



*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 13th July 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. Ollie Moat, Cllr. Allison Wardman, Cllr. Kathryn Thompson, Cllr. Linda Bushell, Cllr. Ruth Hughes, Cllr. Edwin Simpson, Cllr. Jillian Crumble.

2 members of the public were present at the meeting

Clerk: Leeanne Owens

**2. Apologies for Absence**

Councillor Louise Dudden

Personal Commitments

Councillor Mike Quinn

Personal Commitments

**3. Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest declared at the meeting.

**4. Minutes from the Annual Assembly and Annual General Meeting on the 11<sup>th</sup> May 2022 and minutes from the Extra Ordinary Meeting on the 29<sup>th</sup> June 2022**

Cllr. Wardman asked that her name be added to the acceptance of Councillor. Joe Thompson being elected as Chair and Councillor. Ollie Moat as Vice Chair from the meeting on the 11<sup>th</sup> May 2022.

Following this amendment Councillor Simpson moved that the minutes from the meeting on the 11<sup>th</sup> May 2022 be agreed as a true record. Councillor Hawxwell seconded this.

Councillor Simpson also moved that the minutes from the meeting on the 29<sup>th</sup> June 2022 also be moved as a true record and Councillor Wardman seconded this. Councillor Hughes did have some queries in relation to the minutes from the Extra Ordinary meeting on the 29<sup>th</sup> June 2022 and both Councillor Hughes and Councillor Bushell agreed that they did not accept these minutes as a true record, however all other Councillors in attendance agreed to accept these minutes as a true record. Following a discussion, it was:

**Resolved** That the minutes from the meeting held on the 11<sup>th</sup> May 2022 and the 29<sup>th</sup> June 2022, both be agreed as a true record.

## **5. County Councillors Report**

County Councillor Coult presented her report to the meeting which included key events since her last attendance at the Parish meeting. County Councillor agreed to share her report with the Clerk who will then share the report with Councillors.

**Resolved** That the report from County Councillor Coult be noted.

## **6. Opportunity for the public to raise matters of interest**

On behalf of a member of the public present at the meeting who raised concerns with the Clerk over the need for Councillors to be DBS checked, with permission the Clerk discussed this issue again with Councillors. The Clerk advised that previously with the advice she had been given it was felt that the need for Councillors to be DBS checked was not needed for them to fulfil their role as Councillor and this was the reason for the decision, however following a recent turn of events where concerns were raised from a group in attendance at the Miners Hall for a regular meeting they have were approached by a Councillor asking for certain members of the group to sign a form, it was felt that the need for DBS checks needs to be revisited.

Following a discussion, it was;

**Resolved** That the issue around DBS checks needs to be explored further at a future meeting.

## **7. Clerks Report**

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

Following the Clerks report, it was;

**Resolved** That the Clerks report be noted;

## **8. Planning Applications – Appeal – APP/X1355/C/22/3290662 – School House, Front Street, Quebec, Durham**

Councillor Simpson confirmed that an appeal has been made in relation to the planning application for the above property and a brief discussion ensued.

**Resolved** That the information received be noted.

## **9. Esh Parish Council – Facebook Page**

This item was brought to the meeting following concerns raised a while ago about the content on the Facebook page. Councillor Wardman who manages the Facebook page with Councillor Duddy provided Councillors with an update on the structure of the page and how content is published. The Clerk did advise that on observation and upon checking other Parish Council Facebook pages her only concern would be the need for the Facebook page to be a private page. The Clerk advised that she had also sought advice from DCC and they confirmed that it would be best if the Facebook page were made private. Following a discussion Councillor Wardman moved that the Facebook page is changed to become a private page and Councillor Crumbie seconded this.

**Resolved** That the Parish Facebook page be amended to become a Private Facebook page.

## **10. Update on the works for the Garage and the Small Holding**

Chair Councillor Joe Thompson provided an update on the works to both the garage roof which are now complete and the work to the small holding which is also now complete with a new fence being erected and all rubbish now removed. It was confirmed that as the area is now clear and as a Parish Council we are now in a position to relet the small holding in question and it was noted that we do have interested parties. Councillor Hughes moved that we rent the small holding out as soon as possible to enable the Parish Council to generate some income from this area. Councillor Kathryn Thompson seconded this.

**Resolved** That the Clerk contacts the relevant interested party to establish if they are still interested in renting the small holding and if so send out the necessary agreement.

## **11. Access Gates to the Recreation Ground and Old Esh**

Chair Councillor Joe Thompson provided an update to Councillors on the access gates to both the Recreation Ground and Old Esh and made suggestions on the type of fences needed. Councillor Simpson moved that the Parish invest in the costs to access new gates for both areas and Councillor Wardman seconded Councillor Simpson's motion. Following a vote all Councillors in attendance agreed that the Parish move forward and obtain costs for new gates for both areas with all Councillors in attendance agreeing to this by a show of hands.

**Resolved** That costs be obtained for new access gates to both the Old Recreation Ground and Old Esh and be brought to a future meeting for consideration.

## **12. Update on events from the Platinum Jubilee**

Councillor Moat provided an update on the events from the Platinum Jubilee which were held at the Miners Hall and advised that events that were organised were well attended, and the feedback received from those in attendance at events was positive.

