

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

## **PRESENT**

B Crossen, P Dunn, G Crute, M Hannaford, E Miller, K Sandick, J Weighell, L Tostevin, Clerk J Walker, 2 Members of the public.

## **ABSENT**

P Walters

## **24/049 - WELCOME**

K Sandick welcomed Councillors to the meeting. Apologies for absence were accepted from P Walters (Unwell).

## **24/050 – DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no Declarations of Interest.

## **24/051 - MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING**

The minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on 4 June 2024 were confirmed as a correct record. NOTE: a request had been made by a parishioner that the last sentence of minute 24/040 be amended to read "Arrangements have been agreed for the watering of the flower tubs throughout the village", which was accepted by the members.

## **24/052 – ADMINISTRATION MATTERS**

As there had been no request for an election to fill the vacancy on the parish council, the parish council is permitted to co-opt a new member. Unfortunately, to date, there has been no interest. It was agreed that J Weighell would advertise the vacancy on Facebook.

## **24/053 – PACT REPORT**

The PCSO had confirmed that the meeting scheduled for 4 July at Hurworth Grange will be held, despite it being election day. The following meeting on Thursday 29 August is in the Neasham Reading Rooms. The Chair will attend the meeting and it was felt that we should encourage Neasham Parishioners to attend. The clerk to forward the PCSO poster to the Chair to produce a poster for John Weighell to post on Facebook.

## **24/054 – ROADS AND FOOTPATHS**

1. L Tostevin reported that there she was not aware of any developments on the question of the sampling of contaminated “orange” water in the ditch along Neasham Road.
2. L Tostevin informed the meeting that there had not been any further developments in respect of the retrospective planning application for vehicular access onto Neasham Road at Skipbridge.
3. There had been a road traffic accident on Teesway, outside the Fox and Hounds on Friday 21 June involving a car reversing out of the car park and one travelling from Low Dinsdale resulting in damage to two parish council flower tubs. The owner of the car claimed it was not her fault and refused to pay the cost of replacement. In view of the sum involved, the members agreed not to pursue the matter.

## **24/055 ENVIRONMENT AGENCY**

Following the meeting by the Chair and Vice Chair with the Agency's Catchment Manager, the Agency's operatives had been on site surveying the areas of the embankment left with bare soil which potentially could cause erosion and which was causing concern to them. It had been anticipated that they would be in contact with us and that this work would not be being carried out until the following year. The areas affected were where weedkiller had been sprayed together with overhanging vegetation from private housing. The Chair had been contacted by a parishioner who was concerned as to what was to happen. The Chair explained the problems with exposed soil and erosion, but the agency will discuss more fully.

## **24/056 – VILLAGE GREEN**

1. A vote of thanks was proposed to P & P Dunn for their hard work over the years in planting up of the flower tubs, which had brought so much pleasure to the village. P Dunn provided a report which showed at the completion of this years planting, that two tubs had been removed, a further one was broken and two wooden tubs replaced. It was also reported that the two volunteers who played an important role in the watering of theses tubs had no wish to continue after the current season had ended. It was agreed to consult with the villagers as to whether they wished to continue with the display in future years and how this could be achieved.
2. It was reported the M Harrison would have a further attempt to repair of the warped boarding to the raised bed. A possible solution to be considered was to replace the boarding with sleepers and screw the “Marmax” boarding to them, alternatively scaffolding boards in lieu of sleepers could be considered.

It was agreed to submit a firm proposal at the September meeting (or prior to then if agreed by the members).

3. Pretty Gardens are available to attend site for the maintenance work to Memorial garden, but this had been delayed by the work needed to the boarding. A volunteer would be advantageous in looking after the gardens. P Dunn reported that Mark Riddle was willing to advise on which plants would produce a good display requiring little maintenance and which would be purchased from C. Sanderson.
4. The repair works to Pumphouse stonework had been carried out satisfactorily and which included more work than initially envisaged. A volunteer from the village had offered to treat the roof timbers and the parish council agreed to provide the wood oil required.
5. The Neasham RR had held a successful summer event on the village green on 22 June 2024.
6. The Vice Chair stated that the Sockburn and Low Dinsdale notice boards were no longer fit for purpose and consideration should be given to replacing them with new boards similar to the one replaced at Dinsdale Park with brown aluminium frames, the Vice Chair will research alternatives.
7. The Remembrance Day service to be held in November and the Vice Chair felt that planning for this event should be undertaken as soon as possible, which he volunteered to coordinate. The Vice Chair had observed that the RBL were planning to include references to major battles in the last two years of WW2 and he thought it may be a good idea to include any references to war issues that were related to Neasham.

