



*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 11<sup>th</sup> January 2023 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. Kathryn Thompson, Cllr. Allison Wardman, Cllr Ollie Moat, Cllr. Ross Lardner, Cllr. Edwin Simpson

There were no public members present at the meeting

Clerk: Leeanne Owens

**2. Apologies for Absence**

Councillor Linda Bushell	Personal Commitments
Councillor Ruth Hughes	Personal Commitments
Councillor John Duddy	Personal Commitments
Councillor Jillian Crumbie	Personal Commitments
Councillor Mike Quinn	Work Commitments
Councillor Louise Dudden	Work Commitments
Councillor Karenza Passmore	Work Commitments

### **3. Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of interest were declared at the meeting.

### **4. Minutes from the Ordinary Meeting on the 14<sup>th</sup> December 2022**

Cllr. Wardman moved that we accept the minutes from the 14<sup>th</sup> December 2022 and Cllr. Moat seconded this.

**Resolved** That the minutes from the meeting held on the 14<sup>th</sup> December 2022, be agreed as a true record.

### **5. County Councillors Report**

County Councillor Coult was present at the meeting and read out her report to Councillors which highlighted some key areas, which included the Devolution which is a key area which will be consulted on.

County Councillor Coult also discussed the next PACT meeting that is scheduled for the 27<sup>th</sup> January 2023 at 1pm and asked if this could be held at the Miners Hall and be incorporated into the Warm Hubs session. All Councillors agreed to this, and the Clerk confirmed that she would make all Councillors aware of this.

County Councillor Coult agreed to forward her report to the Clerk to share with Councillors.

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

**Resolved** That the Clerk make all Councillors aware that the next PACT meeting will be held on the 27<sup>th</sup> January 2023, from 1pm at the Miners Hall.

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

The Clerk highlighted that she had received some comments from a public member on the following:

#### **Turning Circle at Esh Village**

It was asked if the Parish Council would consider having the turning Circle tarmacked due to the deterioration of this area. Following a discussion Councillors were in agreement that the Parish Council will not be able to pay to tarmac any area of this road as it is not their responsibility. It was suggested that the public members liaises with Durham County Council in relation to this area.

#### **Esh Village Christmas Tree Star**

It was asked if the Esh Village Christmas Tree Star could be PAT tested with the main lights that the Parish Council has for Christmas and kept with our lighting. Cllr. Moat provided an update on the Christmas tree star and advised that having spoken to Lite Ltd who maintain and PAT test our Christmas lights, they have advised that they can't PAT test the Christmas tree star or take ownership of it as it home made and does not meet regulations. In addition, the Parish cannot take responsibility of the Christmas tree star and this cannot be used on the tree at Esh Village as the Parish Council could be liable if there is an accident.

#### **Planting at Esh Village**

The Clerk received a report from a public member to ask if the Parish Council will consider planting the entrances of Esh Village and the centre grass triangle. Following a discussion, it was agreed that the Clerk liaises with EVRA to establish if they are still in existence to determine what they are doing in terms of planting. If they still wish to do planting in Esh Village but funds are an issue it was suggested that they contact County Councillor

Coult who may be able to offer some funding and the Parish Council would be happy to pick up the costs for the remaining planters. If Evra are not able to do any planting in Esh Village then the Parish will be happy to look at the planting, following a quote from our contractor.

**Resolved** That the Clerk contacts the member of public in relation to the Turning Circle to advise that that the Parish Council will not be able to pay to tarmac any area of this road as it is not our responsibility. The Clerk is to advise the public member to contact Durham County Council with any further issues on this area;

**Resolved** That the Clerk contacts the resident in relation to the Christmas tree star to advise that Lite Ltd are not able to PAT test the star as it is not a branded item and does not meet current electricity regulations. In addition, The Clerk is to advise the resident that Esh Parish Council cannot take responsibility of the star and this cannot be used on the tree at Esh Village as Esh Parish Council could be liable if there was an accident;

**Resolved** The Clerk is to make contact with Evra to establish if they are still in existence and to establish what areas of planting, they are able to do at Esh Village and then the Parish will look at the remaining planters;

**Resolved** If the Clerk does not hear back from Evra within 2 weeks, then she is to make contact with our Contractor and ask for a quotation for the planters needed and bring the quotation back to a future Parish Council meeting for discussion.

