

Minutes for the Monthly Parish Meeting of Croxdale and Hett Parish Council
Wednesday 28 October 2020, 7.00 pm
Virtual Meeting

Parish Council Members Present:

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

25/20. 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.

26/20. Declarations of Interest:

Declaration of interest was received from Councillor Kerrison in relation to Croxdale Residents Association / defibrillator request and Councillor Burton in relation to Cemetery Maintenance Contract Review.

27/20. Policing:

The Clerk had shared Policing crime stats: 13 incidents being recorded for the period August 2020 within the Parish. The PCSO confirmed there currently aren't any area specific PACT meetings due to COVID. Instead, they are holding monthly online question and answer meetings on the Durham City Police Facebook page which covers all areas.

Resolved: For Members' Information.

28/20. Public Participation

No members of the public attended the meeting virtually.

Resolved: For Members' Information.

29/20. Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on the 28 September 2020 were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chairman (under separate cover).

30/20. Matters Arising:

i. Defibrillator – Croxdale:

Clerk arranged for an electrician to visit the corner shop on 25 October 2020, however, the electrician did not attend at the agreed time. Clerk is to source an alternative contractor for a quotation to be received for the installation of a defibrillator and cabinet.

Resolved: Clerk to progress accordingly.

ii. Cemetery Gates Painting:

The railings at Croxdale cemetery were painted gold, where applicable.

Resolved: For Members' Information.

iii. Cemetery H&S Tree Inspections:

A quotation from the cemetery maintenance contractor is yet to be received regarding the recommendations of the tree survey.

Resolved: For Members' Information.

iv. Youth Activities:

In view of the new tiered restrictions being introduced, it was no longer practical for the youth sessions to take place during October's half-term. Future sessions are to be arranged next year subject to the situation regarding COVID-19.

Resolved: For Members' Information.

v. Benches on A167/Bus Stops:

County Councillor McKeon advised Croxdale bus stops are being reviewed and may look to change the bus shelter opposite Rogerson Terrace, rather than install a bench/seat for the elderly.

Resolved: For Members' Information.

vi. Request for Road Signage - Croxdale:

No response was received from Highways or from the resident concerned who requested for a slowdown sign be put up just off the roundabout heading towards Tudhoe, therefore this enquiry is now closed.

Resolved: For Members' Information.

vii. Planning Application – Loggins Farm – Residential Home for Children:

This application is still pending consideration.

Resolved: For Members' Information.

viii. Potholes / Road Repairs at Hett:

Councillor Griffiths to follow up with Councillors A and I Watt accordingly.

Resolved: Councillor Griffiths to consult with Councillors Ian and Arthur Watt regarding potential cost and quantity.

ix. Grass Cutting – Hett:

Clerk reported damage to the road side posts following grass cutting which was also reported by County Councillor Blakey and have yet to receive a response.

Resolved: Clerk to follow up progress with DCC.

x. Accessibility Requirements:

The cost of the new Parish website in order to comply with new regulations was £790.00. The new website would 'future proof' the website content, for any new legislation that may come into effect in the future.

Resolved: Members approved for the new Parish website to comply with accessibility requirements.

xi. Hett Litter Picks:

Councillor Griffiths requested if the monthly litter picks on Hett Lane / Leaman's Lane can be re-instated. County Councillor McKeon advised that regular litter picks could be carried out by volunteers in which DCC would provide the required equipment and collect the rubbish, however due to there been no designated footpaths in Hett, this would not be practical.

Resolved: Clerk to action with DCC accordingly.

xii. Financial Assistance from Hett Village Hall Association:

Payment was made to HVHA in relation to the roof repairs. Councillor Griffiths thanked the Parish Council for their generosity on behalf of HVHA. Works are scheduled to commence soon.

Resolved: For Members' Information.

xiii. 20 MPH - Speed Limit Trial

Members referred to the 20mph speed limit trial that has being introduced in 80 towns and villages across the Scottish Borders as part of efforts to improve road safety and encourage people to walk and cycle. Whilst this is in Scotland, the Clerk is to enquire with DCC if there are any plans to do this locally? The PC made the following suggestions:

- Hett – change from 30mph to 20mph
- Sunderland Bridge – change from 30mph to 20mph
- Croxdale – as this is currently 40mph, efforts have been made in the past to make this a 30mph zone without success. Salvin Street was identified as a particular street that would benefit of being 20mph from 30mph

Resolved: Clerk to contact Highways accordingly.

xiv. Croxdale Signage:

County Councillor Blakey has kindly agreed to pay for a new sign from Members Neighbourhood funding.

Resolved: For Members' Information.

xv. Street Lights, Croxdale:

County Councillor Blakey advised this has been reported to Highways and the Clean & Green Team for any required action.

Resolved: For Members' Information.

31/20 Parish Clerk Update / Correspondence:

i. 2020/21 Parish Council Insurance:

The Parish Council's annual insurance premium for 2020/21 is £424.88, which is an increase of £14.56 compared to the previous year.

