

Minutes for the Monthly Parish Meeting of Croxdale and Hett Parish Council
Wednesday 14 September 2016, 7.00 pm

Parish Council Members Present:

Councillor J Anderson (Chair), Councillor J Shaw (Vice-Chair), Councillor R Burton, Councillor J Garner, Councillor K Summerson, Councillor Arthur Watt, Councillor Ian Watt and Councillor W Watt.

Also Present:

County Councillor J Blakey.

95/16. Apologies for Absence:

Apologies of absence were received from County Councillors M Plews and M Williams.

96/16. Declarations of Interest:

There were no declarations of interest.

97/16. Policing:

PCSO Abby Pattison and colleague attended the meeting who are based at Sherburn Road Police Office. 23 Incidents were reported over the month, majority of which were road related. 2 incidents were burglaries: shed at Croxdale and Hett Village Hall. 2 incidents related to anti-social behaviour and 1 incident involving an off road bike.

Resolved: For Members' Information.

98/16. Public Participation

Michael Graveling and representatives from Croxdale Community Association were in attendance. Chris Batty (Treasurer) and Devin McManus (Secretary) attended the meeting requesting financial assistance from the Parish Council with regard to replacement windows for Croxdale Community Centre. The Association has received a quotation in the region of £40,000 for new windows that are in need of replacing which are aged at approximately 150 years old. The Association are looking at other sources of funding i.e. fundraising events and grants, but also requested assistance from the Parish Council. A donation was also to be sought from County Councillors Neighbourhood Budget funding.

Discussion also took place with regard to holding future Parish Council meetings at the Community Centre in lieu of a donation to the Association.

Residents from Salvin Street, Croxdale, also attended the meeting with regard to anti-social behaviour; however, this issue was dealt with by County Councillor Blakey and the Police outside of the meeting.

Resolved: Members agreed a donation to CCA of £2,000 for 2016/17 and to review a further donation in 2017/18. Members agreed for all future Parish Council Meetings to be held at the Community Centre with immediate effect.

99/16. Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on the 13 July 2016 were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

100/16. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

101/16. Parish Clerk Update / Correspondence

i. Bus Stop Repairs:

Clerk reported to Durham County Council in which the repair works was carried out 16 August 2016.

ii. Windsor Court:

Clerk reported to Durham County Council anti-social behaviour issues, upon inspection by the Neighbourhood Wardens there was no evidence of ASB. Situation to be monitored by Councillor Garner and resident concerned.

iii. Slashpool Farm:

Clerk issued letter to Mrs Willetts; Councillor A and I Watts confirmed the fires have now stopped.

iv. Parking on Verges – Rogerson Terrace:

Clerk reported parking issues to the Police but awaiting a response. Councillor Garner to monitor situation and report re-occurring instances to the Clerk.

v. Planning:

Clerk reported notification has been received from the Planning Inspectorate re the planning application at East Street, Hett, and that the application has been dismissed.

vi. Letter of Thanks:

Correspondence from St Bartholomew's Church with regard to the Parish Council's recent donation was circulated to Members for information.

vii. CDALC Update – Newsletter 58:

Clerk gave an update to Members in relation to training for Parish Clerks to attend in connection with 2017 Elections at a cost of £27.00.

Resolved: For Members' Information.

101/16. Financial Matters

i. Financial Report for the Period 1 April 2016 – 14 September 2016

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 14 September 2016. The current net bank balances totalled £11,888.37.

The following cheque payments were approved:

Cheque Number – 400254 – Miss C Maddison – Clerk’s Wages August - £258.00
Cheque Number – 400255 – HMRC – Tax & NI Contributions – £64.40
Cheque Number – 400256 – Miss C Maddison – Parish Expenses - £19.14
Cheque Number – 400257 – Miss C Maddison – Broadband Subscription - £31.49

Resolved: For Members’ Information.

102/16. Cemetery Update

i. Grave Plans:

Hett: Clerk reported that the Conservation and Digitisation for Hett’s cemetery plan is now complete. Awaiting samples from Durham County Council on which paper will be best for the new plan to be printed on. Clerk envisages this will be complete for the next meeting to show to Members.

Resolved: For Members’ Information.

Croxdale: A further quotation has been received from Kate Stockwell, Conservator, based in Leeds estimated at approximately £700, although this may change when the plan is inspected visually. This compares favourably with the quote received from Bowes Museum which was estimated at approx. £1100 from start to finish (conservation/digitisation/printing/cover/mounting/courier costs). With regard to timescales, this can be done in the next couple of months as opposed to early next year by Bowes Museum.

