

Minutes of the **PARISH COUNCIL MEETING** held in the **CHURCH STREET COMMUNITY CENTRE, LANGLEY PARK** on Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> June 2004 commencing at 7.00pm

Present Councillors:- A. Mollon, (Chairman), C. Bloor, G. Coulson, J. Geany, H. Guildford, A. Harling, K. Robson, M. Sands and W. Tyrie

Apologies:- Councillors M. D. Cummings, F. Crow, A. Hiles, S. Rothwell, M. and H. Tyler

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

The Chairman welcomed PC N. Foster to the meeting

#### **064/04 POLICE REPORT**

PC Foster reported on the following:-

##### Esh

Nothing to report

##### Ushaw College

Nothing to report

##### Quebec

Theft of 2 wheel clamps from a caravan

##### Langley Park

Theft of dvd player, 3 days earlier, 2 people arrested. Sneak in robbery at Londis, purse removed, no suspects as yet. 2 tyres slashed in Garden Avenue, suspect unknown. Window damaged at Housing Office. Roller shutter damaged at old fire station premises. Cllr Armstrong has asked his Transport section to look at some form of security fence at these premises, possibly involving some form of DEFRA initiative.

PC Foster was thanked for his attendance and then left the meeting.

#### **065/04 MINUTES OF ORDINARY MEETING HELD ON 11<sup>th</sup> MAY 2004**

Agreed as a true record signed by the Chairman.

#### **066/04 CLERK'S REPORT INCLUDING OBSERVATIONS FROM COUNCILLORS TO THE MINUTES**

##### 134/02 and 126/03 Environmental Improvements along Kaysburn Road

The Clerk's advised that a final account was awaited from the Contractor which would need to be approved by the Wildlife Trust before payment could be made.

The Clerk had also contacted Mr J. Atkinson, the owner of fields to the north of main road, re the bonfires and the state of the land. The bonfires were unwanted hay and straw and some work had taken place to level over the field to remove the apparent eyesore.

##### 064/03 Noticeboard for Langley Park

Email received from the Parish Paths Officer advising of meeting on site shortly with the Council's DSO to discuss possible siting of the board.

The board had been ordered and it was resolved that the heading should be the same as Quebec ie Esh Parish Noticeboard not Esh Parish Council.

##### 092/03 Parish Transport Working Group

See under Minute No 041d/04.

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

Further reminder sent to the District Council re application of the commuted sum.

##### 119/03 and 132/03 Appointment of new Clerk

The Clerk had arranged for a medical check to be carried out on Mr Smith on 7<sup>th</sup> June 2004 and for the usual other checks to be carried out. An offer letter had been sent to Mr Smith (cleared by the District Council's Personnel Officer) and as far as the Clerk was concerned Mr Smith remained very interested in the post on offer.

##### 030d/04 EQUaL Play Group

Further information awaited from the Play Group re their proposals for the Langley Park site in order that the Clerk could contact the Councils Insurers for a premium quote.

##### 033/04 Seats on Esh Village Green

The Clerk advised that work should start shortly on repainting the seats.

##### 037d/04 PPP Applications

Estimated awaited from Mr Cassidy in order that a PPP bid could be lodged with the County Council.

##### 041d/04 Parish Transport Grant

The Clerk advised that the Council's Insurers had confirmed that Indemnity Clause required by the Countryside Agency could be signed. Since the previous meeting arrangements had been made by the

County Council with Stanley Taxis for the service to commence on 7<sup>th</sup> June 2004 and this had been publicised in the local press and in a special edition of Esh Leaves Extra distributed over the previous weekend.

A press released had been made to announce the start date and Councillor Cummings had formally launched the new service on the 7<sup>th</sup> June 2004 with the Northern Echo photographer in attendance.

#### 042e/04 Seminars

Dates offered Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> September or Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> October 2004.

It was agreed to opt for the 26<sup>th</sup> October 2004. The Clerk to finalise arrangements.

#### 051/04 Police Report

The Clerk confirmed that he had contacted the Chief Inspector for the Derwentside Division requesting reports at future meetings to cover Esh, Quebec and Ushaw College, in addition to Langley Park.

#### 056/04 Planning Matters

Application submitted to the City of Durham Council

No 404/00341/FPA/PGH  
Applicant Anderson and Young Coachworks  
Proposed Erection of 13 residential dwellings, associated garages, roads and access  
(revised and resubmitted proposal) (Adjoining Authority Consultation)  
At Old Station yard, Langley Park

The Clerk advised that he had received a letter from the City Council of Durham stating that the Council had refused the application.

In addition the Clerk had ascertained that the land to the west of the track, on the western side of the application area, was not owned by Durham County Council.

