



*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 11th April 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. Kathryn Thompson, Cllr. John Duddy, Cllr Ollie Moat, Cllr. Linda Bushell, Cllr. Ruth Hughes, Cllr. George Hawxwell, Cllr. Jillian Crumbie, Cllr. Karenza Passmore, Cllr. Louise Dudden, Cllr. Mike Quinn, Cllr. Ross Lardner, Cllr Allison Wardman

There was 1 member of the public present at the meeting

Clerk: Leeanne Owens

2. Apologies for Absence

Councillor Edwin Simpson

Personal Commitments

3. Declarations of Interest

Cllr. Linda Bushell declared an interest in Item 9.

Cllr. Ruth Hughes declared an interest in Item 9.

Cllr. Ollie Moat declared an interest in Item 16.

4. Minutes from the Ordinary Meeting on the 8th March 2023

Cllr. Dudden moved that we accept the minutes from the 8th March 2023 and Cllr. Duddy seconded this.

Resolved That the minutes from the meeting held on the 8th March 2023, be agreed as a true record.

5. County Councillors Report

County Councillor Coult was present at the meeting and shared her report with Councillors which included some key issues which included the Consultation Durham County Council are having to recruit Foster Carers. County Cllr. Coult explained that the Bishop Auckland food festival is being held on the 22nd and 23rd April 2023. County Cllr. Coult highlighted that the big spring clean is scheduled to take place every 5-6 weeks and this will improve the cleanliness of the village and volunteers are encouraged to take part. As part of her report County Cllr. Coult advised that there is a big push on Empty Houses with the aim to try and get these houses occupied.

Cllr. Crumbie mentioned her concerns in relation to antisocial behaviour on the line and County Cllr. Coult advised that each time an incident occurs this must be reported to the Police so there is a log and evidence.

County Cllr. Coult advised that she has shared her report with the Clerk agreeing to send the report to Councillors for information.

Resolved That the report from County Councillor Coult be noted;

Resolved That the Clerk shares the report from County Councillor Coult to all Councillors.

6. Opportunity for the public to raise matters of interest

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

Turning Circle at Esh Village

This item has been brought to Council on a number of occasions, however the member of the public has asked if the Parish Council would reconsider having the small section of 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 felt that if the Parish Council agree to this then a precedent will be set for future requests from members of the public for other areas.

Planting at Esh Village

The planting at Esh Village has been brought to the meeting again as following the Parish Councils decision to plant only the entrance and exit of Esh Village the member of the public has asked if the Council will reconsider this and consider planting the entrances and the grass triangle where the Parish Notice board is. The member of the public wants to be sure that the Parish Council have all the clear facts in relation to the planting and the turning circle to enable them to make a clear decision.

Cllr. Moat advised that she attended a recent meeting with EVRA and they advised that in terms of their finances these are as normal as possible and if they are not planting as much of the village it must have been a decision they have made.

Cllr. Quinn said that in his opinion we can't fully understand the issues this resident is raising until they attend a meeting and it was suggested that in relation to both the turning circle and the planting that this member of the public be encouraged to attend a Parish Council meeting to discuss the concerns in person. It was also suggested that it be made certain of EVRA's intentions of the planting in Esh Village.

Dog Fouling and Speeding

The member of the public present at the meeting raised concerns over dog fouling in the village and speeding. County Cllr. Coult did advise that a recent speed test was conducted in the village and the survey did not highlight any major concerns. In relation to the dog fouling, it was suggested that this information be brought to the attention of the Neighbourhood Wardens via the Do It Online system to enable this to be investigated further.

Resolved That the Clerk contacts the member of public in relation to The Turning Circle and Planting in Esh Village and this member of the public be encouraged to attend a Parish Council meeting in person to raise their concerns;

Resolved That the Clerk contacts EVRA to determine their position in relation to planting and bring this information back to a future meeting;

Resolved That the concerns relating to dog fouling be reported to the Neighbourhood Wardens via the Do It Online system;

Resolved That the issues in relation to speeding in the village continue to be monitored and reported when there are concerns.

7. Clerks work in progress

During her report the Clerk discussed the following.

Legionella Testing at the Miners Hall

The clerk advised that she has now received the reported following the Legionella Testing on the 13th March 2023. The Clerk advised that this has not yet been shared with Councillors as this was only received on the date of the meeting. The Clerk printed a copy of the report off for Councillors viewing and the report has highlighted some issues that require attention.