**Resolved** That the update from Councillor Moat be noted.

## **13. Update on the Tractor following Councillor Moat's meeting with the Police**

As agreed at a previous meeting it was agreed that Councillor Moat speak to the Police in relation to the Tractor that can no longer be traced. Councillor Moat read out her catalogue of events having spoken to the Police who have confirmed that the issue is a civil matter.

Councillor Bushell confirmed that the tractor was never owned by the parish and did not require the level of discussion in the past it has generated, however as the Parish were never given the full information from Councillor Bushell it was felt the need for the Parish to go to the Police to draw an end under this subject was required. Following Councillor Moat's update, it was;

**Resolved** That the update be noted, and the Parish are no longer to pursue this matter as a concern.

#### **14. Update from Anti-Social Behaviour meeting**

In the absence of Councillor Quinn, the Clerk read out a report from Councillor Quinn on his account of the Anti-Social Behaviour meeting that he attended.

Councillor Hughes confirmed that she was in attendance at the meeting near Finings Park and she commented that there were a lot of youths causing a nuisance in the park near Finings Avenue. Councillors commented that the meeting appeared to be productive, and these kinds of meetings are needed to help tackle Anti-social behaviour in the area. Councillor Simpson commented that he was also at the meeting and felt that the report read out on behalf of Councillor Quinn was a good account of the meeting.

**Resolved** That the update be noted.

#### **15. Esh Parish Newsletter**

Discussions took place regarding a newsletter for the Parish Council with various options been discussed around who we could use. It was agreed that we do need some volunteers to work together to collate the information for the newsletter and therefore it was agreed for this to be discussed again at the next meeting in September.

**Resolved** That this item be brought back to the next meeting for further consideration

#### **16. Energy Survey**

Councillor Simpson updated Councillors on a training course he recently attended with the energy team at Durham County Council, and he suggested that having an energy survey completed on the Miners Hall building will be a good idea. Chair Councillor Joe Thompson did advise that following repairs to the roof at the Miners Hall following the storms these have unveiled that the roof is in a bad state of repair, therefore Councillor Bushell felt that it may be wise to have the roof fixed first, then look at the energy survey. Discussions took place and it was highlighted that the energy survey may be based on more internal factors, such as the heating system and following a discussion Councillor Crumbie suggested that we get a price for the energy team to conduct their survey and bring this information back to a future meeting.

**Resolved** That the Clerk liaises with the Energy Team to obtain a price for the energy survey and bring this information back to the next meeting.

#### **17. Payments made and bank reconciliation**

The Clerk presented a list of payments to Councillors that are due for payment which are shown on a separate sheet. Councillor Hughes and Councillor Bushell noted the payment to Rospa and asked for a copy of the Rospa report. Councillor Hughes asked for clarification on the payment for flowers and the Clerk explained that these were flowers to a Councillor following the sad death of Councillor Dowson and these were on behalf of the Parish. Councillor Hughes highlighted that public money cannot be spent in this way. Councillor Crumbie did ask for clarification on this as she noted that she felt that this was not a concern. A question was also raised in

relation to the book club tokens, however the Clerk noted that this was spend in relation the Jubilee and this was part of the budget that was ring fenced for the jubilee events.

**Resolved** That the payments are authorised by the Council except for the payment for flowers which the Clerk needs to seek advice on.

## **18. Income**

The Clerk presented Councillors with all income received to date. There was a query in relation to a payment of £55.00 received with no payee details attached and the Clerk confirmed that she would look into this.

**Resolved** That the income information received be noted;

**Resolved** That the Clerk obtain further clarification in relation to the income amount highlighted.

## **19. Memorial Bench**

Due to sad death of Councillor Dowson discussions took place around the Parish purchasing a memorial bench at the Wetlands to remember Councillor Dowson, however due to earlier discussions in relation to the flowers, it was confirmed that public money cannot be spent this way.

Councillor Hughes did suggest we put Councillor Dowson's name on the bench outside of the Miners Hall. Following discussions Councillor Crumbie did suggest that the Parish explores the possibility of a memorial bench in Councillor Dowson's memory. Following further discussions Councillor Moat proposed Councillor Crumbie's suggestion and Chair Councillor Joe Thompson seconded this.

**Resolved** That the Clerk explore if the Parish are in a position to purchase a memorial bench in memory of Councillor Dowson.

## **20. Update on money claim from a previous contractor**

This item was discussed as private and confidential and the members of the public present at the meeting were asked to leave the meeting.

An update was provided to Councillors and Councillors made a clear decision in relation to this item.

**Resolved** That the update be noted.

## **21. Members Conduct**

This item was discussed as private and confidential and the members of the public present at the meeting were asked to leave the meeting.

An update was provided to Councillors and Councillors made a clear decision in relation to this item.

**Resolved** That the update be noted.

## **22. Date of next meeting – Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> September 2022, The Miners Hall, Langley Park.**

**Meeting closed at 8:10pm.**

**CERTIFIED AS A TRUE RECORD**

**CHAIR .....**

**DATE .....**