

The Council of the Parish of Esh Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Council held on Wednesday 22nd May 2019 at the Miners Institute, Church Street, Langley Park. Meeting commenced at 19:03

Annual Meeting of the Council

The Council members and attendees stood to honour the life of Friend and Councillor Richard Bowyer who sadly passed away 10th April 2019. A minute's silence was respectfully observed. Richard served Esh Parish Council for over 25 years and will be missed by all.

1. Election of Chair and Acceptance of Office

Proposed members for the Chair were Cllr. Linda Bushell and Cllr Ryan Drion. Following a vote from Council it was **resolved that Cllr Ryan Drion will Chair the Council for the coming year.** Cllr. Ryan Drion signed the acceptance of office witnessed by the Clerk.

2. Election of Vice Chair and Acceptance of Office

Cllr Linda Bushell was proposed without contest and it was **resolved that Cllr Linda Bushell will be Vice Chair for the coming year.** Cllr. Bushell signed the acceptance of office witnesses by the Clerk.

3. Record of attendance

Cllr. Ryan Drion, Cllr. Linda Bushell, Cllr. Ruth Hughes, Cllr. Susan Jacks, Cllr. Donna Smailes, Cllr. Ollie Moat, Cllr. Stuart Wilkinson.

**County Councillor Bev Coult
Steve McCallan – Durham County Council
PCSO Debra Waller 6055 – Durham Police
PCSO Mark Rodgers 7574 – Durham Police
Sarah Dance – Langley Park resident – Agenda Item 21.**

One member of the public present

4. Apologies of absence

Resolved by Council to accept apologies from Cllr. Edwin Simpson – Holiday Commitment, due to change of meeting date.

5. Declarations of Interest

Cllr. Linda Bushell, via the chair, sought clarification from Cllr. Susan Jacks, as to her current position with regards to the Friends of the Miners Institute. Cllr. Jacks stated that it was open membership and therefore **Cllr. Linda Bushell declared an interest in agenda item 16,** and will self-exclude from debate and vote.

6. Minutes from the previous meeting of the Tuesday 12th March 2019

Resolved to accept the minutes of the meeting as a true record, signed by the Chair.

7. Opportunity for the Public to raise matters of interest;

The resident in attendance spoke with reference to the treatment of the Clerk Agenda Item 10. As an ex Parish Councillor and also Interim Clerk and RFO for the period prior to the recruitment of the current Clerk. The resident reminded Council of their duty of Care towards the Clerk, in what can be difficult and often stressful circumstances. The resident felt that the poor treatment of the Clerks at Esh Parish Council is historical and has now become culturally and socially acceptable. The resident would like to see the Council seek legal redress to effectively deal with vexatious and abusive behaviour towards staff and members of the Council.

8. County Councillors Report

Apologies received from Cllr. Arnold Simpson and Cllr. Bev Coult delivered her first report as newly elected Councillor for Esh and Witton Gilbert.

- The County Council have elected their first female leader of the Council; Katie Corrigan to replace John Lethbridge.
- City of Durham Parish Council have been granted a judicial review against the siting of the new County Hall.
- Velo North will come to Durham on Sunday the 1st September – Road closures are in place, tickets and pricing can be found online.
- Cllr. Simpson and Cllr. Coult participated in Community Speed Watch with Tom an avid volunteer who started the Community Speed Watch campaign. Both Councillors had a good experience and thought it was an excellent volunteer led project.

9. Police report – Debra Waller, Mark Rodgers and Steve McCallan

- Following the PACT meeting in September 2018 which was the result of a surge of antisocial and criminal offences within Esh Parish, in particular Langley Park. The PACT was well attended and resulted in resources being pulled into the area and a Time Limited Project was established.
- The TLPs were well attended by Area Action Partnership, Police, Public, Durham County Council Street & Neighbourhood Wardens and Parish Councillors.
- The area showed improved crime rates throughout and huge improvements with regards to antisocial offences caused by repeat offenders.
- The PCSOs work hard to engage with the residents and attended the Friday Breakfast Club, Tuesday Club and ran several safety and crime roadshows throughout the year.
- The police urged the Parish Council to restart the Esh Leaves as it was an effective tool for communication, this was supported by both Parish and County Councillors.

