted the memorial mason did not install the kerb edging when the headstone was erected.

Resolved: Clerk to contact the family concerned.

(c) Cemetery Gates Painting:

Clerk gave an update to Members regarding the above works. The contractor is unable to confirm timescales due to other work commitments. However, in view of the forthcoming cemetery pointing works, it was agreed that the painting works would be more appropriate to be carried out in the spring.

Resolved: Clerk to contact the contractor accordingly and arrange for the cemetery painting to be carried out in 2020.

52/19: Planning Issues:

The Clerk reported the Parish Council has received the following planning applications for comment / objection:

- Croxdale Citroen Centre – free standing illuminated signs
- InstaVolt Limited – Thinford Park – installation of electrical charging points
- John Coates – Hett – replacement flat rubber roof

For Member's Information – no specific comments / objections were made with regard to the above planning application.

53/19. County Councillor Reports:

County Councillor Blakey gave an update in relation to: forthcoming roadworks at Chair Lane which will impact on Croxdale.

County Councillor McKeon gave an update in relation to: Cabinet adopted new Council Vision: 2035 on 11 September 2019, which has a commitment to public transport users. Councillor Summerson commented there is no public transport through Croxdale on a Sunday after 9.10pm. County Councillor McKeon replied the Scarlett Band service may not be in use but is hopeful it may change in the future.

County Councillor Dunn gave an update in relation to: Hett Village Hall – new design which will cost in the region of £250,000; currently looking at funding streams available. Piling works at Integra 61 will be ongoing until mid-October as part of first phase. Climate Consultation ongoing until 31 October 2019, seeking comments/feedback to develop an action plan to help meet carbon reduction targets.

Resolved: For Member's Information.

54/19. AOB:

Fly Tipping – Hett:

Further fly tipping reports have been raised at Hett Lane/Gypsy Lane (consisting of furniture, MDF, mattresses) whereby a resident has suggested to move the gates forward so vehicles can't park there.

Resolved: County Councillor Dunn agreed to report to DCC.

Hett Fields / Hedges:

Councillor L Griffiths reported the footpath from the village hall (West Street) to the A167 is overgrown and requires attention. Councillor A Watt confirmed the hedge in question belongs to Willets Farm.

Resolved: Councillor Griffiths to investigate further to determine if this is a Parish Council matter.

Street Lighting – Hett:

Councillor I Watt reported faulty street lighting located at East Street. Councillor Griffiths agreed to obtain the reference number and forward to the Clerk to report to DCC.

Resolved: Clerk to report to DCC accordingly.

Grass Cutting – West Street:

Councillor A Watt reported the grass cutting at West Street is not being cut to the pond.

Resolved: Clerk to report to DCC accordingly.

Damaged Signage – Hett:

Councillor Griffiths reported the 30MPH sign has been damaged at Leaman's Lane (opposite Grove Farm) as well as a sign located at Hett Lane (south of West Green) has been knocked off completely with the pole still standing in the ground.

Resolved: County Councillor McKeon agreed to report to DCC.

Street Lighting – Croxdale:

Councillor Garner reported two street lighting columns at Windsor Court requires attention. Councillor Garner agreed to obtain the reference number and forward to the Clerk to report to DCC.

Resolved: Clerk to report to DCC accordingly.

55/19. Date and Time of Next Meeting:

It was agreed that the next meeting would be held on Wednesday 30 October 2019 at 7.00 pm, Hett Village Hall.