

Minutes for the Monthly Parish Meeting of Croxdale and Hett Parish Council
Wednesday 23 December 2020, 7.00 pm
Virtual Meeting

Parish Council Members Present:

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

51/20. Apologies for Absence:

Apologies of absence were received from Councillors A Watt, I Watt, R Burton and County Councillor Blakey.

Also Present:

County Councillors S Dunn and M McKeon.

52/20. Declarations of Interest:

Declaration of interest was received from Councillor Kerrison in relation to Croxdale Residents Association / defibrillator request and Councillor Griffiths in relation to cemetery maintenance contract review.

53/20. Policing:

The Clerk had shared Policing crime stats: 5 incidents being recorded for the period October 2020 within the Parish.

Resolved: For Members' Information.

54/20. Public Participation

No members of the public attended the meeting virtually.

Resolved: For Members' Information.

55/20. Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on the 25 November 2020 were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chairman (under separate cover).

56/20. Matters Arising:

i. Defibrillator – Croxdale:

Clerk had sourced a new company to provide a quotation for the installation of the defibrillator and cabinet which will take place on 28 December 2020.

Resolved: For Members' Information.

ii. Cemetery H&S Tree Inspections:

Three quotations have now been received for consideration which will be reviewed at the next meeting when determining the precept for 2021/22.

Resolved: For Members' Information.

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

This application is still pending consideration.

Resolved: For Members' Information.

iv. Grass Cutting – Hett:

A response was received on 17 December 2020 in which DCC has carried out an investigation and advised a works order will be raised to have the bollards replaced within this financial year.

Resolved: For Members' Information.

v. Hett Litter Pick:

December's litter pick took place on 9 December 2020. Councillor Griffiths requested if more regular litter picks could take place due to the amount of litter in the area. It was also suggested to approach neighbouring Town/Parish Councils to determine if they have seen an increase in litter within their villages. Contact is to be made to the retailers at Thinford on this issue.

Resolved: Clerk to action accordingly.

vi. 20 MPH - Speed Limit Trial:

A response was received from Highways regarding the 20MPH speed limit request at Hett and Sunderland Bridge. Subject to policy criteria being met and the Department for Transport Guidance can be satisfied and funding can be secured then DCC will consider a 20mph limit or Zone. However, the provision of 20mph limits and zones, is aimed at residential estates and side roads rather than through routes and main roads like Sunderland Bridge and Hett.

Discussion took place on a number of previous requests for highways improvements works within the Parish which have not progressed any further. It was agreed for the Clerk to contact Highways to this effect which will also include the Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhoods and 01Local Partnerships, Councillor Brian Stephens.

Resolved: Clerk to action accordingly.

vii. Planters, Croxdale:

Clerk confirmed all 11 planters have now been added to the Parish Council's insurance with a full schedule in place for future reference, with thanks to Councillor Kerrison.

Resolved: For Members' Information

viii. Croxdale Play Park:

The Clerk raised again with DCC on 10 December 2020 for an update on where this is positioned on the priority list and is currently awaiting a response.

Resolved: For Members' Information

ix. Hett Caravan:

Guidance was received from DCC regarding the caravan on the village green. If the parked caravan is to be pursued as a breach of planning regarding the material change of land use, then the land owner will be subject to the enquiry which is the Parish Council. If action taken by the land owner fails, then the local authority (DCC) would seek to take formal

action on the Parish Council and the owner of the caravan. In view of the above, it was agreed to write to the resident and request the caravan is removed, as permission was granted for x2 cars/vehicles and not a caravan.

Resolved: Clerk to issue letter accordingly.

x. Steel Barrier Fencing, Hett Lane:

DCC requested for further information on 15 December 2020 regarding the location and type of fault, this was provided and currently awaiting a response.

Resolved: For Members' Information

xi. Road Signs on Char Lane:

A response received on 11 December 2020 which advised the sign is advisory in which the police requested it be put in place to stop general HGV's using the road to travel between Tudhoe and Croxdale, but should not affect deliveries to properties along the road. However, Councillor Kerrison reported residents of Coldstream still have concerns.

Resolved: Clerk to feedback further concerns from residents.

xii. Street Signs, Hett:

Councillor Griffiths requested for 'clean up after your dog' sign on the footpath notice at the Old Church in Hett following feedback from residents. This was chased again on 10 December 2020 and awaiting a response.