The Chair indicated that he would like to deal with item 21. Out of Order to allow guest speaker Sarah Dance to deliver her report.

21. Centenary Field, Old Rec management plan prepared by Mrs Sarah Dance and update following community Litter pick

Mrs Dance met with the Wildlife Trust and prepared a report regarding the management of the site. The site has numerous areas which need some immediate attention including a wall and blocked waterway causing flooding to the top segment of the field. Mrs Dance will meet with the Clerk to prepare a further report. A Monthly clean up and litter pick was proposed for the first Sunday of the Month with all welcome to attend. **Resolved** the Clerk is instructed to assist Sarah in preparing a plan and costings for initial works to be undertaken, the Clerk will speak to Skill Mill for costings.

The Council organised a litter pick on the site where over 50 bags of rubbish and larger items were removed from the site. There were 20 volunteers who attended on the day and it was a great success. Thank you was given to the Cooperative Food Langley Park, for kindly donating drinks.

At this point on the agenda Cllr. Susan Jacks excused herself via the Chair and left the meeting as she had prior engagements 20:00.

10. Correspondence from ** [REDACTED] ** regarding the Clerks Conduct including action taken and recommendations from the National Association of Local Councils Legal Team.

The Clerk presented a report in line with recommendations from both NALC, SLCC and Durham County Councils Human Resources.

Resolved, the Council acknowledge the correspondence and will deal with the matters via the Council Complaint Committee. The Committee will have the right to reply to the complainants.

****Detail redacted following complaint to the Information Commissioners Office**

11. Review and nomination of committees 2019/2020

A brief discussion was held between Councillors, nominations considered and **resolved** as;

HR Committee; Cllr Ruth Hughes – Chair, Cllr. Susan Jacks and Cllr. Edwin Simpson
Complaints Committee; Cllr Ryan Drion - Chair, Cllr. Ollie Moat and Cllr. Linda Bush
Miners Institute Building Committee – deferred to next ordinary meeting of the Council.

12. Review of Standing Orders

Resolved as accepted without amendment.

13. Review of Financial Regulations

Resolved as accepted without amendment.

14. Amended Asset Register

The Internal Auditor identified a variance of £50.00 due to a type error on the report. This was amended and **resolved** as accepted.

15. Financial Summary 2018/2019 and Internal Audit Report

A copy of the report and summaries were circulated amongst members who note the auditor's comments and are satisfied that the Clerk took sufficient steps to deal with the matters within the financial year. Council **Resolved** to accept the report.

16. Friends of the Miners Institute, hall hire arrangement review and employment of cleaner

Cllr. Linda Bushell self-excluded from debate as she recognised a conflict of interest despite having withdrawn from the group early February 2019.

The Friday Breakfast Club ran by the Friends of the Miners Institute (FOMI) has suspended its activities and cancelled Breakfast Club. A letter of support from a patron has been received by the Clerk and circulated as well as a verbal complaint regarding this ceasing. The Friends of the Miners Institute paid the Parish Council the hall hire fee of £45.00 per session. The FOMI have stated that this is no longer viable and seek a reduction/waiver. A lengthy debate ensued following the written recommendations of the Clerk and Internal Auditor.

The Council wish to defer this matter to the next meeting of the Parish Council

20:55 The Council **resolve** to accept to waive the 2 hour standing order time limit with a 45min extension approved.

17. Planning applications DM/19/0147/FPA with update on land west of Davis Crescent

Deferred to a further meeting of the Council

18. Grant request of £300.00 from Esh and Bearpark Colliery Band

The Council **resolved** to accept the application. Clerk to arrange payment.

