

Minutes for the Monthly Parish Meeting of Croxdale and Hett Parish Council
Wednesday 26 February 2020, 7.00 pm
Hett Village Hall

Parish Council Members Present:

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

113/19. Apologies for Absence:

Apologies of absence were received from Councillor A Watt and I Watt.

Also Present:

County Councillors J Blakey, S Dunn and M McKeon.

114/19. Declarations of Interest:

Declarations of interest were received from Councillor Kerrison in relation to Croxdale Residents Association / defibrillator request and Councillor Griffiths in relation to the request from Hett Village Hall Association.

115/19. Policing:

The next PACT Meeting is to take place on Wednesday 22 April, 6pm, Croxdale Community Centre. The Clerk had shared Policing crime stats: 8 incidents being recorded for the period December 2019 within the Parish.

Resolved: For Members' Information.

116/19. Public Participation

Two members of the public was in attendance. One resident raised concerns of the Allotment Managers role entering allotments for inspections etc. It was agreed the Allotment Regulations were to be reviewed along with a proposed job role for agreement by all parties concerned.

The owner of Croxdale corner shop requested assistance from the Parish Council regarding its support with the application of a post office counter. To assist with their application, it was agreed for the Parish Council to add a covering letter of support, along with a petition of some sort to act as a signature of support from residents.

Resolved: Clerk to draft job role and amend allotment regulations for agreement by Members. Clerk to arrange for letter of support/petition regarding Croxdale corner shop.

117/19. Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on the 29 January 2020 were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

118/19. Matters Arising:

i. Hett War Memorial:

A quotation was received from Cleveland Monumental at a cost of £255.00 for the new plaque for Hett's war memorial. The preferred layout format was agreed.

With regard to Croxdale's new war memorial, the draft Terms of Reference was later on the agenda for agreement. The Clerk confirmed the Parish Council is eligible to apply for a £500 grant from Believe Housing, however as the project costs are unknown at this stage, it was advised it would be better to re-submit the funding application at a later date.

Resolved: Clerk to arrange for the new plaque at Hett war memorial to be fitted.

ii. Hett Litter Pick:

DCC confirmed February's litter pick was scheduled to take place on 26 February 2020.

Resolved: For Members' Information.

iii. Hett Fly-Tipping:

Following further fly-tipping incidents at Hett, Councillor Griffiths requested contact be made to DCC re the use of cameras to which we are currently awaiting a response. Data was received from DCC on the number of fly-tipping incidents reported within the Parish from the period 2016-2020. A total of 100 incidents were reported.

Resolved: For Members' Information.

iv. Refuse Bins / Recycling – Hett:

The contaminated bin was removed on 31 January 2020 and another request for a further leaflet drop was made.

Councillor Summerson raised that residents of Front Street East, Croxdale, received a letter from DCC regarding waste bins were blocking the highway. As this is an unadopted road, no action can be taken. County Councillor Blakey to feedback to DCC.

Resolved: For Members' Information.

v. Planted Bulbs – Croxdale Tommies:

County Councillor Blakey confirmed the associated costs via DCC was in the region of £300 for approximately 5000 bulbs. The County Council's Clean and Green Team would lift the turf and the Civic Pride Team would plant the bulbs with volunteers in October / November time.

Resolved: For Members' Information.

vi. Defibrillator – Croxdale:

A letter of apology was issued to the shop as requested. An alternative electrician visited the shop to provide a quote, however the shop owner requested to be present, therefore was unable to provide a quote.

Resolved: Installation costs to be provided following inspection of premises.

vii. Cemetery Pointing:

The Clerk contacted Durham Stonemasonry Restoration and requested for a quote to be received in advance of our meeting, however a quotation was not received. It was agreed that the pointing works at Hett cemetery would be re-visited later in the year for consideration.

Resolved: For Members' Information.

viii. Additional Cemetery Bin:

Clerk confirmed the additional bin has now being delivered to Croxdale Cemetery.

Resolved: For Members' Information.

ix. Cemetery Hut Building / Ownership:

The Clerk had contacted the Records Office who has carried out a quick search of records in archives and can find no specific reference to the mortuary. Regarding potential costs, a local solicitors firm advised if the Parish Council wishes to make an application for adverse possession, an application would need to be submitted to the Land Registry, if the land is registered there is a fee of £130 and is a reduced fee if the land is unregistered. Legal fees for dealing with the adverse possession would be £300 + VAT.

