

Minutes for the Monthly Parish Meeting of Croxdale and Hett Parish Council
Wednesday 31 July 2019, 7.00 pm
Hett Village Hall

Parish Council Members Present:

Councillor K Summerson (Vice-Chair), Councillor P Kerrison, Councillor M Ord, Councillor A Watt and Councillor I Watt.

Also Present:

County Councillor S Dunn.

31/19. Apologies for Absence:

Apologies of absence were received from Councillor Burton, Councillor J Garner, Councillor L Griffiths (Chair), Councillor W Watt and County Councillors J Blakey and M McKeon.

32/19. Declarations of Interest:

There were no declarations of interest.

33/19. Policing:

The next PACT Meeting is to take place on Thursday 15 August 2019, 7pm, Croxdale Community Centre.

Clerk and Councillor Ord informed Members of feedback from the last AAP meeting which was held at Croxdale Community Centre regarding residents attending the meeting to voice their concerns on recent allotment break-ins. However, it was led to believe the Police representative who attended, could only deal with issues within Ferryhill/Spennymoor area, which resulted in residents leaving the meeting. Clerk has since contacted the Police to request if the relevant representative from the Police can attend the AAP meeting when it is located in their area/ward and is currently awaiting a response.

Resolved: For Members' Information.

34/19. Public Participation

One member of the public was in attendance, together with 2 representatives from 'Team Solan' (TS).

TS initiatives will provide easier local access and increased opportunities for families touched by or aware of a cancer diagnosis. TS became a registered charity in 2017 and was first established in 2015. Now that AAP funding has been secured, TS would like to extend their work by way of free coffee mornings for residents / visitors in each of the AAP areas and would like to start-off by arranging a coffee morning in Croxdale, Hett and Sunderland Bridge. Croxdale Community Centre, Hett Village Hall and the Church Hall at Sunderland Bridge were identified as possible venues. Clerk agreed to forward relevant contact details of booking the said venues to TS.

Resolved: Clerk to forward relevant contact details to Team Solan.

35/19. Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on the 26 June 2019 were agreed as a true record and signed by the Vice-Chairman.

36/19. Matters Arising:

i. 2018/19 Accounts:

Clerk informed Members, the exercise of public rights regarding 2018/19 accounts ran from 3 June and ended on 12 July 2019. There were no representations received.

Resolved: For Members' Information.

ii. Hett Lane:

County Councillor McKeon followed up this request on behalf of the Parish Council to which a response was received from DCC on 5 July 2019 stating that there are no prescribed highway signs applicable for this location and even if such signage did exist, it would be difficult to consider where to appropriately place them as many roads, especially in Teesdale and Weardale would also need to be considered. Councillor Ord then requested if hazard warning posts / red reflectors to the nearside of the lane could be erected? A response is yet to be received from DCC on this.

Resolved: County Councillor Dunn agreed to raise this further with DCC.

iii. Youth Provision:

Clerk confirmed in conjunction with DCC, there are free multi-sports activities taking place across 3 weeks in the school holidays (30 July, 6 August, 27 August) at Croxdale. However, feedback was received from the session that took place on 30 July 2019, which only 1 young person attended, therefore, the session was cancelled.

Regarding additional youth club sessions in the school holidays, 2 sessions have been identified at the end of the holidays (22 and 29 August); which was subsequently agreed by the Parish Council. Cost for both sessions is £150 for youth workers and room hire.

Clerk informed Members of a separate incident following a recent youth club session at Croxdale WMC to which damage to one of the toilets had occurred which resulted with water flooding the lounge and damage to the ceiling. Clerk had spoken to SYCA who suggested to have a checklist that the youth workers need to undertake when entering/leaving the building to prevent any further issues. However, it is unknown that the damage to the toilet was of a direct result from the youth club session.

Resolved: Clerk to arrange the additional youth club sessions in the summer holidays and to speak to Croxdale WMC / SYCA regarding the damage to the upstairs toilet.

iv. Re-location of Memorial Bench:

Estimated timescales for the above works is the beginning of August 2019.

Resolved: For Members' Information.

v. Hett War Memorial:

Councillor Garner to provide an update following the Church's meeting on 23 July 2019, when present at the next Parish Council meeting.

Resolved: Councillor Garner to provide feedback at the next meeting.

vi. Hett Litter Pick:

DCC confirmed July's litter pick took place on 31 July 2019.

Resolved: For Members' Information.

vii. Believe Complaint:

A response was received from Believe on 1 July 2019, and confirmed they are under no obligation to consult with neighbouring properties regarding what alterations they allow to their properties. They also commented that before the decision was made, Believe Housing Officers reviewed the area and advised that there were no designated parking bays and that access to grass cutters would not be restricted as a result. It was also noted that the properties opposite the house in question had driveways, so it was reasonable to grant permission on these observations.

Resolved: For Members' Information.

viii. Allotment Land:

Clerk confirmed she had checked past records / paperwork on the use of the land in question and confirmed a copy of the Land Registry documentation was sourced, which stated the land should only be used for allotment purposes or parking for private vehicles. Councillor Summerson agreed to review the documentation to determine if time restrictions are in place.

Resolved: For Members' Information.

ix. Cemetery Gates Painting:

Clerk confirmed due to workload, the above works will take place in September with exact dates TBC. With regard to the pointing works, Clerk wished to seek confirmation on whether the ivy on the stone pillars at Hett Cemetery are to be removed? Councillor I Watt confirmed this is the case. Two further quotations are to be sourced for agreement at the next meeting.

