

Minutes of the **PARISH COUNCIL MEETING** held in the **CHURCH STREET COMMUNITY CENTRE, LANGLEY PARK** on Tuesday 14th October 2003 commencing at 7.00pm

Present Councillors:- A. Mollon (Chairman), R. A. Bowyer, G. Coulson, H. S. Guildford, A. Harling, A. Hiles, K. Robson and W. J. Tyrie

Apologies:- C. Bloor, F. Crow, S. Rothwell, M. Sands, H. Tyler and M. Tyler

Also in attendance:- M. G. Ackroyd (Clerk) and County Councillor J. Armstrong

121/03 POLICE REPORT

The Chairman welcomed PC Elizabeth Liddle, Beat Officer for Langley Park, to the Meeting.

PC Liddle reported on various incidents since the September Meeting including:-

2 Burglaries, 2 arsons (on cars), 4 youth annoyance incidents, 1 theft, 2 thefts from vehicles, 2 domestic incidents and 7 incidents of criminal damage, all in Langley Park. 4 arrests had been made. there were also 2 incidents reported in Esh.

Cllr Hiles advised the Council that a Crime and Health Group had been established within the EQUaL Partnership which included Cllr Harling and his wife.

The Clerk also referred to a fly tipping problem at Davis Crescent which resulted in an illegal bonfire being ignited and the Fire and Rescue Service being called out. See under 065/03.

Reference was also made to the offer of a talk, by Mr B. Donkin, on the Neighbourhood Watch initiative. It was agreed to invite Mr Donkin to the November Meeting and to advise residents through Esh Leaves of the talk if confirmed by Mr Donkin.

The Chairman thanked PC Liddle for her comprehensive report and she then left the Meeting.

122/03 MINUTES OF ORDINARY MEETING HELD ON 9th SEPTEMBER 2003

Signed as a true record signed by the Chairman.

123/03 MATTERS ARISING

101/02 Recreation Ground, Langley Park

Draft Management Plan still awaited from Durham Wildlife Services (DWS).

An estimate had now been received from W. Marley to cut the heather. Following further advice from DWS the quote had to be restricted to cutting one third of the heather this year. Cost £100.00 +vat.

However DWS had further advised that the quote might need to be amended to conform with the Management Plan requirements. Marley's had advised that their quote would need revising as they had not allowed for the removal of cuttings and the spreading of some cuttings over bare patches to enable seeds to establish as now advised by the DWS. The Clerk said he expected the amended quote to be almost double the one already provided.

The Chairman also advised the Council that the goal posts on this site were now in a poor state of repair. It was agreed that they should be removed. The Clerk to contact Marley's and Alan Mace for a quote.

134/02 Environmental Improvements

The Clerk advised that Trina Barrett from DWS had now met with Clare Heaps from Durham County Council together with Mr J. Atkinson to discuss the proposed tree planting and hedgerow initiative along Kaysburn Road. A draft scheme and preliminary costing (management fee and siteworks) was awaited.

026/03 Progress re appointment of Part Time Development Worker

It was reported that only 2 vacancies had been filled and neither was for Esh Ward. The issue had been taken up by Councillor Coulson with the Group Leader and Marie Moore the District Council's Community Participation and Funding Officer had been invited to attend a meeting of the EQUaL Partnership Executive on 4th November 2003 to discuss the matter further. The Council continued to be concerned that no progress had been made in attracting a Development Worker into the Ward and that the District Council had not taken advantage of advertising the post in Esh Leaves. The Clerk was asked to contact Marie Moore in order to encourage the District Council to place an advert in the next edition of Esh Leaves which is due out shortly. Cllr Hiles made reference to the hours to be worked by the Development Worker and the possibility of the post being upgraded to a full time worker, which would have funding implications.

038/03 Broadband

Although Broadband was now enabled there was still some concern that it was not as fast as had been expected. It was reported however that BT was constantly upgrading their equipment in this area and the situation should continue to improve.