Resolved: It was agreed to proceed with this process in-house in the first instance.

x. Cemetery Gates Painting:

For Members information, the Clerk reported that contact with the appointed contractor in relation to above works was proven difficult to enable a start date be agreed. If a response is not received in due course, the Parish Council may have to look at other options.

Resolved: For Members' Information.

xi. Cemetery H&S Tree Inspections:

A response was received from DCC on 20 February 2020 stating that Croxdale is not a DCC cemetery and the County Council is not responsible for the trees and suggested the Parish Council enlists the services of a tree specialist to undertake a survey and produce a report of its findings.

Resolved: Clerk to progress with tree specialist accordingly.

xii. Citroen Garage – Advertising on A167:

The Clerk contacted the garage as agreed and a response was received with an apology; whereby if the advertising of vehicles caused any ill-feeling amongst residents and would refrain from advertising particularly in the lay-by near to the cemetery in the future.

Resolved: For Members' Information.

xiii. Youth Club:

DCC has confirmed the Parish Council is able to ring-fence the remaining funds for youth activities in the school holidays/day trips etc. Councillor Griffiths confirmed Hett Village Hall was unavailable and was agreed letters would be issued sign-posting to a nearby youth club in Tudhoe.

Resolved: Clerk to issue letters to parents / guardians accordingly.

xiv. Road Plainings, Hett:

Clerk requested for additional road plainings for Hett and currently awaiting a response from DCC.

Resolved: For Members' Information.

xv. Licensing Application - Barnmoor Service Station:

The Clerk responded to the above application with the Parish Council views, which was mainly around the potential increase of litter. A response from the agents was received and

agreed to display notices around the forecourt that states '*please be considerate and take your litter home*'. As agreement had been reached, this application would not progress onto hearing stage.

Resolved: For Members' Information.

xvi. Council Tax Notice 2020/21:

The Clerk prepared the above notice for agreement which was subsequently approved.

Resolved: Clerk to arrange for displaying within the Parish accordingly.

xvii. HVHA Planning Application:

The planning fee in relation to the new Village Hall was £1,180.00 which includes a 50% reduction for Parish Councils. The Parish Council agreed to fund this fee in relation to the planning application which would assist HVHA in raising the necessary funds for the re-build.

With regard to the VAT element, the Clerk is seek specialist VAT advice on whether this request from HVHA was possible.

Resolved: Clerk to contact HVHA accordingly regarding the planning fee.

xviii. Croxdale Inn Car Park Rent – 2020/21:

The Clerk has contacted the owner of the Croxdale Inn regarding this year's fee with payment required no later than 31 March 2020.

Resolved: For Members' Information.

xix. Dog Waste Bin – Cricket Field:

The Clerk reported that the above waste bin required emptying and was done so by DCC.

Resolved: For Members' Information.

xx. Footpath at Poultry Centre Allotments:

The Clerk had previously circulated a rights of way map to Members to which there was no reference to a footpath/public rights of way access, following the query from an allotment holder.

Resolved: For Members' Information.

119/19. Parish Clerk Update / Correspondence:

(i) Far Right Extremism Training:

The Clerk informed Members of the above training via CDALC if of interest. Depending on numbers, this would be arranged for Town and Parish Councillors.

Resolved: For Members' Information.

(ii) 2019/20 Audit Training:

The Clerk informed Members a training session would be held on 7 April 2020 for Parish Clerks in relation to audit arrangements for 2019/20. The next meeting of the Parish Council is to agree the Internal Auditor and agreement of an certificate of exemption due to the annual turnover being less than £25,000.

Resolved: For Members' Information.

120/19. Parish Councillor Vacancy – Co-option:

The Clerk reported 3 expressions of interest were received for Parish Councillor vacancy being:

- 1 = S Burton
- 2 = A Simpson
- 3 = P Adams

Candidate 3 was nominated and seconded receiving the majority of votes.

Resolved: Pauline Adams be duly elected as Parish Councillor and summoned to attend the next Parish Council meeting to sign the declaration of acceptance of office.

121/19. Financial Matters:

(i) Financial Report for the Period 1 April 2019 – 31 January 2020:

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 January 2020. The current net bank balances totalled £17,047.91.

Resolved: For Members' Information.