Resolved: For Members' Information.

x. Refuse Bins / Recycling – Hett:

Clerk progressed with DCC further on 25 June 2019 and received a response on 28 June 2019 stating a further leaflet drop to recommend the respective owners place the bins to the rear of the properties. However, Councillor I Watt confirmed, that the bins in question are still outside of the properties and some haven't been emptied.

Resolved: Clerk to feedback to DCC accordingly.

xi. Planning Application – Mount Huley Farm:

Clerk confirmed on 16 July 2019 that the approved application must commence works no later than 3 years from the date of permission. The application was approved in May 2018.

Resolved: For Members' Information.

xii. Flooded Footpath – B6288:

County Councillor McKeon raised with DCC on 26 June 2019 to which a response is yet to be received. Clerk is to chase progress.

Resolved: Clerk to check progress with DCC accordingly.

xiii. Cars Parked on Footpath:

This request was covered as part of the request above and is being actioned / awaiting a response from DCC.

Resolved: For Members' Information.

xiv. Litter Bin Request:

County Councillor McKeon requested for a litter bin on 26 June 2019. DCC responded on 28 June 2019 stating this location will be monitored over the next few weeks to determine if there is a need.

Resolved: For Members' Information.

xv. Cyclists:

Clerk obtained a copy of the Parish's cycle routes from DCCs website which details bridleways and byways, traffic free paths, cycle lanes and on-road cycle routes. County Councillor Dunn also commented that DCC are currently in the process of designing stretches of cycle paths for Croxdale and will speak to the Parish Council in due course as part of the consultation.

Resolved: For Members' Information.

37/19. Parish Clerk Update / Correspondence:

i. Financial Assistance – Hett Goal Posts:

A request from a resident of Hett for financial assistance was received to renovate the children's football goal posts on the village green. The posts need to be re-painted, hooks for the nets replaced and new nets fitted with works estimating approximately £200. It was noted that some residents have already contributed towards the works also, however an exact amount was unknown. The Parish Council agreed to a donation of up to £100.00. County Councillor Dunn agreed to also support this project by way of a donation via the Members Small Grants Funding, if necessary.

Resolved: Clerk to confirm Parish Council's contribution to Councillor Griffiths.

ii. Artificial Poppies:

A resident of Salvin Street, Croxdale, had approached Councillor Ord who has been making artificial poppies and asked if the Parish Council could ask any members of the public who may be interested to help. The Parish Council agreed to assist with this project, where possible. County Councillor Dunn agreed to also support this project by way of a donation via the Members Small Grants Funding.

Resolved: Councillor Ord to inform resident accordingly.

iii. Removal of Phone Box:

Clerk notified Members that BT are reviewing payphone usage and has been identified that 1 payphone within the Parish is no longer required - Front Street East, Croxdale. Councillor Summerson queried the usage within the last 12 months to which it was confirmed, there has been zero calls made in the last 12 months. No further comments / objections were received.

Resolved: For Members' Information.

iv. Croxdale Cemetery:

Clerk informed Members of feedback received on 30 July 2019 from a resident regarding Croxdale Cemetery following a recent visit. The resident commented they were disappointed at the general state of the cemetery with overhanging tree branches and the entrance looking untidy.

Resolved: Clerk to contact Cemetery Maintenance contractor in the first instance.

38/19. Financial Matters:

(i) Financial Report for the Period 1 April 2019 – 30 June 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 30 June 2019. The current net bank balances totalled £25,936.76.

Resolved: For Members' Information.

39/19: Planning Issues:

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

- Arlington Energy Ltd – Thinford Lane Electricity Sub-Station – Variation of Condition of Application
- All Saints Construction Ltd – Thinford Park - Variation of Condition of Application

As the above applications had already been approved and were simply a variation, Members were of the view that an objection wasn't worth putting forward on this occasion. Councillor Ord was concerned over the volume of traffic as a result of the above works.

Resolved: For Member's Information.

40/19. County Councillor Reports:

County Councillor Dunn gave an update in relation to: bus lane filter – no response as of yet regarding making the bus lane into a multiple lane to ease congestion. New HQ has now been approved. The Judicial Review did not grant approval for an appeal. Works will commence on 12 August 2019 to the Sands car park. Climate Motion – report to Cabinet, with meetings with other LAs on 'climate emergency'. The Government has identified 4 Councils across the country for best practice, with Durham being included as one. Resurfacing works have recently been completed at Hett Lane.

Resolved: For Member's Information.

41/19. AOB:

Grass Cutting Complaints:

Councillor A Watt reported several complaints have been received in relation to the above to an overgrown public footpath. County Councillor Dunn is to check progress with County Councillor McKeon.

Resolved: County Councillor Dunn to action.

BT Post - Hett:

Councillor A Watt reported an Elderberry bush is growing onto a BT post and encroaching onto the village green / road.

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

Croxdale Play Park:

Councillor Kerrison reported the logs at the children's play park at Croxdale have rotted away and in need of repair. County Councillor Dunn confirmed he has raised this with DCC as part of their Play Strategy. Councillor Summerson commented the fencing also needs looking at.

Resolved: County Councillor Dunn to action.

Croxdale Beck:

Councillor Ord reported he has contacted County Councillor Blakey in relation to clearing of Croxdale Beck; the debris is left on the side of the embankment. Previous complaints have been raised on numerous occasions on this subject.

Resolved: County Councillor Blakey to action.

42/19. Date and Time of Next Meeting:

It was agreed that the next meeting would be held on Wednesday 25 September 2019 at 7.00 pm, Croxdale Community Centre.