



*The Council of the
Parish of Esh*

The Council of the Parish of Esh Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Council held on

Wednesday 13th October 2021 at Esh Village Hall.

Meeting commenced at 6:00pm

Ordinary Meeting of the Council

1. Record of Attendance

Cllr. Joe Thompson, Cllr. George Hawxwell, Cllr. Linda Bushell, Cllr. John Duddy, Cllr. Ian Dowson, Cllr. Ollie Moat, Cllr. Allison Wardman, Cllr. Ruth Hughes, Cllr. Kathryn Thompson, Cllr. Louise Dudden, Cllr. Mike McGaun, Cllr. Edwin Simpson, Cllr. Jillian Crumbie

Clerk: Leeanne Owens

3 members of the public were present at the meeting.

2. Apologies for absence

Cllr Eric Bushell was absent from the meeting, however no apology for absence was received.

Resolved That Cllr. Eric Bushell's absence be noted.

3. Declarations of Interest

Cllr Mike McGaun declared an interest in Item 10

Cllr. George Hawxwell declared an interest in items 14 and 19

Cllr. Ian Dowson declared an interest in items 14 and 19

Cllr. Louise Dudden declared an interest in items 14 and 19

Cllr. John Duddy declared an interest in items 14 and 19

4. Resignations

The Clerk advised Councillors that she has had received a resignation email from Cllr. Sue Carver.

Resolved That the resignation be noted.

5. Minutes from the previous meeting held on the 8th September 2021

Cllr. Hughes asked the Clerk to make an amendment to the minutes under item 13, which was noted.

Resolved That the Clerk makes the necessary amendment to the minutes.

6. County Councillor Report

In the absence of County Councillors Bev Coult and Arnie Simpson, the Clerk read out the report from County Councillor Coult, which covered activities and events since the last meeting. A copy of this report may be viewed at the Miners Institute on request.

7. Opportunity for the public to raise matters of interest

A member of the public present at the meeting shared his concerns regarding the planting of trees at Esh Village Green and provided Councillors with his objections over this. It was noted that this is an agenda item and as such will be considered by Councillors when we reach this agenda point.

The Clerk updated Councillors on a report she has received from a member of public in relation to a bench which Esh Village Residents Association want siting in Esh Play Area and they want permission from the Parish before they proceed. They also want to know if the Parish can arrange this work. The email also raises further concerns on the planting of trees at Esh Village Green.

A further member of the public present at the meeting also voiced his concerns on the proposal for tree planting at Esh Village Green. This member of the public also wanted to raise his concerns over the grass cutting in Esh Village Green. The Clerk confirmed that she is aware of these issues and is liaising with the County Council over these concerns. It was also noted from this member of public that the agenda has not been available in the notice board at Esh Village for some time. On behalf of the Parish Council apologies were noted for the absence of information in the notice board and the reasons behind this were given.

Resolved That the Parish note and take on board the valid concerns raised by members of the public and where possible look to address such concerns. In addition, it was noted that the Parish are happy to arrange and pay for the bench to be installed at Esh Play Area and the Clerk will obtain quotations for this work.

8. Clerks Report

The Clerk provided Councillors with a written report which covered many areas, which included:

The Rear of Finings Street

This area was discussed, and the Clerk confirmed that following conversations with the Asset Team at Durham County Council, it has been confirmed that this land does not belong to the Parish and with this in mind the majority of Councillors disagree that the parish should do the works proposed. A suggestion was made that the residents in this street all work together to cover the costs of this work.

Remembrance Sunday

The Clerk updated Councillors on an email received from Reverend Peers which detailed the order of the day for Remembrance Sunday and the update was noted.

Christmas Preparations

Cllr. Wardman updated the Councillors on the preparations the Christmas Working Group have made so far. Cllr. Wardman stated that she is interested in purchasing 230 seats for a pantomime hosted by Ushaw College, which the Parish will be looking to sell to members of the community at a reduced price. It was suggested that the Clerk speaks to Neighbouring Parish Councils to see if they would be interested in purchasing some of these tickets from the Parish to help us reduce some of our costs.

Cllr. Wardman did ask if there was any additional funding available for Christmas events. The Clerk confirmed that the Parish have recently received a £3,000 grant that the AAP's made the Parish aware of and it was confirmed that this funding could be used towards Christmas. The Chair also confirmed that funding was available for Christmas activities.