060/03 Library Service

Cllr J. Armstrong advised that the report should be submitted in the next few weeks to the County Council's Cabinet outlining 3 possible options for a new static library namely the Langley Park School,

the Church Street Community Centre and a potential site between the old Fire Station premises and the Doctors Surgery.

The EQUaL Partnership was considering a response to the County Council's original report. In order to assist the Parish Council and the Partnership in considering possible other users for a new library facility Councillor Armstrong was prepared to arrange transport bus to take residents, and Councillors, to Wingate and/or Thornley where new Libraries had been provided. The Clerk to liaise with Councillor Armstrong re possible dates. It was suggested that up to 15 residents from EQUaL might be interested in going on the visit.

064/03 Noticeboard for Langley Park

The Clerk advised that costings were awaited from Durham County Council.

065/03 Land at Davis Crescent

Whilst considering the Police Report (item 121/03 refers) the Clerk reported on anonymous letter received re spruce trees being removed from a dwelling in Davis Crescent and deposited on the play area. Children had since moved the trees into the middle of the play area and set fire to the rubbish. The Fire and Rescue Service had been called out as there was a threat to the childrens safety and adjacent property. The Clerk had since contacted Home Housing and the District Council to advise them of the situation requesting that if the named property was one of theirs that they take action against the tenant. In the meantime the Clerk had also asked the District Council to send out their fly tipping squad to clear up the site. The Police agreed to make some enquiries in this case.

The Clerk reminded the Council that this site continued to be serious management headache and as the Council did not own the land (now holding over on a lease which matured several years ago) the question had to be raised – did the Council wish to continue to using this site or terminate the lease granted by Home Housing. The grounds for handing back the land would be that continuing vandalism by adjacent householders (possibly including some of Home Housing's own tenants) prevented the Council from having a peaceful occupation of the site.

Before deciding on a course of action the Clerk said it would be helpful if the EQUaL Partnership could confirm whether the Davis Crescent site was being considered by them as one of the 'new' play areas for the Parish. Councillors Bowyer and Hiles were able to confirm that this was not the case.

In the circumstances it was resolved to terminate the lease with Home Housing as soon as possible.

066(i)/03 Play Areas

The new goal posts for the Esh play area had now been installed and the official launch covered by the local media.

Cllr Robson declared an interest in the following item.

077/03 Access to the Recreation Ground

The Clerk advised that the County Council had confirmed that the 'locked gates' did not interfere with the existing pedestrian access arrangements in this area. Cllr Armstrong nevertheless agreed to request officers to check whether the stiles were adequate to enable pedestrians to pass in comfort.

The Clerk stated that although he had contacted Anderson and Young on the question of keys for the gates to enable the Parish Council continued access along this access for maintenance vehicles no reply had been received. Cllr Hiles said that as far as she was aware the Parish had permissive rights over this track and both she and Cllr Bowyer were concerned that if access was denied over this track and the one off Bridgeway (to be developed by Newton Moor) then the Parish could be faces with a landlocked site. The Clerk said that he had already contacted CISWO re the title deeds for the site and any access rights into the site. As no reply had been received reminders to be sent to CISWO and Anderson and Young.

080/03f(viii) Reports

The Clerk confirmed advised that he had not yet received a reply from the County Council re the possibility of the South Derwentside Access Bus Link being extended into the Parish.

089/03 Correspondence

8 The Clerk advised that he had contacted the Planning Officer at Derwentside District Council re Diggerland Vehicles penetrating onto the banks of the River Browney and had been informed that a site inspection had been carried out by their Enforcement Officer and no evidence found to support this allegation .

10 Christmas Trees

Following Cllr Sands request to leave the lights on for a longer period at Esh the Clerk advised that the cost of increasing the times for the Esh tree should not be prohibitive and it was agreed to an extra period to be arranged between The Clerk in conjunction with the Chairman and Cllr Sands.

090/03 and 108/03 Planning Matters

a) Esh Parish Hall and the Multi Use Sports Area

The Clerk advised the Council that he had requested details of the floodlighting proposals from the County Council – details awaited.

