



*The Council of the
Parish of Esh*

The Miners Institute, Church Street, Langley Park, Durham, DH7 9TZ
0191 3736687

Clerk : Leeanne Owens

Chairman : Cllr Joseph Thompson

**The Council of the Parish of Esh Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Council held on
Wednesday 10th November 2021 at The Miners Institute, Langley Park.**

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

2. Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for absence.

3. Declarations of Interest

Cllr. George Hawxwell declared an interest in item 13

Cllr. Ian Dowson declared an interest in item 11 and 13

Cllr. Louise Dudden declared an interest in items 11 and 13

Cllr. John Duddy declared an interest in item 13

Cllr. Ollie Moat declared an interest in item 12

4. Minutes from the previous meeting held on the 13th October 2021

Cllr. Hughes and Cllr. Bushell did have some queries on the minutes of the last meeting, however it was discussed that following the agreement at the last meeting it was agreed that the Clerk was to send the minutes of all future meetings to Councillors 14 days after the 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. Cllr. Simpson said the Clerk sent the minutes out to Councillors within this time and therefore the minutes should be as seen by the Clerk.

Following a discussed it was;

Resolved That the minutes of the last meeting be agreed as a true record.

5. County Councillors Report

On behalf of DCC Councillor Bev Could presented a verbal report to councillors on activities and events since the last meeting. A copy of the report may be viewed at the Miner's Institute on request.

6. Opportunity for the public to raise matters of interest

A member of the public present at the meeting read out a letter expressing her concerns over the SLA for L & S Services whom is a family member. At the last meeting it was agreed to suspend this SLA due to the contractor not having Public Liability Insurance, however it was agreed that once Public Liability was sought the Council would then consider the SLA going forward.

Resolved That the report and concerns raised be noted.

7. Clerks Report

The Clerk presented her report to Councillors and shared information on the quotations received to cut back the hedges at Sir Bobby Robson Play Area. Three quotations have been received one from Olivers, one from S.C Horticultural and one from LME Contracting Ltd.

Cllr. Crumbie suggested that in future quotes be listed as quote A, quote B and Quote C which other Councillors were in favour of.

Following a discussion the following Councillors were in favour of the quote from LME Contracting Ltd: Cllr. Hawxwell, Cllr. Duddy, Cllr. Crumbie, Cllr. Kathryn Thompson, Cllr. Dowson, Cllr. Dudden, Cllr. Moat, Cllr. Wardman and Cllr. Joe Thompson.

Resolved For the Council to accept the quotation from LME Contracting Ltd and for the Clerk to contact the company to arrange the work.

The Clerk updated Councillors on the preparations for Remembrance Sunday.

During her report the Clerk also updated Councillors on the email system the Parish has in place and advised Councillors that at present she does not have the access to be able to set Councillors up with a Parish email address. The Clerk stated she is currently liaising with other Parish Councils to establish what systems they have in place and stated any ideas would be welcomed from Councillors.

Following issues with the fence at Esh Village Green the Clerk has been asked to obtain further quotations as the original quotation received from LME Contracting Ltd was over £4000. The Clerk again asked for suggestions on who to contact and both Deerness Fencing and Burnell Fencing were mentioned.

Resolved For the Clerk to contact both Deerness Fencing and Burnell Fencing to ask if they can provide quotations to repair the fence.

8. Funding for the Recreation Ground

Cllr. Thompson, the Chair confirmed that he feels that the Parish should put some funding towards the plans to create a play park at the Recreation Ground. It was noted that at present quotes for the park are ranging up to £70,000. County Cllr. Coult stated that herself and County Cllr. Simpson are able to put £10,000 each towards the play park, then £14,000 will be given from the Towns and Village Funding and between £40,000 - £45,000 will be funded from the Neighbourhood Budget.

Cllr Hughes did state that as a Parish there were a list of repairs in the relation to the Miners Hall that were presented at the meeting on the 4th May 2021 and stated that we need to consider this list of repairs and the cost implications before we make a decision on contributing to the potential works at the Recreation Ground.

Cllr. Crumbie did ask for a list of these repairs which the Clerk agreed to send.

To move this discussion forward Cllr. McGaun proposed that the Parish match any funding the County Councillors offer towards the Recreation Ground. All Councillors were in favour of this except from Cllr. Hughes and Cllr. Bushell with Cllr. Bushell stating that until the budget is set the Parish do not know what the budget will be.

Following a lengthy discussion, it was;

Resolved That the Parish agrees to match any funding that the County Councillors are willing to offer if the plans to create a Play Park at the Recreation Ground go ahead.

9. Christmas

Cllr. Wardman updated Councillors on the work of the Christmas Planning Group and listed a range of events the Parish are looking to be involved with over Christmas. It was noted that a poster will be created letting residents know of the events and information may possibly be put in the notice boards and on the website.

Cllr. Hughes moved that we go ahead with the plans of the Christmas Group and Cllr. Crumbie seconded this.

Resolved That the updates be noted.

10. Planning Applications Received - DM/21/03166/FPA, 14 Glebeside, Witton Gilbert, Durham, DH7 6SD

Resolved That it be noted that the Planning Application presented is not in the Parishes area.

11. Langley Park Sport and Social Club – Community Right to Bid

Cllr. Moat provided an update to Councillors on this item explaining that DH7 have put an offer in for this property, however several questions have been asked. Cllr. Moat explained that DH7 have merged with Save our Sports (Community Share Offer) and they are planning on holding a public meeting before the 4th December.

Resolved That the update be noted and Cllr. Moat is to update the Parish following the Public Meeting.

12. Quebec and District Village Hall Association

Cllr. Dowson stated that as the Village Hall is within the Parish Boundary he is asking if the Parish are willing to donate £2,500 towards the running of the Village Hall. Cllr. Dowson also said he would like it to be included on the Parishes precept that the Village Hall receives £2,500 annually.