Following a discussion Councillors present at the meeting were happy for the Clerk to contact Northumbrian Water and other suitable contractors to get quotations for the remedial work highlighted in the report.

Accounts for Financial Year 2022-2023

The Clerk advised that the accounts for financial year 2022-2023 are now with the Accountant. Following the Accountants initial inspection of the accounts the accounts will then go to the newly appointed auditor for further checking prior to being sent to Mazars at the end of June.

Resolved That the Clerk contacts suitable contractors to get quotations for the remedial work highlighted in the Legionella Report;

Resolved That the Clerk's work in relation to the accounts be noted.

8. Planning Applications Received - DM/23/00577/FPA, 31 Eppleton Close, Langley Park, Durham, DH7 9UX DM/23/00613/FPA – Greenland Farm, Greenland Road, Quebec, Durham, DH7 9RR DM/23/00589/FPA – Langley Cottage, Low Moor Road, Langley Park, Durham, DH7 6TJ

The planning applications received were discussed in detail and it was noted that the Parish Council have no objections with any of the planning objections received.

Resolved That the planning applications received be noted and it be noted that the Parish Council have no objections in relation to the planning applications received.

9. Update on Money Claim – Identifying Items

As Cllr. Hughes and Cllr. Bushell declared an interest in this item they left the room whilst this item was discussed.

Cllr. Kathryn Thompson and Cllr. Wardman provided an update to Councillors in relation to this subject advising full Council that they have contacted both Cllr. Hughes and Cllr. Bushell asking them to meet them to discuss the items they are claiming for, however they have not had a response.

It is understood that Cllr. Hughes and Cllr. Bushell are querying the email received from Cllr. Wardman and they believe she did not write this. Cllr. Wardman confirmed that she did send this email. Cllr. Passmore advised that this situation is a tedious waste of Parish Councillors time

It was suggested that to move the matter forward that the meeting is adjourned whilst Cllr. Wardman and Cllr. Kathryn Thompson speak to Cllr. Bushell and Cllr. Hughes.

Following Cllr. Kathryn Thompson and Cllr. Wardman speaking with Cllr. Hughes and Cllr. Bushell they both returned to the meeting and advised Councillors that Cllr. Hughes and Cllr. Bushell have agreed to meet them on Thursday the 20th April at 5:30pm to look at the items they are claiming for. They did query that some items are missing and they have asked for compensation for the court fees. Cllr. Moat advised that she is not happy for the Parish Council to pay for the court fees.

Following further discussion, it was;

Resolved That there is no resolution on this matter to date and Parish Councillors at the meeting are not happy to pay the court fees;

Resolved That an update will be provided to full Council to determine the outcome of the meeting that Cllr. Hughes and Cllr. Bushell are going to have with Cllr. Kathryn Thompson and Cllr. Wardman to discuss the items they are claiming for.

10. Community Engagement Review Consultation

Following the information, the Clerk sent to the Parish Council in relation to the Community Engagement Review which is in relation to the AAP's that is due to close on the 23 April 2023, Councillors agreed to send any comments they have to the Clerk by the 18th April 2023 in order for a collective view to be put forward from the Parish Council.

Resolved That Parish Councillors give any comments they have in relation to the Community Engagement Review to the Clerk to enable her to submit collective comments in time for the consultation end date of the 23rd April 2023.

11. A Community Building

Cllr. Moat provided an update on the Community Building the Parish Council are looking to buy. Cllr. Moat advised that the working group needs to be empowered by the Parish Council.

Cllr. Hughes asked who first viewed the property. Cllr. Moat said it was herself and the Chair Cllr. Joe Thompson, although Cllr. Quinn and Cllr. Passmore were also invited but could not attend.

