



*The Council of the
Parish of Esh*

The Miners Institute, Church Street, Langley Park, Durham, DH7 9TZ
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Clerk : Leeanne Owens
Chairman : Cllr Joseph Thompson

**The Council of the Parish of Esh Draft Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Council held on
Wednesday 13th April 2022 at The Miners Hall, Langley Park.**

Meeting commenced at 6:00pm

Ordinary Meeting of the Council

1. Record of attendance

Chair Cllr. Joe Thompson, Cllr. George Hawxwell, Cllr. John Duddy, Cllr. Ian Dowson, Cllr. Ollie Moat, Cllr. Allison Wardman, Cllr. Kathryn Thompson, Cllr. Louise Dudden, Cllr. Edwin Simpson, Cllr. Mike Quinn.

3 members of the public were present at the meeting

Clerk: Leeanne Owens

2. Apologies for Absence

County Councillor Bev Coult	–	Work Commitments.
Councillor Ruth Hughes,	-	Personal Commitments
Councillor Linda Bushell	-	Personal Commitments
Councillor Jillian Crumbie	-	Personal Commitments

3. Declarations of Interest

Cllr. Ollie Moat declared an interest in item 12

Cllr. Ian Dowson declared an interest in item 12.

4. Election for Parish Council vacancy 7th April 2022

The Council welcomed Councillor Mike Quinn to Esh Parish Council, following the election for a Parish Council vacancy on the 7th April 2022.

Resolved That Cllr. Quinn signed his declaration of office witnessed by the Clerk.

Resolved That the Parish Council welcome Cllr. Quinn to the Parish Council.

5. Minutes from the previous meetings held on the 9th March 2022

Cllr. Simpson moved that we move the minutes of the last meeting as an accurate and true record. Cllr. Hawxwell seconded this.

Resolved That the minutes from the meeting on the 9th March 2022 be agreed as a true record.

6. County Councillors Report

County Councillor Coult was absent from the meeting, however she sent a report to all Councillors prior to the meeting. It was agreed that we move the report as read.

Resolved That the report from County Councillor Coult be noted.

7. Opportunity for the public to raise matters of interest

The members of the public present at the meeting did not wish to raise anything at the meeting. The Clerk did however receive a report from a member of the public who was not present at the meeting however had asked for his concerns to be raised. The concerns were access to the field at Esh Village Green on a weekend. The member of the public also raised concerns over the number of dogs on the field and the fact that the notice board in the village is not updated.

Discussions ensued around the Village Green and it was noted that during Covid the Parish allowed access to the green using a one way system via the gate.

Following a lengthy discussion, it was:

Resolved That the Clerk write to the school raising concerns over why access is being allowed to the green;

Resolved That the clerk and the member of the public liaise with the neighbourhoods Wardens in relation to dogs on the green;

Resolved That Councillor Moat is to liaise with the member of public regarding the key for the notice board at Esh Village and that the Parish ensure the notice boards throughout the Parish ward are updated with key information.

8. Clerks Report

The Clerk presented a verbal report to Councillors and discussed a range of things which included training for Councillors.

As part of the Clerks report DBS checks were also discussed again. The Clerk confirmed that CDALC have advised that it is not a requirement for Councillors to have DBS checks, however Cllr. Dowson does feel that Councillors should be DBS checked. A lengthy debate took place regarding this and it was suggested that item is discussed again at a future meeting.

The Clerk also presented information from Durham County Council on the HR Service the Parish are access if in agreement at a cost of £75.00 per hour. It was agreed that this item also be discussed at a future meeting.

As part of the Clerks report the Clerk presented Councillors with the cost for the new CCTV which is due to commence on the 21 May 2022 for a cost of £213.60 (this cost is the amount with VAT added on). Councillors were all happy for the CCTV contract to be renewed.

As part of the Clerks report the Clerk presented Councillors with a quotation for the roof at the Miners Hall following the storm damage and a quotation for the Garage roof. The Clerk advised that the insurance company only required 1 quotation for the Miners Hall roof, however as the garage roof had not been attended to for a long time, a survey was required. The Roofing Company who conducted this survey have advised that the garage roof is in a bad state of repair and the cost of the work will be £4,000.