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

The Clerk read out a verbal report to the Parish Council and during her update the Clerk discussed the Legionella testing that she is looking to get done at the Miners Hall. The Clerk advised that a quote has been received from Northumbrian Water for £275.00. Cllr. Simpson moved that the Parish accepts this quotation and Cllr. Kathryn Thompson seconded this.

During her report the Clerk also discussed PAT testing and advised that Durham Electrics have confirmed they can do the PAT testing at the Miners Hall. The Clerk advised that she has created a list of items that need PAT Testing which she will forward to Durham Electrics. Following a discussion Councillors agreed that if the PAT Testing was only £200 then we should proceed, however if the works were nearing £1,000 then the Clerk was to bring this back to full Council for a further discussion.

### **Miners Hall Roof**

During her update the Clerk confirmed that she has spoken to CISWO in relation to the roof repairs to the Miners Hall and they have confirmed that they would not be willing to contribute to the cost of any of the roof repairs. The Chair Cllr. Joe Thompson said in his opinion if this is the case then going forward, he would only be willing to do patch repairs to the roof instead of paying for a new roof as the cost of a full roof replacement will be too costly for the Parish Council. Following a discussion, it was agreed that the Miners Hall be scheduled for a further discussion at the next Parish Council meeting.

### **Parish IT**

The Clerk explained that following the last meeting she has been in contact with Alv IT Solutions who have advised that they can provide IT support. Councillors were in agreement that the Clerk progress with this and updates the Parish Council accordingly.

**Resolved** That the Clerk forward the necessary paperwork to Northumbrian Water to proceed with the Legionella Testing;

**Resolved** That the Clerk speak to Durham Electrics in relation to the PAT Testing and if the price is only around £200 then she is to request these works to be scheduled;

**Resolved** That the Miners Hall be put on the agenda of the next meeting for further discussion;

**Resolved** That the Clerk progresses with the IT work and updates Councillors on this progress.

**8. Planning Applications Received - DM/22/03293/FPA, Old Co-operative Buildings, 2 Front Street, Langley Park**

A discussion took place in relation to the planning application for the Co-Operative building. Cllr. Simpson advised that if the planning application is purely to put windows in the room, then he has no issue with it, however County Councillor Coult explained that the application is to have 10 flats/apartments above the shops. The Clerk advised that she did send the Parish Council's objections to the Planning Team following the last meeting, however County Councillor Coult suggested the Clerk liaises with the planning team and asks that the Parish Council's objections be uploaded onto the planning portal.

**Resolved** That the Clerk liaises with the Planning Team to ask that the Parish Council's objections be uploaded to the Planning Portal.

**9. Email Correspondence Received**

Following one of the emails sent to Councillors an email was in relation to photographs of her Majesty being replaced with photographs of the King at a notified time. A discussion took place in relation to how many photographs the Parish Council have of her Majesty, and they advised that when needed they would replace these with pictures of the King.

Following a further email sent to Councillors one of these emails was in relation Section 106 Monies. Cllr. Simpson advised that there is some Section 106 money available for the Parish area. County Cllr Coult explained to Councillors how the Section 106 funding works and advised that the Parish need to have a physical project in place to be able to access the funding.

**Resolved** That the emails received be noted;

**Resolved** That the Parish Council will check the photographs they have of her Majesty and when these need replacing, they will ensure that photographs of the King are available.

**10. Budget and Precept Preparations 2023-2024**

The Clerk prepared budget information and details of the precept requirements for budget year 2023-2024. Cllr Simpson advised that he does not wish for the Parish to increase the precept for 2023-2024 and all Parish Councillors in attendance of the meeting agreed not to increase the precept by a show of hands.

**Resolved** That the Parish Council accepts a Precept for 2023-2024 of £110,065.68 which achieves a Band D Charge of £76.70 and a LCTRS Grant payable of £279.00.

**Resolved** That the budget detail presented by the Clerk be approved.

**11. Insurance Renewal 2023/2024**

The Clerk presented information of the Parish Council's insurance Policy which is due for renewal on the 25<sup>th</sup> January 2023 for a sum of £4,221.21. Cllr. Simpson moved that the Parish Council accept the renewal price and Cllr. Wardman seconded this.

**Resolved** That the Parish Council accept the insurance renewal at the price of £4,221.21 and that the Clerk notifies the insurance company to accept the renewed insurance policy.

## **12. Grass Cutting SLA for 2023-2024**

The Clerk provided Councillors with quotations for Grass cutting from April 2023 from OJM. The Clerk advised that other companies were approached for quotations, however the companies approached were not forthcoming with quotations.