A letter had also been sent to the Director of Education re the intended start dates for both developments together with a management plan for the site – again reply awaited.

b) Former compass Caravan site

The Clerk advised that this site was not now to be used by the Police as another purchaser (Creative Christmas Co from Consett) had acquired the site and to move onto the site next month.

092/03 Reports

a) Parish Transport Working Group

Report awaited from Councillor Geany. The Clerk to contact Councillor to ascertain what progress she was making with the report.

c) www site

The Clerk said he had contacted the local website deeplinking into the Council's website and the situation had improved.

d) Parish, District and County Councillor reports

Parish Council

- ii) The Clerk advised that the Benefits Session had been a success and it was possible that another session would be arranged in the New Year. An article advising residents who they should contact re benefits had been written for Esh Leaves.

108/03 Footpaths Esh Village

Letter sent to the Northern Area Office. Reply awaited.

110/03 Proposed Pedestrian Refuge, Front Street, Langley Park

Following consultations by the County Council on a possible pedestrian refuge in Front Street near Ian's Place and the Nursing Home Cllr Armstrong reported that out of 29 adjoining occupiers consulted 12 were in favour 4 were against and 13 did not reply. Cllr Armstrong said that in light of the comments received it was intended to slightly modify the scheme and to move the proposed refuge a few feet in a westerly direction and a further site meeting had been arranged for the following day after which it was intended to progress the works in the near future.

Cllr Bowyer requested consideration to a zebra crossing to All Saints Youth Centre. Councillor Armstrong stated that whilst the cost of this would be prohibitive he would ask officers to prepare a plan for consultations with the local residents regarding a safe crossing point in this location.

111/03 Commuted Sum for the erection of 25 dwellings at Woodside Farm, Woodside Terrace Langley Park

Letter sent to the District Council re application of the commuted sum. Reply awaited.

112/03 Pantomime

The Clerk confirmed that the Pantomime was to be held on Saturday 10th January 2004 at the Wood View Community Centre. He also said that he had contacted the two nursing homes in Langley Park inviting them to send clients to the Pantomime. It was hoped that around 10 residents from each home would be able to attend. It was confirmed that the residents and their helpers should be allowed free admission. It was agreed that the Council should charge £2 for adults and £1 for children with children being given a free gift on entry.

114/03 Annual Audit

Clerk advised that the internal audit would be carried out on 27th October 2003 by Mrs J. Brown prior to the accounts being sent to the external auditor. The accounts would be available for public inspection prior to the accounts being sent for auditing.

118/03 Payment of outstanding invoice to Durham Rural Community Council

This has now been paid.

124/03 NON CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING HELD ON 6th OCTOBER 2003

Confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chairman

125/03 CORRESPONDENCE

126/03 National Tree Week 2003 – Trees Matter, Plant Them

The Clerk had requested details on the basis that the funding could be used towards the tree planting proposals on Kaysburn Road

127/03 Community Highways Worker

It was agreed that the Clerk should obtain more details on this scheme from Durham County Council

128/03 Members Allowances

New Regulations enabled Parish Councils to pay basic allowances to members. The actual amount per Councillor per annum was the subject of a report through the District Councils independent

remuneration Panel which was seeking the views of Parish Councils. The initial suggestion was a basic allowance based up 4% of the District Council's basic allowance resulting in a figure of around £160pa per Member (paid out on a monthly basis). It was confirmed that this would have to be paid monthly to Members. The Clerk said he would need to know as soon as possible on whether the Council wished to pay these allowances as it could have a bearing on future budgets.

Councillor Hiles was strongly in favour of the allowances being paid although it would be up to individual Councillors as to whether they wished to retain the allowance, donate it to Charity or return it to the Council. Councillor Guildford was opposed to the payments.

It was agreed that the Clerk would make further enquiries and the matter would be considered at the next monthly Meeting.

