



*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 the 9<sup>th</sup> November 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. Kathryn Thompson, Cllr. Linda Bushell, Cllr. Ruth Hughes, Cllr. Jillian Crumbie, Cllr. Louise Dudden, Cllr Ross Lardner, Cllr. Allison Wardman, Cllr. Edwin Simpson.

County Councillor Bev Coult

1 member of the public was present at the meeting

Clerk: Leeanne Owens

**2. Apologies for Absence**

Councillor Karenza Passmore

Personal Commitments

Councillor Mike Quinn

Work Commitments

**3. Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of interest were declared at the meeting.

**4. Minutes from the Ordinary Meeting on the 12<sup>th</sup> October 2022**

Cllr. Dudden accepts that the minutes of the last meeting were a true record and Chair Cllr. Joe Thompson seconded this.

**Resolved** That the minutes from the meeting held on the 12<sup>th</sup> October 2022, be agreed as a true record.

## **5. County Councillors Report**

County Councillor Coult was present at the meeting and read out some key highlights to Councillors. County Councillor Coult agreed to share her report with the Clerk which the Clerk will then share with Councillors.

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

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

The Clerk read out a statement from a member of the public over some birch trees which County Councillor Coult was aware of and discussed as part of her report.

Following a discussion, it was;

**Resolved** That the information from the member of the public be noted.

## **7. Clerks work in progress**

The Clerk presented her report to Councillors which included the quotations received for the damaged fence at Quebec Play area and the fence on the road near the play area following a collision. 3 quotations were received for this work from Deerness Fencing, LME and L.D.F Fencing and Gardening Services.

Councillors discussed the quotations received and Cllr. Hughes said in her opinion she prefers the quotation from Deerness Fencing. The Clerk did highlight that this quotation was itemised and felt that there was more information on this quotation and from an auditing point of view, this quotation was more thorough. Cllr. Wardman also confirmed that she was more inclined to go with this quote.

Following a discussion all Councillors present at the meeting agreed by a show of hands to accept the quotation from Deerness Fencing for the fence works at Quebec Play area and the fence on the road.

### **Boiler**

It was noted that there have been some issues with the boiler at The Miners Hall and as this is a health and safety concern the boiler has been repaired. As part of this repair the plumber has highlighted that the boiler needs a new expansion tank fitted to the hot water tank. Cllr. Moat explained that because we will have a water tank legionella testing may need to be looked at. The Clerk explained that she is happy to explore this and provide Councillors with an update.

### **Update on Moles**

As part of her report the Clerk shared the quotation received for the issues with moles at The Old Recreation Ground, Old Esh, Sir Bobby Robson Play Area and Quebec Play Area. Only 1 quotation was sought as this work is under £1,000.00. Cllr. Hughes does not feel this work should go ahead as she has visited some of the areas highlighted and doesn't feel there is a huge concern as there are minimal mole hills. Cllr. Hughes has also sought advice which states that it is the wrong time of year to get this work done and feels that the money could be better spent on other things at the moment, for example she feels that there is an issue with the toilets at The Miners Hall and mentioned that there is a foul smell coming from them.

Cllr. Bushell also commented that it is the wrong time of year to deal with the issue of the moles and it has been confirmed to Cllr. Bushell also that the spring is the best time of year to deal with this issue.

Following a discussion, it was highlighted that at the last meeting it was agreed that a quotation be sought, therefore Councillors present at the meeting were asked to vote on whether to go ahead with the quotation received to deal with the issues of the moles. Following a vote Chair Cllr. Joe Thompson, Cllr. Hawxwell, Cllr. Kathryn Thompson, Cllr. Wardman, Cllr. Duddy, Cllr. Moat, Cllr. Simpson, Cllr. Lardner, Cllr. Dudden and Cllr. Crumbie all agreed to accept the quotation for the work to eradicate the moles and they agreed this by a show of hands.

Cllr. Hughes and Cllr. Bushell abstained from voting.