Bins and Picnic Table – Sir Bobby Robson Play Area and Quebec Play Area

The Clerk shared information on a different range of bins and a picnic table the Parish are looking to purchase for Sir Bobby Robson Play Area and Quebec Play Area.

Hedges at Sir Bobby Robson Play Area

The Clerk presented Councillors with the quotations from 3 contractors for work to cut back the hedges at Sir Bobby Robson Play Area. Councillors queried the quotes as each one refers to something different, therefore it was suggested that quotations are received again all detailing the same information to enable Councillors to make a decision on this work.

Following the update from the Clerk, it was:

Resolved That the Clerk orders 5 wreaths for Remembrance Sunday.

Resolved That the Clerk contacts Neighbouring Parish Councils to ask if they are interested in purchasing some pantomime tickets from the Parish.

Resolved That the Clerk speak with Lite who store the Christmas lights for the Parish to establish the schedule for the lights this year.

Resolved That the Christmas Planning Group are given permission to go ahead with their plans and funding be provided, given the limited timescale they have left. In addition, the Planning Group are to keep Councillors updated on their work.

Resolved That the Clerk makes contact with the owner of the Old Co-op Buildings to establish if they want lights to be put up outside of these buildings

Resolved That the Clerk is to order 1 wheelchair accessible picnic table for Sir Bobby Robson Play area.

Resolved That the Clerk orders 3 street bins for the Play parks which include, 1 street bin for Quebec Play area and 2 street bins for Sir Bobby Robson Play area.

Resolved That the Clerk speaks with the companies who have provided quotations for the hedges at Sir Bobby Robson Play Area to ask that each contractor quotes for the same work to enable the Council to move forward with this work.

9. Corrections to the minutes prior to meetings taking place

Following Cllr Crumbies suggestion for this agenda item, Cllr. Crumby suggested that in order to spend less time discussing the previous minutes at future meetings which can take a considerable amount of time, a suggestion

would be for the Clerk to send the minutes to Councillors 14 days after the initial meeting to enable Councillors to make suggestions for amendment. Once amendments are made, the Clerk will then upload the minutes 7 days prior to the next meeting.

Following agreement from the full Council it was;

Resolved That the Clerk adheres to the suggestion agreed by Councillors.

10. Planning Applications Received – DM/21/03142/FPA – Fourwynds, Low Moor Road, Langley Park Durham, DH7 6TJ

Cllr. Simpson suggested that we move the planning application received.

Cllr. Moat asked the Clerk to query with the Planning Team the planning enquiry for the Church Yard at Quebec as the closing date for this application has now passed.

Resolved That Councillors agree to the planning application received.

Resolved That the Clerk liaises with the Planning Team to ask for an update on the planning enquiry for the Church Yard at Quebec.

11. Update on the Recreation Ground following meeting on the 21st September 2021

Following a site visit at the Recreation Ground to discuss possible proposals to turn this area into a play park, it was noted that a basic quote has come back from Playdale Playgrounds for £64,000.

In addition to the initial quote, it was noted that County Councillor Bev Coult is looking to obtain a further quote from Wicksteed. Councillor Kathryn Thompson advised that she is also looking to approach Street Scape for a quote.

As part of these plans, it was highlighted that public consultation will take place in relation to any works progressing on the Recreation Ground and as the project moves forward the Parish and the Local Community will be kept up to date.

Following the initial planning meeting it was highlighted that in order to scan the area of the Recreation Ground fully the grass does need to be cut to a low level. It was noted that if the Parish were willing to maintain this area this will save a considerable amount of money. Cllr. Joe Thompson and Cllr. Ian Dowson both volunteered to maintain this area.

Resolved That all Councillors are in favour of Cllr. Joe Thompson and Cllr. Ian Dowson maintaining the grassed area of the Recreation Ground.

12. Formation of an Environment Committee

Cllr. Simpson discussed his views on the benefits of having an Environmental Committee and expressions of interest to form this committee were sought. Cllr. Crumbie noted that while she is not in a position to commit to joining this committee at present, this is something she would be happy to consider at a later date.

Resolved That the Council move forward with the Environment Committee, which will be made up of the following Councillors: Cllr. Simpson, Cllr. Joe Thompson and Cllr. Ian Dowson.