## 24/057- PLANNING

1. Applications received since last meeting:-  
24/00514/TF – Crown reduction to protected tree at 3 Riverbanks, Dinsdale Park, Middleton St George DL2 1UB. **(APPROVED)**.
2. Decisions posted since last meeting: -  
None.
3. A further communication had been received from Middleton SG Parish Council setting out their suggestions to the Darlington BC Rights of Way Officer on a proposed diversion of a footpath in a field off Roman Way. Neasham PC had understood understand that a planning application for a change of use of the field together with the erection of a small stable block and hay store has been submitted, but no record of this showed on the portal. (POST MEETING NOTE: a query was raised by the Clerk with the applicant, who reported that Planning had raised several queries which he was responding to). The Vice Chair gave a

resume of the issues which may affect any decisions, but it was agreed to defer further discussion until the application was submitted and reviewed.

## **24/058 – RISK MANAGEMENT**

1. Scheduled Inspections due in May/June:- Village Green (consolidated), General Inspection of Electrics. It was agreed that the event lighting and the power supply cable should be PAT tested
2. No defects were raised in June 2024 and one was closed.
3. The Risk management Report for the 1Q 2024/5 had been circulated for information.

## **24/059 – FINANCE**

1. Previously approved payments made in June:- A Dargue £250.00 (Repair Pumphouse Stonework), Clerk £552.96 (Salary), HMRC £138.00 (PAYE).
2. Change of mandate for authorised signatories to bank accounts is ongoing.
3. Finance Report for 1Q 24 as circulated for information.

## **24/060 – REACHING OUT AND COMMUNICATION**

1. The Vice Chair had received a copy of the NALC response to the Government's Community Energy Consultation in which their response to Q3 was largely in line with the draft response he had prepared and previously circulated and was ratified by the members.
2. The Christmas event had been very successful and the Reading Rooms were keen to repeat the event. L Tostevin reported that a new company had taken over from Banks but were continuing to offer grant but they would be for applications of £7,000 which would involve more preparatory work. L Tostevin agreed to confirm the date for applications. The Chair felt that communications between the parish council and Reading Rooms had improved considerably and that he was keen to continue this.

## **24/061 – WARD COUNCILLOR MATTERS**

1. L Tostevin reported that the construction of the 20mph zone near Hurworth School would cause considerable disruption. For the period from 12th to 30th August, the road would be fully closed in both directions and in the 3 weeks before that, there would be a single lane operation in place. Although the

school would be closed throughout this period, there would still be major disruption in the area.

2. L Tostevin reported that the Hopetown project in Darlington would be finished and officially opening in July. The Chair confirmed that the Hurworth band would be playing at the event.
3. Tostevin reported that the DHSS consultation period on the fluidisation of water in the area had been extended to the end of July and that they were keen to have received a response by that date.

## **24/062 – CORRESPONDENCE**

Various emails from NALC regarding Chief Executive's Bulletin (06/06 x2, 13/06), Events (18/06), Hardwick in Partnership (19/06), Minutes of CLCA Meeting 11/06. All listed for information only.

## **24/063 – OTHER VILLAGE MATTERS**

1. Further to the earlier discussion on the lack of interest in the vacant councillor position, it was queried as to whether anyone connected to the Reading Rooms would be interested. The Chair agreed to raise this with them.
2. M Hannaford requested that the parish council keep up the pressure on Highways to do something about road markings as many throughout the village were worn off.
3. G Crute reported that he was now on Facebook and would contact P Walters to enquire the best way forward in promoting parish issues.
4. The clerk was instructed to compare savings rates of other banks as a comparison of the current NS&I rates.

## **24/064 – DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Date of next ordinary parish meeting is Tuesday 3 September 2024. The meeting concluded at 7.35pm.

*Minutes signed on 3 September 2024 by K Sandick*