#### 055n/04 Special Meeting to discuss the future of the DAPTC

To be held at 10.30am, Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> June 2004 in County Hall, Durham. Further details of the meeting had been provided by the Town Clerk of Great Aycliffe Town Council, acting on behalf of the Steering Group considering the successor arrangements.

In summary the former Honorary Secretary to the DAPTC was retiring and his former employer, Shildon Town Council, would not be providing similar financial support towards this post, which previously included accommodation, equipment and notional salary costs (about 2 full days a week).

The Secretary's work had grown and great deal more needed to be done in order to address recent changes in work practices (QPC's etc) let alone training courses, which had been very limited in the last 5 years, apart from a whole raft of training sessions which had been organised recently by the North East Region Employers Organisation.

In order to address these concerns it was proposed to appoint a full time Secretary and this could have serious implications on the fees charged out to Councils. The County Council and 6 District Councils had been requested to fund one third each, with the remaining third paid by the smaller Parish and Town Councils. Based upon the 3 different repayment bases quoted Esh Parish Council's fee could rise from £173.50 for 2004/05 (not yet presented for payment by the Clerk due to possible changes in the operational procedures) to a new fee of between ££376.51 to £407.89.

The Clerk stated that he would not be able to attend the Meeting but Councillor Harling said that he might be available and it was agreed to refer a copy of the papers to him.

#### 055/o/04 LGPS Regulations 1997 – changes to the Internal Dispute Procedure

The Clerk gave a brief report on the meeting in County Hall on 14<sup>th</sup> May 2004 to discuss the new Regulations and in particular the new IDR arrangements. In the event of a dispute on eligibility, pensionable pay etc the final arbiter will no longer be the ODPM but the Administering Authority (Durham County Council)(Stage 2 of an appeal process). In the circumstances it will be necessary to appoint a person to act as a Local Referee at the initial Stage (Stage 1). Many Councils are either unable to provide an officer in house and indeed would prefer that this be dealt with by an appropriately qualified third party. The County Council has advised that it uses a Mr John Briscoe of Diss, Norfolk for this purpose who has considerable experience in this field of work. His charge would be £200 + vat per case fixed until May 2007. As the new arrangements commenced 1<sup>st</sup> June 2004 it was essential that the County Council were advised of Councils views on the matter as soon as possible. The Clerk advised the Council that there is now no appeal against a Stage 1 decision if the appeal is in favour of the applicant (presumably the employee not employer).

It was resolved to appoint Mr Briscoe to act as Local Referee if the situation should arise with this Council.

The Clerk also referred to a letter from the County Treasurer regarding Certificates of Permanent Ill Health. The definition of "permanently incapable" means that the Member will, or more likely than not, be incapable until, at the earliest, his/her 65<sup>th</sup> birthday. The relevant Certificate has now been amended to reflect this change.

#### 057/04 Hanging Baskets

The Clerk advised all the brackets had been checked and it was found that several were either weak or not placed high enough to satisfy the County Council's criteria of a 2.7 m high vertical clearance. Following further discussions with the Northern Area Manager (NAM) the Clerk had been advised that whilst 2.7m was desirable the height could be reduced to a minimum of 2.1m although it was stressed that this should apply in all cases, even those where the baskets would not be adjacent to a public highway. Unfortunately the height criteria could result in baskets not being hung in certain locations (such as Esh Post Office) as there might not be sufficient space to relocate the bracket on premises within the same occupation.

In addition a method statement for hanging, and watering, the baskets had been provided by Mr Snowdon, and agreed with the NAM. Cover had also been agreed with the Council's Insurers. Requests had also been received from the Blue Star, Costcutters and Lace for either a new bracket and/or the baskets to be watered by Mr Snowdon at the same time as others watered by him.

It was resolved to:-

- a) instruct Mr Cassidy to repair and resite any weak brackets (estimated cost £4 per bracket plus parts) in order to comply with the 2.1m criteria
- b) instruct Mr P. Snowdon to hang the baskets as soon as possible
- c) agree to provide a new bracket and/or arrange for the baskets to be watered by Mr Snowdon at the Blue Star, Costcutters and Lace

In addition the Clerk to advise Cllr Guildford on the cost of the baskets, which the Clerk advised should be the same as for 2003.

#### 058/04 Unaudited Accounts for 2003/04

The accounts to be summarised for inclusion in Esh Leaves July 2004.

#### 059a/04 Reports

##### (i) Parish Walk

Parish Walk held on Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> May 2004 attended by 29 people including several Weightwatchers who were walking on behalf of the National Childrens Homes and had raised well over £400 (precise amount not yet available).

The Councillor Bloor thanked for leading the walk and the Chairman and his wife for the catering arrangements.

An email had been received from the NCH thanking the Council for the walk and indicating that they could be interested in making this an annual walk for their charity. It was resolved not to raise any objections to this subject to it not being exclusive to the NCH (ie other recognised organisations could join the walk on a sponsored basis) and to these other organisations arranging their own insurance and medical cover.

