

Minutes of Neasham Parish Council meeting held on Tuesday 2 April 2024, 6:30PM, in Neasham Reading Room

PRESENT

P Dunn, G Crute, J Grainger, M Hannaford, K Sandick, J Weighell, L Tostevin, P Walters.
Clerk J Walker

ABSENT

B Crossen, E Miller

24/001 - WELCOME

K Sandick welcomed Councillors to the meeting. Apologies for absence were accepted from B Crossen (Holiday)

24/002- DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest.

24/003 - MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on 5 March 2024 were confirmed as a correct record.

24/004- MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

There were no matters arising.

24/005 – PACT REPORT

The dates for the next three meetings have been set as:- 11 April at Hurworth Grange, 23 May at Dinsdale Court, Middleton St George, 4 July at Hurworth Grange. All commencing at 6.00pm.

24/006- ROADS AND FOOTPATHS

1. It was reported that Darlington BC Highways had been carrying out a considerable amount of work on the road to Low Dinsdale to resolve the issues with drainage and had installed two large drain gratings. It had been commented that there had not been remedial work to the tarmac road surfacing, but this may be that the works are ongoing. It was reported subsequent to the meeting that there still an issue with the drainage, which also could be because the work is ongoing.

2. Whilst it is accepted that it is a national issue, there had many complaints from residents regarding potholes throughout the parish. L Tostevin stated that although Darlington BC recognised these concerns, they were sticking to their policy of not repairing holes less than 40mm deep.

24/007 – ENVIRONMENT AGENCY MATTERS

1. The debris to east end steps to embankment had still not removed by the Agency. The clerk was instructed to contact the Agency and request its removal as soon as possible. A photograph was available to forward with the complaint.
2. J Weighell reported that the Agency appeared to have resolved the current issue of moles in the embankment.

24/008 – VILLAGE GREEN

1. The Chair reported that he was instructing Eden Landscapes to carry out three jobs in the near future. 1) Reinstatement of the goal posts 2) Repairs to the Memorial Garden boards 3) Erection of Lighting pole, all of which were approved by the members.
2. R Heward has confirmed that his quotation for the maintenance of the verge to Kent Beck Bridge would be £200 which is the same as last. The clerk was instructed to place an order.
3. The Vice Chair gave a verbal report on the pruning of the cherry tree at the end of New Lane which had been carried out recently to avoid damage to the overhead cables. It had been found that the tree was in a poor condition and hard to pollard with some branches dying off. Miss Trees was not hopeful that it could be done again and a new tree will be required in the next 3 years. The Clerk to include the cost in next year's precept.

24/009 – PLANNING

1. Applications received since the last meeting:-
None.
2. Darlington BC no longer directly inform parish councils on planning decisions, interested parties will now have to log onto the planning portal in respect each application. Whilst it is a relatively simple exercise, of the three applications involving Neasham returned this year all three were still shown as undecided, although it is understood that a decision has been made on them all.
3. 22/00875/FUL Dinsdale Park Golf Club application, reply still awaited from Darlington BC in response to the Neasham PC complaint.
4. Report on NALC guidelines in respect of biodiversity consideration with regard to planning applications and SLCC guide on promoting diversity, both as

circulated. The Vice Chair confirmed that Neasham PC will have to follow these guidelines if considering any property affected.

5. Formal notification of the result of the appeal against the enforcement notice regarding the siting of 4 mobile caravans at Skipbridge is still awaited. The issue of the "orange water" in the ditch on Neasham Road, Skipbridge is being investigated, but it was felt that that it was likely to coming from contamination of the backfilling to the old tip.
6. An email had been received from Mr R Walton regarding proposed diversion of permissive footpaths over land he owned adjacent to Roman Way at Middleton St George. The Clerk requested further details of his proposals which were provided. Mr Walton indicated that he wished to keep all interested parties fully informed. The clerk was instructed to inform Mr Walton that the parish council had examined his proposal and had no adverse comments to make and that he would be welcome to attend a meeting should he still feel that necessary.

24/010 – RISK MANAGEMENT

1. Trees, Village Green and Millennium Garden inspections had been due in March, but were delayed until April because of adverse weather.
2. No defects raised, but the Chair reported that he had not yet been able to contact the owner's son of a property on Teesway, where there is a step protruding out onto a badly lit section of the footpath on Teesway. This considered to be a trip hazard and it was felt that it could alleviated by the positioning of a small solar light.
3. The annual All Risks Checklist is currently being compiled for approval by the members at the May meeting.

24/011 – FINANCE

1. Previously approved payments made in March:- Clerk expenses £33.99 (Printer cartridges), ICO £35.00 (Data protection), Clerk £542.40 (Salary), HMRC £135.60 (PAYE), Miss Trees £180.00 (Tree reduction), Amazon £57.80 (Floodlights), SR Lighting ££335.09 (Lighting Pole), Eden Landscapes £75.00 (Fixing Pole).
2. The accounts are indicating that the general fund at the end of year will be approximately 75% of the precept. To reduce this, a proposal to ring fenced a sum of £1000. For "IT generally and Website" was approved.
3. A quotation of £250 from Andrew Darge for repairs to the pump house stonework was approved.
4. P Dunn reported that the cost of plants and compost from Neasham Nurseries would be approximately the same as last, but no more than an increase of 5%.

5. The years accounts will be submitted to the internal auditor in week commencing 8 April.

24/012 REACHING OUT AND COMMUNICATIONS

1. The clerk had met with P Walters regarding the Facebook page and it was agreed to change the account from a personal account into a business one, which was successfully carried out, our thanks to P Walters. Three persons have access to the new account. P Walters would remove himself from the list, but more could be added. When asked if anyone wish to be added, it was announced by the chair he had received an email from J Grainger resigning from the council. She will be sorely missed, but agreed to fulfil her Business Manager commitments over the next month. The Chair agreed to forward any story on events that happen in the village to J Weighell for posting on Facebook.
2. The Chair agreed to prepare a report on the years events. There would also be a post card size leaflet for a leaflet drop advertising the Assembly. It was agreed that the publicity for the Assembly needs co-ordinating.

24/013 – WARD COUNCILLOR MATTERS

P Walters reported that he had posted a link on Facebook for contacting Darlington BC with complaints and that it was easy to report a problem online which normally receives a quick response. L Tostevin stated that Highways do check potholes following a complaint.

24/014 – CORRESPONDENCE (AS CIRCULATED IN MARCH)

Various emails from NALC regarding Chief Executive's Bulletin (07/03, 14/03, 28/03), Events (02/04), Newsletter (27/03). All listed for information only.

24/015 – OTHER VILLAGE MATTERS

1. The Vice Chair had suggested that a list of useful contact numbers be prepared for posting on the noticeboards. A draft had been prepared and circulated to the members for them to suggest further additions.
2. An email had been received from a parishioner, that Neasham PC consider forwarding his request that the start and end dates for the collection of garden waste material be brought forward by two weeks. This was because many bins in the village were full well before the first collection. It was agreed to forward his request to Street Scene. It was noted that at a previous

Assembly the possibility of compost facilities had been discussed, which could be raised again at this year's Assembly.

24/016 - DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Date of the Annual Meeting followed by the ordinary Parish Meeting has been set as Tuesday 7 May 2024. The meeting concluded at 7.30pm

Minutes signed on 7 May 2024 by K Sandick