Following the Clerks report, it was;

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

**Resolved** That the quotation from Deerness Fencing be accepted and the Clerk contacts Deerness Fencing to progress these works;

**Resolved** That the Clerk makes contact with companies who are able to carry out Legionella checks and provides an update to Councillors on any progress made;

**Resolved** That the quotation from Greengrass Mole Control be accepted and the Clerk advises Greengrass Mole Control to carry out the necessary works.

**8. Planning Applications DM/22/02927/PNC – New Cornsay House Farm, Cornsay Colliery, DH7 9EE – Report attached  
DM/22/03070/FPA - Stobbilee Farm, Langley Park, Durham, DH7 9TR – Report attached**

Following discussions in relation to the planning applications received, Cllr. Simpson advised that he has no objections with these and proposed that the Parish accept these planning applications. Chair Cllr. Joe Thompson seconded this.

**Resolved** That the Planning Applications be noted and the Parish Council are happy with the planning applications received.

**9. Email Correspondence**

The Clerk presented Councillors with a range of different emails received for Councillors information.

**Resolved** That the email correspondence be noted.

**10. Policies and Procedures due for renewal**

The Clerk presented a list of Policies and Procedures to Councillors that have been updated and that are due for ratification from full Council.

The polices due for renewal are:

Dignity at Work Procedure

Complaints Procedure

Recruitment Policy

Public Participation Policy

Equal Opportunity Policy

Scheme of Delegation Policy

Protocol for dealing with email correspondence Policy

Standing Orders Policy

Financial Regulations Policy

In addition to these policies, the Clerk has created a new policy named Annual Risk Management.

Following a discussion, it was;

**Resolved** That all policies be agreed and be used by the Parish Council going forward.

#### **11. Lanchester and Langley Park 2022 Traffic Regulation Order**

The Clerk presented an email to Councillors on Lanchester and Langley Park 2022 Traffic Regulation Order.

Cllr. Simpson proposed that the Parish accept this order and Chair Cllr. Joe Thompson seconded this.

**Resolved** That the Lanchester and Langley Park 2022 Traffic Regulation Order be moved by the Parish Council.

#### **12. Update from Sub Committee Groups on Warm Hubs and Christmas Preparations**

Cllr. Hawxwell provided Councillors with an update on the Warm Hubs that the Parish Council are going to be involved with. Cllr. Hawxwell explained that the Miners Hall as a venue must register with DCC so that their Charter can be displayed.

Cllr. Hawxwell read out the Charter to Councillors and explained that as part of being a Warm Hubs venue training will be offered by Durham County Council on the 24<sup>th</sup> November for 1 ½ hours. This training is an online course. In addition to this training a Food safety course is also available and details will be shared if required.

As part of being a Warm Hubs venue there are certain criteria the Council must adhere to, for example a Lone Working Policy must be in place and a Safeguarding Policy must also be in place. Cllr Moat advised that as part of the Miners Hall hosting the Warm Hubs space there must a minimum of 2 volunteers on site at all times.

County Cllr Coult also stressed this. County Cllr. Coult advised that if the Parish Council struggle for volunteers Durham County Council Leisure has a list of volunteers who the Parish Council could access if they are struggling.

As part of the parish Council taking part in the Warm Hubs scheme County Cllr Coult discussed producing care packs for the Parish area, however identifying people for the Care packs was discussed. Cllr. Hawxwell has already identified residents from Crescent Homecare and County Cllr. Coult confirmed that she has some contacts and may be able to identify people this way. As part of producing the care packs County Cllr. Coult asked if the Parish could initially donate £1,500.00. Items for the care packs were discussed, however these need to be finalised. Following a vote, all Parish Councillors agreed by a show of hands to donate £1,500.00 to the Care Packs.

The Miners Hall has set the start date for the Warm Hubs as the 24<sup>th</sup> November 2022 and the venue will be available as a Warm hub on a Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 10am until 3pm. Councillors were asked at the meeting if they were available to volunteer to enable a rota to be set up. Cllr. Dudden confirmed that she can

commit to a Monday, Cllr. Duddy will commit to a Wednesday and Cllr. Lardner confirmed he would be available during the school holidays.