Resolved: For Members' Information

xiii. Parish Logo/Crest:

The Clerk advised Members if the Parish Council was to adopt an existing coat of arms or crest, then the Parish Council would need to seek the approval of the owner of such crests to do so. Further guidance can be sought from the Heraldic Association/Organisation who can advise on what can and can't be used. Members agreed a logo for the Parish Council should be pursued.

Resolved: Clerk to action accordingly.

xiv. Replacement Cherry Trees, Croxdale:

County Councillor Dunn confirmed this is hand; one will likely to be replaced whilst the others are to be re-assessed which is still ongoing.

Resolved: For Members' Information

xv. Allotment / Garage Rent Collection:

Clerk confirmed letters have now been issued to all tenants with details of allotment/garage rent collection arrangements due to COVID. One tenancy is being investigated following reports that the tenant has moved out of the Parish.

Clerk is to investigate the new housing measures that came into force in England, Scotland and Wales on 14 December 2020 regarding Avian influenza (bird flu) and whether this has any impact on allotment holders.

Resolved: Clerk to action accordingly.

xvi. Bus Shelters, Croxdale:

County Councillor McKeon reported a seat is to be installed at the bus shelter on Rogerson Terrace. The other bus shelter in this area is proposed to replace the shelter with a seat however there will be no protection from the rain/bad weather. Members requested if the area could be made larger in order for a sheltered bus stop to be installed. County Councillor McKeon is to also chase progress on the bus shelter request at Butchers Race.

Resolved: County Councillor McKeon to action accordingly.

xvii. Hett Wildflower Meadow:

Councillor Griffiths reported the additional seeds and bulbs are not to be purchased yet due to the area being water logged.

Resolved: For Members' Information

57/20 Parish Clerk Update / Correspondence:

i. Proposed Centralised Custody Facility:

This item was discussed under planning matters.

Resolved: For Members' Information

ii. Double Taxation:

The Clerk informed Members of a survey in relation to double taxation which seeks Town / Parish Councils opinions as to whether they agree to the following motion or not.

"Great Aycliffe Town Council acknowledges Durham County Council's response to the issue of double taxation. We would request that, in the interest of fairness, there is a commitment by Durham County Council to reconsider the issue of double taxation and possible options to alleviate the unfairness that this causes for local council tax payers in County Durham. It is requested that this review is undertaken in consultation with the Local Councils Working Group."

Resolved: Members agreed to the above motion which the Clerk is to respond to accordingly.

58/20. Financial Matters:

(i) Financial Report for the Period 1 April – 30 November 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 November 2020. The current net bank balances totalled £18,896.16.

Resolved: For Members' Information.

59/20: Cemetery Maintenance Contract Review

Clerk advised that 3 tenders were received for the cemetery maintenance contract with annual charges being:

Tender A)	£2,300.00	Tender B)	£960.00	Tender C)	£1,920.00
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Following review of the documentation provided and discussion, it was resolved to accept Tender B) in view of costings. Clerk to draft contract for agreement with both parties.

Resolved: Clerk to inform outcome of the tendering process to individuals accordingly.

60/20: Planning Issues:

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

- a) DM/20/03732/FPA - Erection of 1 agricultural building for sheep/lambing
- b) DM/20/03668/FPA - Police Custody Suite

Resolved: Clerk to prepare responses of objections on the grounds of a) concerns of a grounds work company applying for an agricultural building for lambing and b) the proposed facility and resulted lengthy journeys will not result in improved efficiency and genuine fear of crime within the surrounding villages.

61/20. County Councillor Reports:

County Councillor McKeon gave an update in relation to: majority of updates already covered within the meeting. Full Council met last week whereby it was agreed not to roll out with exams in 2021 in which Durham County Council was the first Council to pass this motion. Coxhoe Community Pantry is to open in the new year.

County Councillor Dunn wished the Parish Council a very Merry Christmas and wondered if there was any update/progress regarding the roof repairs to Hett Village Hall? Councillor Griffiths confirmed stage 1 is now complete and stage 2 will commence second or third week in January 2021 depending on the order of materials.

Resolved: For Member's Information.

62/20. AOB – there was no any other business.

63/20. Date and Time of Next Meeting:

It was agreed that the next meeting would be held on Wednesday 27 January 2021 at 7.00 pm.