The quotations from OJM were for £3,400 for grass cutting at the Play Area Quebec, Play Area Esh, Village Green Esh, Football Field Esh, Recreation Ground Langley Park and Sir Bobby Robson Play Area. Hedge maintenance is also included in this quotation.

A quotation of £900 was received for seasonal Parish seat maintenance.

A quotation of £580.00 was received for further grass cutting and clearance to the bottom of the Recreation ground.

Following a discussion Cllr. Simpson moved that the Parish Council accept the quotations from OJM and Cllr. Wardman seconded this.

**Resolved** That the Clerk contacts OJM to instruct them that the Parish Council wish to accept the quotation for the works listed.

## **13. Emergency Contact**

The chair discussed having an emergency contact number displayed at the Sir Bobby Robson Play Area, the Recreation Ground, the park at Old Esh, Quebec Play area and outside of the Miners Hall.

The Chair suggested getting a Sim only phone then displaying signage with appropriate wording on highlighting the emergency contact number for any queries. Councillors in the meeting were in agreement of having an emergency contact number however they all agreed that a Rota be put in place, so all councillors take a turn to have the mobile phone.

Discussions took place around the signage, and it was suggested that the Clerk liaise with Print Me It and the Sign Shed for prices of signs and it was agreed that the wording for the signs be agreed at the next meeting.

To move the issue forward it was;

**Resolved** That the Clerk purchase a Sim only phone;

**Resolved** That the clerk sources prices for signage and bring these back to the next meeting and the Parish Council agree on the wording for the signs at the next meeting.

## **14. Safeguarding Policy**

The Clerk presented a Safeguarding Policy which the Parish Council are hoping to adopt. Following a discussion Cllr. Moat proposed that the Parish Council adopt the Safeguarding Policy and Cllr. Simpson seconded this.

**Resolved** That the Safeguarding Policy be adopted by the Parish Council.

## 15. Update on the Warm Hubs

Cllr. Hawxwell provided an update in relation to the Warm Hubs which restarted on the 4<sup>th</sup> January 2023. It was explained that the Parish Council are not getting the uptake they had expected, however promotion of the Warm Hubs continues.

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

## 16. Feedback from Christmas

Cllr. Moat provided an update on the Christmas events that the Parish Council held and explained that the afternoon tea and Santa parade that were organised went really well. £166.00 was raised as part of the Christmas tombola and this money was donated to the Jo and James Chemo unit at Durham. During the Christmas events a further £339 that was raised was donated to Robert Daniel Smith Memorial.

Discussions took place around the Christmas events, and it was suggested that a thank you letter is sent to Oliver's Trees for their support with the Christmas Trees.

Cllr. Moat explained that going forward when planning Christmas events Lite Ltd have advised that they are happy to meet with the Parish Council in February to look at the lights required for Christmas 2023.

Further discussions took place, and it was suggested that the Parish Council look at siting a permanent Christmas tree along the village. County Councillor Coult offered some advice on this process, and it was agreed to place the Christmas Committee on the agenda for the next meeting of the Parish Council.

**Resolved** That a thank you letter is sent to Oliver's Trees for their support with the Christmas trees;

**Resolved** That the Parish Council explore the possibility of siting a permanent Christmas tree in the village;

**Resolved** That the Christmas Committee be put on the agenda for the next Parish Council meeting.

## 17. 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.

Following a discussion all Councillors in attendance accepted the payments that are due.

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

## 18. Income Received

The Clerk presented a list of income that the Parish Council has received for the last quarter. Cllr. Moat advised that DH7 did not hold the Wicker making class or the Wreath making class, therefore they did not provide this income.

With the exception of the highlighted income received all Councillors in attendance moved that the Parish Council note the income received, however the Clerk is to investigate who the income for the Wicker making class and the Wreath making class was received by.

**Resolved** That the income received to date be noted;

**Resolved** That the Clerk establishes who made the payments for the Wicker making class and Wreath making class.

**19. Current Money Claim**

At the end of the meeting the Chair added the above item. This was discussed as private and confidential and all Parish Councillors were updated accordingly.

**Resolved** That the update be noted.

**20. Date of next ordinary meeting – Wednesday the 8<sup>th</sup> February 2023, 6pm at Esh Village Hall**

**Meeting closed at 8pm.**

**CERTIFIED AS A TRUE RECORD**

**CHAIR .....**

**DATE .....**