### **Christmas Preparations**

Cllr. Moat provided an update on the preparations for Christmas confirming that the Christmas trees will be going up on the 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2022. Cllr. Moat explained that she had asked about timers for the Christmas lights, however it has been confirmed that it is too late this year, therefore this will need to be looked at next year. On the 7<sup>th</sup> December there will be an afternoon tea, the village fayre will take place on the 10<sup>th</sup> December, and the Santa parade will take place on the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> December. As part of the preparations for Christmas discussions took place on the possibility of making up hampers for care homes.

Cllr. Bushell discussed the email she sent to the Clerk around the Parish Council donating Christmas trees to businesses in the area. It was noted that it is not a guarantee that businesses can be given a tree as funding would need to be sought for this, and for this year it is too late. In addition, it was clarified that trees cannot go on Durham County Council land without permission. Cllr. Bushell said that she would direct businesses to the Clerk.

**Resolved** That the update on the Warm Hubs be noted;

**Resolved** That the Parish Council agree to donate £1,500.00 towards the care packs for the warm hubs initiative;

**Resolved** That the update on the Christmas preparations be noted.

### **13. Safeguarding Issues**

The Chair asked for this item to be on the agenda as concerns were raised in relation to a Councillor entering a garden at Willow Park recently to query works been undertaken. It was noted that the property of interest has vulnerable children on site, and this posed serious safeguarding concerns. There was also a dog on the premises, therefore the Councillor could have been at risk.

Due to this incident, it was highlighted again that no Councillor is to work on their own and if there are concerns these be brought to full council for a decision to be made.

**Resolved** That the information be noted.

### **14. Room Booking form for discussion and review**

Cllr. Moat asked if the room booking form can be looked at. The official social distancing information needs to be taken off the form and Cllr. Moat suggested that we only offer the main hall as a room, however it was noted that the Parish office can also be used, and some groups have used this room in the past. It was also noted that the use of the kitchen should be a one-off fee for the whole booking, charged at £5.00.

**Resolved** That the information be noted;

**Resolved** That the room booking form to be updated accordingly and to reflect that the main hall and Parish Office can both be booked.

**15. Chairmans Allowance**

The Chair suggested that as part of receiving the annual Chairmans Allowance of £300.00 per year, he proposes that this year he would like to use this allowance to hold a Christmas Party for Councillors and suggested the 9<sup>th</sup> December from 6pm as a date.

**Resolved** That Parish Councillors will meet on the 9<sup>th</sup> December at 6pm for a Christmas party at the Miners Hall.

**16. 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.

As part of the payments a discussion took place on any monies the Parish Council receive as part of the Christmas events. Last year the funds received were put into the income the Parish receives, however Councillors discussed the possibility of donating any monies received to charities. The Chair Cllr. Joe Thompson also suggested doing the village fayre for free. County Councillor Coult explained that she will check if the Parish can donate to charities and the Clerk can also look at this. It was noted that the Parish do need to be clear on how any money made is also given back.

Following a discussion, Cllr. Moat proposed that the Parish accept the payments that are due and Cllr. Simpson seconded this.

**Resolved** That the payments due are authorised by the Council;

**Resolved** That the issue relating to donating any monies received from the Christmas events to Charities be explored and relayed back to the Parish Council.

**17. Budget preparations for 2023/2024**

The Clerk presented Councillors with the budget preparations for 2023/2024 which she has prepared. This looks at the different budget headings and looks at how much money has currently been spent so far this year and looks at budget projections for next year.

The Clerk asked Councillors to look at the information and highlight any areas/updates in time for the meeting in January 2023 and explained that at this meeting she would like the budgets for 2023/2024 finalised.

**Resolved** That the information be noted and brought back to the meeting in January 2023 to be finalised.

**18. Date of next ordinary meeting – Wednesday the 14<sup>th</sup> December 2022, The Miners Hall**

**Meeting closed at 8pm.**

**CERTIFIED AS A TRUE RECORD**

**CHAIR .....**

**DATE .....**