##### (ii) Esh Leaves

Next edition due out mid July

##### (iii) Development at the Board Inn

Email received from the Planning Enforcement Officer advising that he had visited the property and ascertained that an overflow car park had been created, storage facilities provided, a marquee erected and play area/beer garden provided. A site meeting was being arranged for planning colleagues and others to visit the site shortly.

##### (v) Development on land at Bridgeway

Following a conversation with the Planning Officer it was understood that the wall to the rear of the site would be rebuilt and that the access to the Recreation Ground would need to be checked out at the appropriate time.

##### vi) Meeting of the Society of Local Council Clerks 24<sup>th</sup> May 2004

Attended by the Clerk and Clerk Designate. Useful meeting with considerable emphasis on Quality Parish Council's. One area considered was the possibility of a "qualified" Clerk hosting another Clerk to enable that Council to attain QPC status. The Clerk was seeking further advice on this although it was agreed that this might be worth further consideration if this Council should achieve QPC status. The Clerk also referred to the Council's web site and the possibility of exploring the "sale" of its services (ie setting up and then managing) another Council's web site particularly as the Council's ILM officer would be out of contract on 30<sup>th</sup> September 2004. It was agreed to contact adjacent Council's to ascertain whether they might be interested in this type of work.

059c/04 Reports

v) County Linesmen

The Clerk advised the Council that he had contacted the Northern Area Manager to discuss the project. The scheme was similar to that previously reported to the Council which, using the formula based on road lengths, resulted in a contribution of well over £10,000 towards a Community Worker for the Parish. The NAM agreed however to ascertain if it was possible for the Council to join forces with other Councils to provide a limited service in the area. Cllr Armstrong also to make further enquiries in this case.

**067/04 CORRESPONDENCE**

Durham Association of Parish and Town Councils

- a) Clerks Training Bursary Fund
- b) Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000
- c) Cooperative Bank in Partnership with Community, Parish and Town Councils
- d) New Measures to tackle illegal working
- e) Consultation – Taking it On

Durham County Council

- f) Pension Scheme Regulations 1997 (as amended) – Certificate of Permanent Ill Health
- g) Local Government review – second submission to the Boundary Committee

Derwentside District Council

- h) The Restructuring of Local Government

The National Training Strategy for Town and Parish Councils

- i) Clerk's Training Bursary Fund (not applicable to EPC)

Other

- j) The Boundary Committee for England – Final Recommendations for the North East
- k) Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2002 – Section 68
- l) Illegal Working
- m) Consultation from NALC – DEFRA consultation on "Taking it On"
- n) DAPTC - County Secretariat moving to Room 99 in County Hall on 7<sup>th</sup> June 2004
- o) Partnership Funding Event in County Hall on 8<sup>th</sup> September 2004 cost £27 + vat. Agreed to fund one delegate, Mr G. Smith, the Clerk Designate.
- p) Shaw and Sons – Book catalogue

**069/04 PLANNING MATTERS**

Councillors Coulson and Guildford declared an interest in this item and took no further part in the subsequent debate on the following 4 applications.

No SL/1/2004/0369/DMFP  
Applicant Mr R. Smith  
Proposed Two storey extension  
At 22 Herrington Close, Langley Park

No SW/1/2004/0403/DMFP  
Applicant Miss L. Bennington  
Proposed Erection of single storey rear extension  
At 33 Middridge Road, Langley Park

No SW/1/2004/0413/DMFP  
Applicant Mr and Mrs Dawson  
Proposed Erection of single storey rear extension  
At 3 Crossways, Langley Park

No SW/1/2004/0416/DMLE  
Applicant Mr J. Redhead  
Proposed Certificate of Lawfulness for proposed development for the erection of a garden room  
At 10 Eldon Close, Langley Park

All the above have already been considered under the delegated powers arrangements. No issues received from any Councillors excepting that adjacent owners should be consulted and their views taken into consideration by the District Council when considering each application. It had been noted that an objection has been made against the application for 22 Herrington Close, Langley Park.

## **070/04 PROPOSED STOPPING UP OF HIGHWAY AT HADRIAN LODGE, ESH**

Details of the proposal had been circulated with the agenda. Some initial concern was expressed at the longer term proposals for the land, the land ownership (not owned by the County Council) and whether the land was Common Land.

After considerable debate on the matter it was resolved that the Clerk would contact the County Council to clarify whether this land is designated Common Land and thereafter one of the following resolutions would apply.

- 1) Should the land be designated as Common Land then the Council would object to the proposed Stopping Up Order.
- 2) Should the land be not designated for this purpose then the Council would not raise any objection to the Stopping Up Order subject to the relevant Planning Authority, Derwentside District Council, being asked to consult the Parish Council on any planning application that might be made on this site in the future.