122/19: Cemetery:

(i) Cemetery Guide:

The Clerk circulated the proposed Cemetery Guide for approval. The guide aims to provide residents/members of the public with information about the cemetery and various aspects relating to burials, including reference to headstones and kerb surrounds. It also explains their responsibilities as owners of the rights over grave spaces at the cemetery. Subject to minor amendments, the Guide was approved which now replaces the existing Cemetery Policy.

Resolved: It was agreed for the Parish Clerk to contact families (where possible) in relation to now allowing kerb surrounds and arrange for the Cemetery Guide to be published on the website and Memorial Masons.

(ii) Grass Cutting Contract 2020/21:

The Clerk presented the proposed grass cutting tender pack to Members for approval in relation to grass cutting arrangements for 2020/21 at Croxdale and Hett Cemeteries. Subject to minor amendments, the tender pack was approved.

Resolved: Clerk to arrange to issue tender pack accordingly for agreement at March's meeting, in readiness for grass cutting arrangements to take place from April 2020.

123/19: Meeting Schedule 2020/21:

The schedule of meetings for 2020/21 was circulated for information and meetings agreed to be held on the fourth Wednesday of every month (except August when no meetings are held).

It was noted December's meeting is brought forward due to the Christmas holidays and a decision will be made nearer the time, if this meeting will take place.

Resolved: For Member's Information.

124/19: Terms of Reference: Croxdale War Memorial Working Group:

The Clerk circulated the draft Terms of Reference (ToR) for agreement in relation to the newly established working group in respect of Croxdale War Memorial. The ToR was agreed, subject to minor amendments, and was agreed group membership to be determined at the next meeting.

Resolved: For Member's Information.

125/19: Review of Governance Documents:

The Clerk notified Members that the annual review of the Parish Council's policy and procedures were to be reviewed at the next meeting and will circulate under separate cover suggested changes to policies, where applicable.

Resolved: For Member's Information.

126/19: Planning Issues:

The Clerk reported the Parish Council has received the following planning application(s) for comment / objection:

- No Ordinary Estates Limited – Thinford Park. Erection of 6no. retail units with first floor office space.

Resolved: No specific comments / objections were made with regard to the above planning application.

The Clerk reported the following planning application, for information, which is not within the Parish boundary for comment / objection:

- Coldstream Farm - Variation of condition 2 (approved plans) pursuant to planning approval ref: DM/18/01243/FPA.

Resolved: For Member's Information.

127/19. County Councillor Reports:

County Councillor McKeon gave an update in relation to the bus services following her investigation however unfortunately, no further action can be taken.

County Councillor Dunn gave an update in relation to: new bus station consultation is currently ongoing and gave an update with regard to the selective licencing scheme. Council Tax setting was agreed at today's Council meeting to increase council tax by 2%. The Council's climate change emergency response plan was also referenced. Regarding the new HQ, DCC confirmed provisions are in place for flooding as per the Environment Agency.

County Councillor Blakey gave an update in relation to: attended Spennymoor's AAP meeting last week with a donation from County Councillor Blakey in relation to VE Day celebrations for the Parish.

Resolved: For Member's Information.

128/19. AOB:

Salvin Street, Croxdale:

Councillor Ord reported rat running at Salvin Street and requested 'slow down' signs or to make a one-way system. A further site visit with Highways was requested, County Councillor Blakey agreed to progress this.

Resolved: County Councillor Blakey to progress.

Road Plainings – Croxdale:

Road plainings for the rear of Front Street East and the back street of Johnson Terrace was requested. County Councillor McKeon queried if previous details on an apprenticeship could assist with this? It was agreed this would be discussed further at a future meeting.

Resolved: For Member's Information.

Bus Shelters:

Councillor Griffiths reported there are no bus shelters on the A167 at Butchers Race. The bus stop is being used by more individuals now since Learning Curve opened. County Councillor McKeon agreed to progress.

Resolved: County Councillor McKeon to progress.

Benches – A167:

Councillor Garner requested if it could be possible for a bench to be installed on the A167 near to the bus stop at Rogerson/Johnson Terrace for the elderly.

Resolved: Clerk to progress accordingly.

129/19. Date and Time of Next Meeting:

It was agreed that the next meeting would be held on Wednesday 25 March 2020 at 7.00 pm, Croxdale Community Centre.