13. Esh Leaves

Cllr. Hughes asked Cllr. Hawxwell to update Councillors regarding whether the volunteer interested in producing the newsletter was known to him and if any payment was expected for doing this work. Cllr. Hawxwell confirmed

that to produce 2500 copies of the newsletter the cost will be £275.00 and the volunteer is asking for some kind of reimbursement for his time, although the amount was not specified.

A lengthy discussion ensued about this agenda item with various alternative decisions been discussed. Following a lengthy debate, it was;

Resolved That Cllr. Hawxwell is to obtain further information from the volunteer which details all final costs for the work to enable the Council to consider this item further.

14. The Wetlands

Following a discussion with the Clerk prior to the meeting Cllr. Hughes noted her intentions to leave the meeting whilst this item was discussed.

Cllr. Ian Dowson updated Councillors on the work the Wetlands is involved with and stated that the Wetlands is part of the Parish.

Resolved That the update be noted.

15. Trees for Children Tree Planting

The Clerk provided information to Councillors from St Michaels School and their proposal for tree planting at Esh Village Green.

Following a lengthy discussion and also taking into consideration concerns raised by members of the public present at the meeting it was;

Resolved That the Parish Council are all opposed to this idea and that the Clerk is to forward the views of the Parish and members of the public present at the meeting to County Councillor Coult and St Michael's School.

16. Rebuilding The Weir at Wallnook on the River Browney – First Steps

Cllr. Simpson provided an update on this agenda item updating Councillors on his concerns.

Cllr. Dowson mentioned details of a project that has commenced in relation to this work, and he agreed to share this detail with Cllr. Simpson.

Resolved That the update be noted.

Resolved That Cllr. Dowson shares the details of a project that has commenced in relation to the Weir with Cllr. Simpson.

17. Durham City of Culture Bid 2025

Cllr. Simpson presented his verbal report to the Parish and confirmed that Durham have reached the final 8 of Durham City of Culture 2025. Cllr. Simpson recommended that as a Parish we support this scheme explaining the many benefits for the area if Durham City are successful in their bid. Cllr. Hughes also proposed that we move this agenda item in favour of the Parish supporting the bid.

Resolved That the update be noted. In addition, the Clerk is to contact the relevant team expressing the Parish Councils support of this bid.

18. SLA for L & S Services – Update from the Clerk

The SLA for L & S Services was discussed in detail and it was noted that the Parish have been made aware that the handyman does not have Public Liability Insurance which is a concern for the Council. The importance of having public liability was discussed between Councillors and it was noted that anyone in a contract with the Parish to do work must have Public Liability Insurance. Due to the absence of this with this SLA, Councillors took a vote on whether or not to terminate the current SLA agreement with the current handyman.

Following a vote, it was;

Resolved That the current SLA be terminated. All Councillors in favour of this decision were Cllr. Joe Thompson, Cllr. Kathryn Thompson, Cllr. Edwin Simpson, Cllr. Mike McGaun, Cllr. Ollie Moat, Cllr. Ian Dowson, Cllr. Allison Wardman, Cllr. Jillian Crumbie, Cllr. Louise Dudden, Cllr. John Duddy, Cllr. George Hawxwell.

Cllr. Linda Bushell and Cllr. Ruth Hughes abstained from voting.

Resolved That the Clerk approaches alternative companies for quotations to carry out this work.

19. Funding Request from the Wetlands £300.00

Discussions took place regarding the funding request from the Wetlands. It was noted that the information received was not correct.

Resolved That the application be deferred until the next meeting. In addition, the Clerk is to liaise with Cllr. Hawxwell detailing the information required to enable the Parish to consider the funding request.

20. Payments to make and bank reconciliation

The Clerk presented a list of payments that are due for payment which are shown on a separate document.

Resolved That Councillors approve all payments put forward by the Clerk.

21. Asset Register

The Clerk presented the Asset Register to Councillors. Following a discussion there was some debate on items on the asset register that cannot be traced. In addition, Cllr. Ian Dowson discussed the green tractor not been present on the asset register, however it was noted at a previous meeting that this tractor does not belong to the Parish.

Following a debate, it was;

Resolved That the Clerk updates the asset register removing items which can no longer be traced. In addition, Cllr. Ian Dowson is to liaise with the AAP Team to establish the funding source for the tractor.

22. Date of next Ordinary Meeting – Wednesday the 10th November 2021, 6pm at the Miners Institute.

Meeting closed at 20:00pm

CERTIFIED AS A TRUE RECORD

CHAIR

DATE