

The Council of the Parish of Esh Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on Tuesday October 8th at Quebec Village Hall, Quebec. Meeting commenced at 19:00

1. Record of attendance

Cllr. Ryan Drion, Cllr. Linda Bushell, Cllr. Donna Smailes, Cllr. Ollie Moat, Cllr. Edwin Simpson, Cllr. Ruth Hughes, Cllr. Stephan Aal

County Councillor Bev Coult
County Councillor Arnie Simpson

14 members of the public were present.

2. Apologies of absence

Resolved by Council to accept apologies from the following members;

Cllr. Stuart Wilkinson – Medical leave
Cllr. Robert Smedley – No apologies received

3. Declarations of Interest

4. Minutes from the previous meeting of the Tuesday 10th September 2019.

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

5. County Councillors Report

Cllr. Bev Coult delivered the following report to Council;

- Push for the online library services initiative
- Re-cycling centres have now reduced to winder hours, please check timings.
- 70 new apprentices have recently been taken on throughout Durham County Council.
- Issues regarding parking/speeding around the local schools, County Councillors looking at funding A- style boards to go roadside warning drivers to drive carefully as school ahead.
- County Councillors have funded a new set of books for each school
- Local bus company complaints received regarding speeding through the smaller villages, the Company is currently recruiting new drivers and training.
- County Councillors have funded Quebec Village Hall and Esh Village Residents Association
- New drop-in surgery dates will be released soon

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

Standing orders were suspended by the chair, the floor was opened to the residents' in attendance to raise matters/questions. One member of the public wished to speak and raised the following;

A report was requested to be read firstly, which should have been dealt with by the Clerk, in item number 8. This report from Durham County Council regarding the Wetlands was read aloud, indicating that as the landowner only, responsibility for and health and safety concerns are to be addressed directly to the group occupying and Durham County Council confirm that no complaints to date have been received.

- Request for the name of the complainant who initially raised concerns with Parish Member.
- Life Bouys have been donated to the group, but Durham County Council have indicated that these are not required on the site.
- Signage concerns at the wetlands area have been reviewed and risk assessed
- Part of the riverbanks are managed by the Local Angling Club and this accessible stretch is cordoned off during public events.
- Fairy Glen is a community space which has been visited by 13000 people over the last 7 weeks with a 37500 strong following on social media.
- The area is currently checked every day, 365 days of the year by volunteers.
- The group are seeking legal advice regarding safeguarding issues and potential legal action, through their insurance company. The group and individuals concerned are looking at reporting deemed breaches of conduct of Esh Parish Council Members with the Monitoring Officer at Durham County Council. Contact details of which were offered by the Clerk, however, declined.

A written response will be issued if deemed necessary

7. Clerks work in progress report

The Clerk delivered a short report and update on the following;

Parish Website

Esh Play park

Lock – Up Rear of Garden Ave

Kids Club Christmas Trip

Signatory changes to the Parish bank account

Home Group Advise Sessions – Drop-in Wednesday 1-3pm, Miners institute

Age UK – January 2020

Lighting upgrade Parish Office

New seats installed top-end of Langley Park

8. Planning application received

9. External Audit conclusion 18/19 – Mazars LLP

The auditors notice of conclusion and recommendations are now available to view at the Miners Institute or on the County Durham Association of Local Councils' website.

The auditors concluded that the Council have only minor scope for improvement and for the first time in years is unqualified.

Resolved to accept the details of the conclusion.

10. Funding Application – Langley Park Football Club

This application for funding has been withdrawn from the Parish Council as the County Council have funded the same initiative.

11. Tree Planning – Cllr. Edwin Simpson

Councillor Simpson delivered a short report on engagement with the Woodland Trust.

Resolved to accept the recommendations and register for the scheme. Clerk to arrange registration.

12. Scribe Accountancy package for 2020/2021

Scribe is a bespoke Local Authority accountancy package, details of which were provided to member prior to the meeting. **Resolved** to accept the quote and Clerk to arrange demo and training for begin in November.

13. Recruitment of a Community Development/Parish Support Officer

Councillor Aal would like to amend the wording of the job specification and will present to Council a report for review prior to the budgetary meeting of the 22nd of October 2019 to enable Council to agree the role and costings.

14. VE Day 2020 – May 8th – 10th

A brief update was given by the Clerk regarding initial preparations for the VE75 Weekend.

Resolved the Clerk to contact Durham County Council regarding road closures to enable a 'Street Party'

15. Christmas Events

7th December – Christmas Fayre and light switch on event.

14th December – Childrens Christmas Party and Santa's Grotto

23rd December – Snowman at the Sage

16. Hedge work at Sir Bobby Robson Park

The Council **resolved** to accept the option 3 of the quote, Clerk to inform contractor to begin work.

17. Esh Play Area – Update on installation, signage, pathways and seating options

New play equipment and grass matting is now installed, and the play area is closed to the public. The Clerk and Vice Chair identified post install that grass matting pins were missing from install. Details of this have been sent to installation team who will reattend to underpin. A quotation has been requested for pathways and seating options. Signage option will be presented to a further meeting of the Council.

18. Emergency plumbing repairs to the kitchen drainage system, replacement thermostatic valve in the Miners Institute, plus damage to hall flooring urgent action required.

The Clerk presented a report detailing actions taken outside of Council, in urgency, instructed in line with the Council's Delegation Scheme. **Resolved** as accepted.

Clerk instructed to contact contractors regarding work required to hall flooring.

19. Parish Media update – Councillor Ryan Drion

Parish website is currently having archive content added, Council will have.gov.uk email addresses and this should be live by the end of the year.

20. Macmillan Coffee Morning Update and upcoming Royal British Legion Event, Including Poppy Distribution in Esh Parish

- £323 was raised at the Macmillan Coffee morning – Thanks to all within the parish who either donated, helped or attend the event.
- Royal British Legion event – details to be arranged – Friday 7th November 2019.
- RBL Poppy Appeal – Cllr. Linda Bushell will distribute and collect poppy's throughout the businesses and schools

21. Esh Leaves production

The Council will produce an edition of Esh Leaves – delivered first week in November. Clerk to arrange collation of articles for print. Delivery options are being investigated and a shared delivery cost may be of benefit.

22. Chairman's Allowance £300.00

Resolved to pay allowance, Chair will donate his funds to Christmas grotto event. Clerk to arrange payment.

23. Payments to make and bank reconciliation

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

24. Date of Next meeting –

Tuesday 22nd October 2019 -Extra Ordinary Meeting of Council – Budget and Precept.

Tuesday 12th November 2019 – Ordinary Meeting of Council

Signed as a true record _____ 12th November 2019
Chair to the Council of the Parish Esh