Resolved: For Members' Information.

ii. Poppy Wreath:

Clerk delivered the PC wreath to Councillor Garner for Remembrance Sunday on 8 November 2020. The wreath will be laid at the Tommie's in Croxdale. Due to COVID-19, ceremonies have been scaled back this year. Clerk is to confirm what the current guidance is

on public attendance at ceremonies and complete the necessary COVID risk assessment, if required.

A letter of 'thank you' is to be issued to the residents concerned in relation to the handmade remembrance poppies that have been placed throughout the village.

Resolved: Clerk to arrange COVID secure arrangements for Remembrance Sunday ceremony in due course. Clerk to issue letter of thanks to residents.

iii. **Christmas Trees – Hett:**

Councillor Griffiths confirmed Hett does not require a Christmas tree this year for the village green.

Resolved: For Members' Information.

iv. **Kerb Surround Application, Croxdale Cemetery:**

Clerk informed Members of an application to install a kerb surround at a grave in Croxdale – in respect of T Curle Moran. The required materials and size specifications were satisfactory and the memorial mason to carry out the works was listed on the Parish Council's approved contractor list. It was noted the current headstone would remain.

Resolved: Application approved, Clerk to advise memorial mason accordingly.

v. **Planters, Croxdale:**

County Councillors Dunn and McKeon would like to provide the Parish Council with new planters in Croxdale (suitable locations to be determined).

Resolved: Councillor Kerrison is to liaise with County Councillor Dunn regarding the locations of the new planters.

vi. **Croxdale Skatepark:**

Clerk informed Members of a request received from a resident regarding the possibility of converting the open space area next to Croxdale play park into a skate park.

Following discussion, this initiative was not in favour by Members in view of there being a skate park available close by at Spennymoor, and also the green is used particular in the summer months to play football etc.

As the land in question is owned by Durham County Council, this could be explored/progressed direct, however, the Parish Council would not be in supportive of the proposal.

Resolved: Clerk to inform outcome to the resident accordingly.

vii. **County Durham Plan:**

Clerk advised the County Durham Plan was adopted by Durham County Council on 21 October 2020 which sets out the planning policies which the Council will use to determine planning applications in County Durham. The County Durham Plan covers the period 2016-2035.

Resolved: For Members' Information.

viii. **Proposed Solar Installation – Hett Moor Farm:**

Clerk informed Members of an invitation received today, regarding the proposal for a 50-megawatt solar installation which would be located at Hett Moor Farm, Thinford Lane.

Members/residents were invited to attend an online Q&A session with Lightsource BP scheduled for 3 November 2020, 7pm.

Resolved: Clerk to circulate details of the invitation to Members accordingly.

32/20. Financial Matters:

(i) Financial Report for the Period 1 April – 30 September 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 30 September 2020. The current net bank balances totalled £21,409.74.

Resolved: For Members' Information.

(ii) Financial Assistance Request – Durham Cathedral:

A request for financial assistance was received and considered from Durham Cathedral. Members agreed a donation of £250.00 in the first instance, which would be reviewed again towards the end of the financial year.

Resolved: Clerk to progress payment accordingly.

33/20: Cemetery Maintenance Contract Review

Clerk informed Members the cemetery maintenance contract is due for renewal on 31 December 2020. To ensure the Parish Council is receiving value for money, it was agreed to go back out to tender for this area of work.

Resolved: Clerk to arrange for tender notice / documentation to be issued accordingly.

34/20: Planning Issues:

No specific planning matters was discussed.

Resolved: For Members' Information.

35/20. County Councillor Reports:

County Councillor Dunn gave an update in relation to: DCC has funded free school meals vouchers following national campaign. County Councillors Blakey, Dunn and McKeon have dedicated £5,000 of Members Neighbourhood funding in relation to the roof pairs at Hett Village Hall. A further AAP grant has been approved for £15,700 which will go towards the renovation works, gas central heating installation and to replace window and doors. The History Centre planning application has been approved at Mount Oswald's with a scheduled 2021 opening.

County Councillor Blakey gave an update in relation to: work continues with food banks during COVID-19 and will look to involve Croxdale going forward.

County Councillor McKeon gave an update in relation to: online events are being held for this year's Remembrance Sunday ceremony. DCC has supported to 'light up' various buildings in red across the county as a mark of remembrance. Working with communities to look at ways in providing pantos/Christmas plays this year in view of COVID-19.

Resolved: For Member's Information.

36/20. AOB:

Croxdale Play Park

Councillor Kerrison reported following feedback from a resident regarding the condition of Croxdale's play park – perimeter fence and the removal of the rotten logs.

Resolved: Clerk is to follow up progress with DCC, as this was previously reported.

37/20. Date and Time of Next Meeting:

It was agreed that the next meeting would be held on Wednesday 25 November 2020 at 7.00 pm.