Cllr. Moat provided Councillors with an update on the works the Village Hall has had done and provided detail on the grants already received.

Following discussions both Cllr. Hughes and Cllr. Bushell stated that the Parish has no responsibility for the Village Hall and they don't support the Parish giving the Village Hall any funding.

Following a lengthy discussion Cllr. Simpson said that in his view he moves that the Parish agree to fund the Village Hall £2,500 and discuss this with Community to confirm that this is what they wish. Cllr. Moat did clarify that if the Village Hall was to ever close the Land and the Building would be sold and any monies left would come back to the Parish.

Cllr. McGaun stated that he does not disagree with the Parish funding the Village Hall £2,500 as a one off, however if they want any further funding, they need to provide the Parish with a Business Plan which provides a full overview of the financial status of the Village Hall.

Resolved That the Parish agree to fund the Village Hall with a one-off payment of £2,500 with the following Councillors in agreement: Cllr. Joe Thompsom, Cllr. Simpson, Cllr. McGaun, Cllr. Crumbie, Cllr. Wardman, Cllr. Duddy, Cllr. Dowson, Cllr. Dudden, Cllr. Hawxwell and Cllr. Kathryn Thompson. Cllr. Moat, Cllr. Hughes and Cllr. Bushell abstained from voting.

13. Funding request from the Wetlands £300.00

Resolved That this item be deferred to the next meeting.

14. Policies due for Renewal

The Clerk presented the Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and the policy on Processing a Casual Vacancy for Councillor Approval. Cllr. Simpson moved that both the Financial Regulations and Processing a Casual Vacancy are approved and Cllr. Hughes seconded both these proposals. It was suggested that the Clerk updates the Standing Orders accordingly with any missing information.

Resolved That the Financial Regulations and Processing a Casual Vacancy policy are both approved and updated on the website. That the Standing Orders are amended accordingly and also updated on the website.

15. HR Policy – Update from the HR Committee

Cllr. Moat advised that following the disruptive meetings the Parish has had she would like to bring this item to the next meeting for further discussion.

Resolved That the information be brought to the next meeting for discussion.

16. Leisure Transformation Consultation – Closing date 12th November 2021

Resolved That the report be noted.

17. Window Cleaning Contract

Cllr. Bushell asked if she could read out a statement in which she expressed her concerns in the way in which the issue with the SLA for L & S Services was handled at the last meeting and feels that the Parish should offer this company an apology.

A lengthy discussion ensued in relation to SLA's and it was noted that the previous Council were issuing SLA's and not asking for Public Liability. The Clerk advised that she has sought advice on this from CDALC and this advice states that Public Liability should be sought from anyone conducting work for the Parish. The Clerk has made Councillors aware of this. Cllr. Hughes stated that she has information stating that Public Liability is not required by law, however it would be prudent for the Parish to ask for this.

It was confirmed that going forward the Parish do need to ask that any contractor doing work for them has Public Liability insurance in place. The Clerk advised that she would amend the current SLA the Parish has in place to include that Public Liability is required and share this document with Councillors.

Discussions continued in relation to the window cleaning contract and the Clerk advised that she has spoken to this contractor to ask for their Public Liability, however the company have not been forthcoming. It was suggested by Councillor Wardman that if the public liability has been asked for and the company have not been willing to provide this, then this is a breach on the company's behalf, and we should terminate the window cleaning contract.

Following a discussion, it was;

Resolved That the Parish terminates the current window cleaning contract with the following Councillors voting in favour of this: Cllr. Joe Thompson, Cllr. Simpson, Cllr. Duddy, Cllr. Hawxwell, Cllr. Dudden, Cllr. Crumbie, Cllr. Warman, Cllr. McGaun, Cllr. Dowson, Cllr. Kathryn Thompson and Cllr. Moat. Cllr. Hughes and Cllr. Bushell abstained from voting.

Resolved That the Clerk approach other window cleaners who could possibly take on the contract.

18. Chairman's Allowance

The Chair, Cllr. Joe Thompson confirmed that he is happy to donate his yearly Chairman's allowance to the Christmas preparations the Parish are preparing.

Resolved That the information be noted.

19. Asset Register

The Clerk presented the Parish with the current asset register. A discussion took place around the tractor that Cllr. Bushell signed from the Environment Group and accepted on behalf of Esh Parish Council which was initially stored in the lock up, however this tractor is no longer in the lock up. Questions were asked about where the tractor was now held, however Councillor Bushell refused to provide information to Councillors on where the tractor is now located. As a result of Councillor Bushell's noncompliance both Cllr. Dowson and Cllr. Moat agreed that the Parish should contact the Police in relation to the missing tractor and other items which are no longer available in the lock up. Cllr. Hughes agreed that to move this matter forward she was in agreement of the Parish contacting the Police.

Resolved That the concerns raised be taken up with the Police.

Further discussions took place in relation to some other missing items from the Asset Register such as the Walkie Talkies, the silhouette of Tommy, 1 x lawnmower and 1 x power washer. In addition, it was noted that the previous Clerk had a laptop that was not on the Asset Register.

It was;

Resolved That the Clerk makes the necessary adjustments to the Asset Register and also establishes the location of the laptop that the previous Clerk had.

20. Payments to make and 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. Intruder Alarm System Maintenance Contract

The Clerk presented Councillors with details of the new Intruder Alarm System and Maintenance Contract.

Resolved That the Parish accept the new contract and the Clerk inform the alarm company of this decision.

22. Date of next Ordinary Meeting – Wednesday the 8th December 2021, 6pm at Ushaw College.

Meeting closed at 20:00pm

CERTIFIED AS A TRUE RECORD

CHAIR

DATE