19. Grant request towards the 'Goodwill' Trip of £300.00

The Council **resolved** to accept the application. Clerk to arrange payment.

20. Funding request from Citizens Advice County Durham

Deferred to a further meeting of the Council

21. Centenary Field, Old Rec management plan prepared by Mrs Sarah Dance and update following community Litter pick

Item dealt with out of order see item 21 before 10

22. Esh Play Park update and consideration of quotes for initial corrective groundworks

Four companies were approached to provide quotes for initial groundworks to remove damaged equipment and soft landscape, two contractors responded, quotes were considered, and Council **resolved** to accept the quote from Brambledown Landscape Services for £1210.00. Clerk to contact and arrange site visit to proceed.

23. The year ahead in summary including Council Meeting Timetable and delegation to Working Groups

Resolved The Council accepted the Calendar of meetings but stated that these were subject to change or additional meetings as and when the Council requires. The Council felt that the prior established committees were sufficient at this moment to deal with current Council affairs.

24. Payments to make and bank reconciliation

Opening Balance (All Accounts) of Council 1st April 2019 £234,528.82

NWG Corona	Gas Miners Institute carried from 18/19	£3,529.45
NWG Corona	Gas Miners Institute	£378.68
NPOWER	Feeder Pillar L/P Christmas Tree	£79.62
Wave	Water Charges Jan - April 2019	£88.37
Office Depot	Stationary, Vacuum and consumables for MI	£187.61
Durham County Council	Trade Waste Collection Miners institute	£337.48
Durham County Council	Knee Rail Fencing 107m (NHB CC)	£3,539.83
Cooperative Bank	Commission	£8.86
Cooperative Bank	Service Charge	£10.00
CISWO	25th March - 23rd June 2019 Quarterly Rent	£983.68
HMRC	PAYE & NIC to April 5th 2019	£874.33
GRENKE	Quarterly Fee for Photocopier	£306.00
NEST	Pension Contributions	£53.31
NEST	Pension Contributions	£56.22
Total Business Group	Photocopying Charges	£13.87
L&S Maintainence	Play Park Inspections March 2019	£135.00
CDALC	Annual Subscription (Steve Ragg)	£678.09
NWG Corona	Electricity Miners Institute March 19	£96.58
PJ Embleton	Clerks Salary April 2019	£1,492.57
PJ Embleton	Expenses April 2019	£12.50
William Ward	Window Cleaning - Miners Institute 24/04/2019	£50.00
EVRA	Donation towards Snow Angels Project	£140.14
Total Business Group	Printing Charges	£13.62
Durham County Council	HR Advice & Guidance February	£180.00
		£13,245.81
PJ Embleton	Taxi - return to Sunderland for Accountants	£70.00
PJ Embleton	Taxi - return to Sunderland for Accountants	£70.00
JRB Enterprise	Dog Bags x 50000	£552.00
Office Depot	Stationary and Storage	£160.90
Roadware	relacement bin for damages to SBR Play Area	£311.88
Cooperative Bank	Commission	£3.85
Cooperative Bank	Service Charge	£10.00
Miners Memorial Group	Miners Memorial Group Funds Held from 2016/2017	£2,350.00
NWG Corona	Gas Miners Institute April 2019	£317.93
NWG Corona	Electricity Miners Institute April 2019	£80.83
NWG Corona	Gas Miners institue March 2019	£383.18
PJ Embleton	Salary May 2019	£1,553.45
PJ Embleton	Expenses May 2019	£12.50
William Ward	Window Cleaning - Miners Institute 21/05/2019	£50.00
L&S Maintainence	Play Park Inspections April 2019	£135.00

Resulting bank balances less payments due of £19,307.33
=£215,221.49

The Council noted the bank statements, approved payments as listed and **resolve** the Clerk to arrange payments.

Signed as a true record _____ 9th June 2019
Chair to the Council of the Parish Esh