126/03 MINOR CORRESPONDENCE

Durham County Council

- i) Parish Paths Partnership Walk around Middleton on Sunday 2nd November at 10.00a.m.
The Clerk to attend with his wife
- ii) Boundary Committee Review – Stage 1 Submission

Derwentside District Council

- iii) Derwentside Community Safety Forum – 5th September 2003.
- iv) Beacon Council Newsletter Issue 7
- v) Draft Derwentside Community Strategy

Other

- vi) Society of Local Council Clerks – Quality Councils Seminar 21st November 2003
- vii) BTCV Catalogue
- viii) Stewardship News and Claim Form for 2003

127/03 PLANNING MATTERS

It was noted that Councillors Coulson and Guildford had an interest in all the following applications.

Applications

No FJC/1/2003/0764/DMFP
Applicant Mr G. Nelson
Proposed Demolition of existing building, erection of offices and eight flats (outline)
At Former Hippodrome Building, Hedley Terrace, Langley Park

No CS/1/2003/0941/DMFP
Applicant Mr J. Kane
Proposed Conservatory
At 3 Elemore Close, Langley Park

No LS/1/2003/0943/DMFP
Applicant Mr J. Emms
Proposed Conservatory
At 2 Springwell Avenue, Langley Park
No objections subject to adjacent owners being consulted.

128/03 PLAYGROUNDS

The Clerk reminded the Council that it not had elected a playground sub committee until the EQUaL Partnership was established and a Playground Group formed. Councillor Bowyer said that as this Playgroup was now up and running and were formulating a strategy on improvements to the Esh and Quebec sites and were in discussions with the Cricket Club for a site within their campus. Councillor Bowyer therefore asked if the Parish Council could establish a Playground Group to liaise with the EQUaL Partnership Sub Group. After some debate it was agreed that if the Partnership could advise the Clerk when their Playground Group would be meeting an invitation could then be sent to all Parish Councillors to attend the meeting if they so wished.

Cllr Hiles advised the Council that the Playground Group was now working up proposals for 3 main sites for Esh and Quebec (using the Parish Council's sites) and Langley Park (within the Cricket Ground campus). It was likely that the Parish Council would be approached to release the £19,000 plus funds available for play areas within the Parish and to agree to enter into a lease, at a peppercorn rent, for the Esh and Quebec sites subject to the Council agreeing to maintain and insuring the sites/equipment.

129/03 REPORTS

a) Parish

Councillor Bloor had contacted the Clerk re substantial trees being removed from Springwell House. The Clerk to contact the District Planning Officer.

The Clerk handed out a note of the annual Allotment inspection. It was agreed that the Clerk in conjunction with the Chairman and Councillor Coulson be authorised to serve Notices to quit on those tenants who failed to comply with the letters sent out requesting that their sites be tidied up. This would be subject to any mitigating reasons as to why the sites remain neglected.

b) District

Cllr Tyrie referred to developments with the Neighbourhood Office and that whilst the facility might fall to a 2½ arrangement it was not anticipated that this would occur during 2003/04.

Cllr Tyrie also made reference to the transfer of certain licence functions from the Magistrates Court to the District Council's Licensing Committee.

c) County

Cllr Armstrong advised the Council that he had recently given £500, from his Local Members Budget, in order that the Langley Park Primary School Girl's Under 12's Football team might be able to purchase some equipment and have some funding available towards travel costs.

Cllr Armstrong also reported on the parking signs that had appeared near the Trailer Library site. It was intended that the general public should be directed to the side street outside St Michael's RC Church/ Hall and that the actual car park next to these buildings was for use by the Church and by way of a private arrangement part would be made available by the Church to the Nursing Home. In order to avoid possible vehicle obstruction outside the Church entrance Cllr Armstrong said that he would be arranging for some white lining in the area immediately adjacent to the entrance.

130/03 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

To be held at the Parish Room, Langley Park on Tuesday 11th November 2003, commencing at 7.00pm.

EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

That pursuant to Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 the public be excluded for the remainder of the Meeting during consideration of the items listed below on the grounds that if they are present during the discussion of these items there could be disclosure to them of exempt information as defined in Section 10.