Resolved: Members agreed to proceed with Kate Stockwell for Croxdale’s cemetery plan due to financial costs and timescales involved.

- ii. **Cemetery Fencing:** Works are yet to be completed at Croxdale and Hett - old fencing still remains present within the cemetery grounds and the skip is still present at Croxdale. Email received from Deerness Fencing regarding contractor’s workmanship had previously been circulated to Members for information. Works at Hett (part of old fencing still erected) is still not complete as promised by RA Fencing dated 6 August 2016. Clerk issued letter dated 9 September 2016 to RA Fencing requesting works to be completed within 14 days or further action will be taken.

Resolved: Clerk and Vice-Chair to continue to contact RA Fencing in order to try and resolve the ongoing issues with the cemetery fencing.

iii. Cemetery Complaint:

The Clerk reported a complaint was received from Mr John Smart regarding grass cutting at Croxdale cemetery, in particular around headstones. This has been addressed with Durham County Council who advised that the strimming / weed killing around headstones takes place periodically, with the next round taking place in the next couple of weeks. This information was relayed to Mr Smart who was happy with the outcome.

Resolved: For Members' Information.

103/16. Council Owned Land Adjacent to the Croxdale Inn

Discussion took place regarding the use of the above land and what it could be used for i.e. turning into an allotment and renting out or to use it as a communal area for all allotment holders for storage of supplies / deliveries etc. It was agreed this would be more suitable as a communal area due to the costs involved into turning it into an allotment; the land therefore is to be fenced off as soon as possible.

Resolved: Clerk to write to the owner of the Croxdale Inn and advise him the land will be fenced off accordingly.

104/16. Planning Issues:

i. Planning Applications:

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

- a) Former Thinford Inn – erection of a new Domino's retail unit
- b) Thinford Lane – electricity sub-station – gas fuelled power generation plant

Resolved: For Members' information – no specific comments / objections were made with regard to the above two planning applications.

ii. Payphone Kiosk Removal:

The Clerk reported correspondence the Parish Council has received from Durham County Council in relation to phone boxes located at Hett and Sunderland Bridge. BT offers to Parish Councils and registered Charities the facility to adopt a kiosk, taking ownership of the facility at a cost of £1.00 thereby protecting the heritage of the community. At this stage, BT has asked Durham County Council to collate comments regarding the matter and relay these back to BT for consideration. The Clerk has asked Durham County Council for detailed financial information / risk implications if the Parish Council was to agree in adopting and taking ownership of the payphones in question.

The Clerk reported that views have been received from HVHA on their reasoning as to why they wish to keep the facility at Hett and as a Charity they would be interested in adopting the facility but requires more financial details also before committing to this.

Resolved: For Members' information at this stage until further information is obtained from BT / Durham County Council.

105/16. Expressions of Interest for Vacancy of Parish Councillor

The Clerk reported 1 expression of interest was received for Parish Councillor vacancy being:

1 = John Leslie Griffiths, Hett Village

The above candidate was nominated and seconded receiving unanimous votes. It was noted, the vacancy is for Sunderland Bridge Ward with Member representation from Hett Village.

Resolved: John Leslie Griffiths be duly elected as Parish Councillor and summoned to attend the next Parish Council meeting to accept the acceptance of office.

106/16. County Councillor Reports

County Councillor Blakey gave an update in relation to MP Boundary changes, budget consultation events being held throughout County Durham and ongoing issues in relation to Teaching Assistants Terms and Conditions.

In County Councillor Williams' absence, the Clerk reported Councillor Williams has reported the damaged fencing around the playground at Front Street, Croxdale, and also reports of anti-social behaviour at Salvin Street, Croxdale, (as per Public Participation item above).

Resolved: For Members' Information.

107/16. 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.

108/16. AOB:

i. Grass Cutting – Cricket Field:

Councillor Summerson queried grass cutting arrangements to the cricket field; field has not been cut in the last 3 years.

Resolved: Clerk to contact Durham County Council and query grass cutting services with relevant Department.

ii. Letter to Mrs Dent:

Councillor I Watt requested a letter of thanks and appreciation is sent to Mrs Dent regarding works carried out in Hett Village.

Resolved: Clerk to write to Mrs Dent accordingly.

iii. Pond at Hett Village:

Discussion took place regarding potential health and safety issues with regard to the pond at Hett Village and who would be responsible for this – the Parish Council or Hett Village Pond Association.

Resolved: Clerk to contact Durham County Council for initial health and safety advice in the first instance.

109/16. Date and Time of Next Meeting:

It was agreed that the next meeting would be held on Wednesday 12 October 2016 at 7.00 pm.