## **071/04 REPORTS**

- a) Parish Transport Grant  
See 041d/04 above
- b) EQUaL Partnership  
No report given
- c) Parish  
Bonfires on Allotments  
Report received from the District Council (via complaint from a resident in Garden Avenue) of bonfires on the ED allotments which were not being formed or controlled in an approved manner. The Clerk's draft letter to all the tenants on both the ED and CF allotments was agreed.
- d) District  
Cllr Tyrie reported on the following:-
  - (i) County Durham and Darlington Acute Hospitals NHS Trust  
Recommendation that one urology service covers the area south of the Tyne instead of the 3 separate services at the University of North Durham, Sunderland Royal Hospital and South Tyneside Hospital. Two locations being considered at either the inpatient unit at North Durham or Sunderland.  
All other outpatient services to be offered at North Durham, South Tyneside or Bishop Auckland
  - (ii) Stanley Swimming Pool  
Initial cost £4.6m inc DDC contribution of £0.85m, now £5.8m inc DDC contribution of £2.2m  
Was 67 weeks project now 140+ weeks although in the interim period 2 contractors have gone Bust. Completion now only a matter of weeks away.
  - (iii) CCTV  
Installation of cameras for Esh Ward scheduled for March 2005
  - (iv) Fear of Crime and Disorder  
Figures have improved for burglaries throughout Derwentside. 2001/02 : 439 properties, 2002/03 : 330 properties and for 2003/04 : 281 properties  
Cllr Coulson reported on the following:-
    - (v) CCTV  
Following in from Cllr Tyrie made reference to DDC officers being invited to make presentation on CCTV. It was agreed that this should be an open meeting, advertised in Esh Leaves, on a date to be agreed with the District Council.
    - (vi) Transfer of Housing Stock  
Visit to Sunderland to receive presentation on how they dealt with the transfer of stock  
Cllr Robson referred to the Apprentice Training scheme in Sunderland
- e) County  
Cllr Armstrong referred to the following:-
  - (i) Site visit on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> June 2004 to consider sleeping policemen in Langley Street and path to the Langley Park School
  - (ii) New Esh Hall and the multi use games area  
On schedule for completion in September 2004

- (iii) Floodlighting for the multi use games area  
Will require approval by the County Council. Copies of details to be requested for the Clerk for display in Esh
- (iv) Library facility  
Looking at interim use of part of the former Fire Station Site (including portakabin option) until new premises identified
- (v) Kingsway, Langley Park  
Road works ongoing. Some planings but required by DCC. Clerk to check if available to EPC for the CF allotments track
- (vi) Horsebox outside property in Front Street, Quebec. Police have spoken to the owner but as yet the box has not been moved. The Clerk to contact the Highway Authority to see what can be done.

**072/04 FINANCIAL STATEMENT AND REPORT**

After receiving details of the financial statements (V43 - 63) should be paid and, where appropriate, confirm the Chairman/Clerk's action for issuing any cheques in advance of the Meeting.

**073/04 PRECEPT 2004/05 – INVESTMENT OF FUNDS**

The Clerk advised the Council had now received the precept and contribution from the District Council and that it should now be invested in a high returning account until required. Initially the rates quoted from the Coop, AMC and C and G Banks suggested that the existing C and G Bank account paying 3.85% should continue to be used. In the meantime the Clerk would check if any better rates were obtainable elsewhere.

**074/04 REQUESTS FOR DONATION**

Requests received from the following

(a) County Durham Education Fund

The Clerk had been advised that currently no children within the Parish received support from this Fund. In addition no financial statement had been provided with the request. It was resolved not to make a donation although the Fund should be advised that if a similar request is made in the future it should inform the Council how many potential recipients live within the Parish and also send a copy of their latest financial statement.

(b) All Saints Youth Centre

A copy of the Centre's latest statement had been provided. The Centre wanted to upgrade the electrics to renew their Entertainment Licence. Although they had some funds available from EQUaL, a Street collection and other donations, amounting to £1007, they were still short by almost £950, of their target. Based upon the one quote received to date the target figure was £1962.25, although other tenders were awaited and a grant would be applied for from Durham County Council.

It was resolved to meet any shortfall (up to £955.25) between the lowest acceptable tender received and any funding already identified together with any grant which might be made by the County Council. The grant to be made under the powers contained within the Local Government Act 1972 s144.

**075/04 OPPORTUNITY FOR THE PUBLIC TO RAISE MATTERS OF INTEREST**

There being no Members of the Public present the Chairman moved onto the next item on the Agenda

**076/04 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

To be held at the Esh C. of E. School on Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> July 2004 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.

No confidential items raised on the agenda

The Meeting closed at 9.05pm