Cllr. Hughes asked if there were any restricted covenants in relation to the Church the Parish Council are looking to buy. Cllr. Moat advised that she has been informed there are none. Cllr. Hughes also raised comments about the sale of alcohol at the property. Cllr. Moat said she can speak to the surveyor regarding the sale of alcohol. Cllr. Hughes also advised that she has been informed that it could cost in the region of £30,000 per year to keep the building safe. Cllr. Passmore advised that the decision the Parish Council need to make is are the Parish Council going to make an offer on the Church and agree to a top price and following this discussion Cllr. Passmore proposed a motion that the Parish Council go ahead with putting an offer in for the church. Following a vote the Chair Cllr. Joe Thompson, Cllr. Moat, Cllr. Passmore, Cllr. Lardner, Cllr. Quinn, Cllr. Hawxwell, Cllr. Duddy, Cllr. Wardman, Cllr. Crumbie, Cllr. Kathryn Thompson and Cllr. Dudden all agreed to the Parish Council putting in an offer for the Church.

Cllr. Hughes and Cllr. Bushell abstained from voting.

Following the vote for the purchase of the Church Councillors were asked to agree a price the Parish Council would offer for the Church with the survey determining the maximum amount the Parish Council would offer for the building.

Cllr. Crumbie gave her opinion on the maximum amount she feels that the Parish Council should offer for the Church with Councillors in agreement to this amount which is subject to the results of the survey. It was agreed that the Parish Council would put in a bid of £150,000. Following a vote, the Chair Cllr. Joe Thompson, Cllr. Moat, Cllr. Passmore, Cllr. Lardner, Cllr. Quinn, Cllr. Hawxwell, Cllr. Duddy, Cllr. Wardman, Cllr. Crumbie, Cllr. Kathryn Thompson and Cllr. Dudden all agreed to the Parish Council putting in an offer for the Church for £150,000.00

Cllr. Hughes and Cllr. Bushell abstained from voting.

To progress with the purchase of the Church Cllr. Moat proposed that the Parish Council give authority to request the survey for the Church. Following a vote the Chair Cllr. Joe Thompson, Cllr. Moat, Cllr. Passmore, Cllr. Lardner, Cllr. Quinn, Cllr. Hawxwell, Cllr. Duddy, Cllr. Wardman, Cllr. Crumbie, Cllr. Kathryn Thompson and Cllr. Dudden all agreed to the Parish Council progressing with the survey for the Church.

Cllr. Hughes and Cllr. Bushell did not take part in the vote.

It was agreed that Cllr. Lardner, Cllr. Moat, Cllr. Quinn, Cllr. Duddy, Chair Cllr. Joe Thompson and Cllr. Kathryn Thompson be part of the subcommittee for the Church the Parish Council are looking to buy.

It was agreed that public consultation needs to start as soon as possible. Cllr. Moat advised that she has began collating a list of members who can be involved in the consultation process.

Cllr. Hughes asked if the Parish Council were not successful in the purchase of the Church could the Parish Council not consider spending their money on the compulsory purchase of the cricket club. Cllr. Moat advised that this would take to long, however Cllr. Hughes' motion was noted by the Parish Council.

Resolved That the Parish Council put in a bid for the Church for £150,000 which is subject to the survey.

12. Email Correspondence Received

The Clerk discussed the emails sent to councillors prior to the meeting. These were noted by Council.

Following on from this the Clerk brought the recent decision notice to Councillors attention which was as the result of a series of complaints against all Councillors and the Clerk by Cllr. Hughes and Cllr. Bushell. Following this decision notice the Clerk was asked if the Council were able to publish this, however the Clerk said she would seek advice.

Following the decision notice Cllr. Passmore proposed a motion that Cllr. Hughes and Cllr. Bushell have no say in this meeting and future meetings and are not included in any discussions and decisions relating to Council business. They are allowed to listen at meetings however they are not able to interject as they both continue to cause problems in meetings. Cllr. Moat seconded this. Following a vote all Councillors present at the meeting agreed to Cllr. Passmore's motion by a show of hands.

Cllr. Hughes did ask the Clerk as the legal person to check whether the Parish Council are able to do this.

Resolved That the emails received be noted;

Resolved That the Clerks seeks guidance on the motion proposed and agreed on by the Parish Council.

13. Protocol for the use of the Parish Council Mobile Phone

The Clerk presented the draft policy she has produced for the Parish Council for the Protocol for the use of the Parish Council Mobile Phone. Cllr. Wardman proposed that the Parish Council adopt this policy and Cllr. Hawxwell seconded this.

Resolved That the Parish Council adopt the policy on the Protocol for the use of the Parish Council Mobile Phone.