Councillors discussed the quotations received and are happy for the Clerk to send the information to the insurers for the Miners Hall roof, however all Councillors were in agreement that it is unlikely that the insurance will cover the garage roof, and as the repairs quoted are over £1,000.00 that it will be beneficial for the Parish to receive a further 2 quotations which will then be considered by Councillors.

Following the Clerks report, it was;

Resolved That the Clerks report be noted;

Resolved That the issue with DBD checks be brought back to a future meeting;

Resolved That the HR Service Level Agreement be discussed at a future meeting;

Resolved That the Clerk books Councillors who have requested training onto the necessary training courses.

Resolved That the Clerk contact C.D.S Security and Fire to advise that the Parish are happy to renew the CCTV contract.

Resolved That the Clerk send the quotation for repairs to the Miners Hall to Zurich Insurance for them to consider.

Resolved That the Clerk liaise with alternative Roofing Companies to obtain 2 further quotations for the Garage Roof.

9. Planning Applications

There were no planning applications for discussion at the meeting.

10. Service Level Agreement for Skate Park at the Dir Bobby Robson Play Area

Councillors discussed the SLA for the Skate Park, and it was highlighted that the SLA the Parish has in place will last longer than the life span of the Skate Park.

The Clerk advised that she did contact the contractor last year when the first works for the SLA were completed because at the time the work quoted for was not carried out to the standard stated, however no response was received regarding this.

Following a discussion, it was;

Resolved That the Clerk contacts this Contractor again asking why the issues with the original works were not addressed and allow a response by the next meeting;

Resolved That in the interim period the Clerk is to liaise with CDALC for advice to establish if others clerks are aware of any contractors for Skate Parks.

11. Esh Parish Facebook Page

This item was brought to the meeting for discussion as there were queries raised over the Parish Council's Facebook page. At present this is managed by Cllr. Duddy and Cllr. Wardman. Queries were raised over what content is published on this Facebook page and suggestions were made in relation to what the public can comment on. Chair. Cllr. Joe Thompson said he would agree to certain posts allowing the option for comments; however he does not agree that all posts should allow comments to be added.

Following a lengthy discussion Cllr. Dowson proposed that Cllr. Duddy and Cllr. Wardman look at the Facebook page and that we bring this back to the next meeting for further discussion. Cllr. Moat seconded this.

Resolved That Cllr. Duddy and Cllr. Wardman look at the current Facebook page and that this item is brought back to the next meeting for further discussion.

12. Regular Monthly Room Bookings for the Snooker Room

As Cllr. Dowson and Cllr. Moat declared an interest in this item they both left the meeting whilst this item was discussed.

In the absence of both Cllr. Dowson and Cllr. Moat it was confirmed that the DH7 Group have expressed an interest to hire the Snooker Room at The Miners Hall for a couple of evenings per week on a regular basis, however as part of hiring the room, they want sole use of the room.

It was confirmed that CISWO whom the Parish Council lease the Miners Hall have been approached over this request and they have no objections with DH7 using this room on a month-to-month basis, however if this agreement works out we may need to put a licence agreement in place.

Discussions also took place over Cllr. Moat becoming a Key Holder for the Miners Hall. Cllr. Wardman proposed that we allow Cllr. Moat to become a key holder for the Miners Hall. Cllr. Kathryn Thompson seconded this proposal.

Following a discussion, a vote was taken at the meeting, and it was

Resolved That the Parish Council are happy for the DH7 Group to book the Snooker Hall at the Miners Hall on a regular basis and also allowing them sole use of the room. Following a vote for this by a show of hands the following Councillors were in agreement to this;

Chair. Cllr. Joe Thompson, Cllr. Hawxwell, Cllr. Simpson, Cllr. Wardman, Cllr. Duddy, Cllr. Dudden, Cllr. Quinn and Cllr. Kathryn Thompson. As Cllr. Dowson and Cllr. Moat declared at interest in this item and left the meeting whilst this was discussed, they were not party to the vote.