14. Emergency Plan

Cllr. Passmore advised that herself and Cllr. Moat have prepared a draft version of the Emergency Plan but are going to look at this further and they would like a second opinion on this. Cllr Wardman offered to check this. Cllr. Passmore asked that this be put on the agenda for May.

Resolved That Councillor Wardman is to check the Emergency Plan produced by Cllr. Passmore and Cllr. Moat;

Resolved That the Emergency Plan be brought to the meeting in May to be adopted by the Parish Council.

15. Small Holdings

An update was given to Councillors on the concerns raised at one of the Small Holdings. It was noted that a letter has been sent to the tenant there are concerns about and Cllr Crumby has another on-site inspection planned for the weekend and she advised she would like the Chair to attend with her.

It was advised that there is a problem with the fence on the line side due to anti-social behaviour. Cllr. Crumby has checked this fence with the tenant who said they would look into this. Cllr Crumby will check this on her next visit.

There is also damage to fencing on the street side which the Parish Council are responsible for. Approximately 52 metres of fencing needs replacing. The Clerk will look at getting quotations for this work. Cllr. Dudden raised her objections to one of the contractors that the Clerk is looking to approach and this was noted.

Resolved That the update be noted;

Resolved That Cllr. Crumby provides an update to the Parish Council on the Small Holding following her next inspection with the Chair;

Resolved That the Clerk seeks quotations for the replacement of the fence that has been highlighted and bring these back to a future meeting for discussion.

16. DH7 – Future use of the Snooker Room

As Cllr. Moat declared an interest in this item she left the room whilst this item was being discussed. Following a discussion the Chair, Cllr Joe Thompson, Cllr. Hawxwell, Cllr. Duddy, Cllr. Dudden, Cllr. Lardner, Cllr. Quinn, Cllr. Crumbie, Cllr. Wardman, Cllr. Kathryn Thompson and Cllr. Passmore all agreed by a show of hands that they are happy for DH7 to continue using the Snooker Room on a regular basis with them having sole use of the room.

Due to the earlier motion against Cllr. Hughes and Cllr. Bushell they were not granted permission to take part in the vote.

Resolved That DH7 continue using the snooker room at the Miners Hall on a regular basis having sole use of the room.

17. Funding Request from Esh Village Residents Association and 1st Langley Park Rainbows, Brownies and Guides.

Councillors were provided with paperwork for both funding applications prior to the meeting and these funding requests from both applications were for funding for £300 for activities they were planning in relation to the upcoming Coronation of the King.

Following a discussion Cllr. Dudden proposed that both applications be approved. Cllr. Quinn seconded Cllr. Dudden's proposal.

Resolved That the application for funding from Esh Village Residents Association for £300 towards activities in relation to the Coronation be approved;

Resolved That the application for funding from 1st Langley Park Rainbows, Brownies and Guides for £300 towards activities in relation to the Coronation be approved.

18. Memorial Bench

Cllr. Dudden provided an update in relation to the memorial bench that was purchased by Crescent Homecare for the late Cllr. Dowson. Cllr. Dudden thanked Crescent Homecare for this kind gift. Discussions took place in relation to where the bench will be sited and it was noted that the Chair Cllr. Joe Thompson will install the memorial bench.

Resolved That the update be noted.

19. Friday Coffee Morning

Cllr. Hawxwell provided an update in relation to the Friday Coffee Morning he is part of and advised that a group of ladies who attended the Miners Hall for the Warm Hubs want to use the venue for a coffee morning. Cllr. Passmore advised that it may be a good idea to use this as joined up working with the church if we can get them involved.

It was asked if the Coffee Morning will be self-funded. It was confirmed that this is the case and it was also highlighted that any money raised from the Coffee Morning will be donated to the local Church.

Resolved That the update in relation to the Coffee Morning be noted.

20. 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.

21. Income to Date

The Clerk presented a list of all Income received over the past 3 months to Councillors which is shown on a separate sheet.

Following a discussion all Councillors in attendance noted the income received.

Resolved That the income received be noted by the Council.

21. Date of next Annual Meeting – Wednesday the 10th May 2023, 6pm, The Miners Hall, followed by the Annual General Meeting of the Parish Council.

Meeting closed at 19:43

CERTIFIED AS A TRUE RECORD

CHAIR

DATE