Resolved That Cllr. Moat become a keyholder for the Miners Hall.

13. Update on the Small Holdings

The Clerk provided Councillors with an update on the issues the Parish are experiencing with one of the small holdings the Parish rents out. Following a lengthy discussion, it was;

Resolved That the Clerk is to provide this tenant with 2 weeks' notice to clear the land and if this is not completed to a standard the Parish will accept, then the Parish Council will not renew the Licence Agreement.

14. Preparations for the Platinum Jubilee

Cllr. Moat updated Councillors with the preparations for the Jubilee and suggested some ideas to Councillors. A range of ideas were discussed and as part of the discussion, Cllr. Moat asked what budget the Parish Council had set for the Jubilee. Following a discussion Cllr. Moat asked if the parish could ring fence £1,500.00 for Groups within the village to apply for funding, this is in addition to the funding the Parish ring fences for groups to apply for throughout the year. In addition, Cllr. Moat asked if £1,500.00 could be ring fenced for the activities the Parish were planning for the Jubilee.

Resolved That the Parish Council are happy for £1,500.00 to be ring fenced for Groups to apply for funding for in relation to the Jubilee. This amount equates to £300.00 per group who applies for funding and meets the criteria detailed in the funding application form.

Resolved That the Parish Council ring fence a further £1,500.00 for activities the Parish are planning for the Jubilee.

Resolved That Councillors involved in the Planning for the Jubilee ensure all receipts for expenditure are given to the Clerk for budgeting purposes.

15. Update on the Tractor

Discussions took place regarding the ongoing issues with the tractor that can no longer be traced.

Cllr. Dowson asked for this item to be brought back to the meeting following discussions that a non-Parish Councillor had signed for the Tractor to be kept in the Parish Council's lockup on behalf of the Environment Group.

Following a debate, it was agreed that to move forward with this issue which has been an ongoing concern that a letter is wrote to the Environment Group to ask if they have information on who signed for the Tractor on behalf of the Parish Council. A letter is to also be sent to the Non-Parish Councillor asking who gave them permission to sign for the tractor on behalf of the Parish Council.

Resolved That the Clerk writes the necessary letters to the Environment Group and the Non-Parish Councillor and updates Councillors at the next meeting.

16. Payments to make and bank reconciliation

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

Resolved That the payments are authorised by the Council.

17. End of Year Balance for Budget Year 2021-2022

The Clerk presented Councillors with the budgets for budget year 2021-2022 and the preparations made for the new budget year. Councillors were happy with the information prepared and the Clerk advised that all budgets for financial year 2021-2022 are now with the accountant for their audit which is part of the preparation for the audit by Mazars.

As part of the budget, Cllr. Simpson did ask if the Parish Council can look any schemes on renewable energy for the Miners Hall.

Resolved That the information from the Clerk be noted;

Resolved That the Clerk looks into any information on renewable energy that will benefit the Miners Hall.

18. Preparations for the 2021/2022 AGAR

The Clerk Councillors that that all budget information for financial year 2021-2022 is now with the accountant for the accountant to complete their audit and she explained that this is part of the preparation for the audit by Mazars. The Clerk explained that Mazars need all information relating to last years budgets with them by the 30th June 2022 and this is what the Parish are working towards.

Resolved That the update from the Clerk be noted.

19. Schedule of Parish Council Meeting from June 2022 – May 2023

The Clerk has prepared a list of meeting dates from June 2022 – April 2023 for discussion with Councillors.

Following a discussion, it was;

Resolved That the meeting dates and times proposed are accepted by all.

20. Date and Time of the next meeting

The next meeting is scheduled to take place on Wednesday the 11th May 2022 from 6pm at The Miners Hall, Langley Park. The first part of the meeting is the Annual Assembly, and the Annual General Meeting will follow on from this meeting.

Meeting closed at 7:45pm.