

Draft minutes of Neasham Parish Council meeting held on Tuesday 5 September 2023, 6:30PM, in Neasham Reading Room

PRESENT

J Grainger, G Crute, M Hannaford, K Sandick (Chair), J Weighell, L Tostevin, P Walters, Clerk J Walker

ABSENT

B Crossen, P Dunn, E Miller

23/067 - WELCOME

K Sandick welcomed Councillors to the meeting. Apologies for absence were accepted from P Dunn (Prior engagement), B Crossen (Holiday), E Miller (Working).

23/068 – DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest.

23/069 - MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on 4 July 2023 were confirmed as a correct record.

23/070– MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETING / PROGRESS REPORTS

There were no matters arising from the previous meeting.

23/071 – PACT REPORT

No notifications had been received about a meeting last month, but it is understood that one had been held at Middleton St. George.

23/072 – ROADS AND FOOTPATHS

1. Following a suggestion by a parishioner that “speed bumps” should be installed in a side street in Neasham, the clerk had written to Darlington BC to enquire what their criteria was when considering such an installation. A

response had been received and forwarded to the parishioner. The resident of 38 Teesway had also been informed that Highways would not carry out further repair to the sunken trench outside his house. Neasham PC cannot take the matter further and he should pursue the issue directly with Highways.

2. A complaint has been received from the resident of 17 Teesway about a pothole in the access road over the grass verge between the highway and service road. Although Highways are responsible for the main and service roads, they do not accept responsibility for the 5 hard-cored areas across the grass verge that is not part of the adopted area. This also the position of Neasham PC who can take the matter no further as they also do not own this parcel of land. The complainant is advised to check his deeds to see if that clarifies the position.
3. A complaint has been received from a resident regarding a grass verge in New Lane not being properly maintained by Darlington BC. L Weighell had spoken to the workforce on site who told him that the area had been missed off their work schedule which would be attended to. As mowing of the area is still not being carried out, J Weighell to contact the Environmental Services.
4. An email had been received from a resident complaining about the condition of Teesway and the affect that heavy lorries were having on it, particularly in view of the possible increase in traffic due to works at Dinsdale Golf Club. The Parish council share these concerns and it was resolved to carry out a survey of the major roads in the parish complete with photographic evidence to submit to the Borough Council in support of a prospective request to the Borough Council to state whether and when major renovation work is scheduled.

23/073 – ENVIRONMENT AGENCY MATTERS

1. J Weighell had established new contact details within Agency, which he had conveyed to the clerk.
2. Remedial work to the stile to footpath off Sockburn Lane. Although not owned by Neasham PC or the Environment Agency, a damaged section of the stile had been removed by Neasham PC as it was a dangerous. The landowner expressed a wish that it be reinstated as it was a clear demarcation of his boundary, however he would accept a reasonable alternative solution. It was reported that the Agency are writing to the Landowner advising him of the danger to the public.

23/074 – VILLAGE GREEN

1. J Weighell reported that Petty Gardens had weeded the Memorial Garden including laying 1 ton of bark chipping. Subsequently a further four bags were laid and the work is now complete.
2. Eden Construction have been instructed to carry out the outstanding works to the Memorial Garden including installation of a baffle to the lectern and repairs to raised bed retaining board.
3. Lowering of Village Green new noticeboard has been carried out, however the tops of the new posts still need reducing and the stumps of the old board legs remain and are a trip hazard and require cutting out. The Chair agreed to arrange their removal.
4. The Vice Chair reported that tree outside 29 Teesway had grown lately and now reached the telephone wires. The action taken to arrange emergency pruning was approved. The Vice-Chair reported that he would ask Miss Trees for advice as to a longer-lasting solution.

23/075- PLANNING

1. Applications received since last meeting:-

- 23/00679/FUL Demolition of existing single storey rear extension, erection of replacement single storey rear extension including various alterations to windows at 2 Neasham Springs Farm Cottages, Neasham Road, Hurworth Moor, Darlington, DL2 IQS. After a site visit showed no reason to object, - APPROVED.
- 23/00772/FUL New kitchen extension to rear, formation of roof terrace and associated works at 1 Neasham Springs Farm Cottages, Neasham Road, Hurworth Moor, Darlington, DL2 IQS. After a site visit showed no reason to object, - APPROVED.

2. Decisions received since last meeting: -

- 22/00875/FUL Dinsdale Park Golf Club – Councillors had been informed that the application had been refused at the Planning Applications Committee meeting on 1 July 2003 but that it had subsequently transpired that this was recorded as the Committee being “minded to refuse” the application. The subsequent Planning meeting on 9 August 2003 was advised about possible reasons for refusal. It was understood that at that meeting verbal proposals for scheme variations were made, but without supporting plans and specifications or advice on outcomes. Some Councillors had argued that the application should be further adjourned for proper presentation, consultation and consideration of these proposals. After further discussion, the Committee had voted by a majority to approve the application, subject to conditions. The Vice-chair said

that there appeared to have been some irregularities in the conduct of the matter, but advised that although there may be grounds for seeking judicial review, the expense of court proceedings would be prohibitive. Following discussion the Vice-Chair was asked to draft a complaint to the Borough Council relating to the reported matters.

- 22/00383/TF Neasham Abbey felling of 2No trees – a ballot had been circulated to all the members and the application was approved unanimously.
3. The Vice Chair and L Tostevin had attended the appeal against enforcement notice for the siting of 4No mobile caravans and associated works, at Skipbridge, Neasham Road, on 15/08/23. Although the Inspector had still to visit the site, it was revealed that Darlington BC had insufficient private sites available. It is anticipated that the appeal probably will be upheld when Secretary of State publishes his decision following the receipt of the inspector's report on his findings.
 4. The documents relating to Climate Change issues in relation to planning and also bio-diversity consultation re Hedgerow protection had been circulated as requested.
 5. As previously requested, the Clerk had arranged for Neasham PC be included on Durham Police's "Regional Economic Crime Co-ordination Centre" mailing list.

23/076 – RISK MANAGEMENT

1. There were no scheduled inspections due in July and August.
2. No new defect notices were raised during July and August. A retrospective defect notice was raised in respect of the damage to the Environment Agency footpath stile.
3. The Asset Management Overseer reported that the new arrangements for Schedule Inspections were working well with the Chair and B Crossen inspecting and reporting any defects back to J Weighell who then completed the documents to forward to the clerk. J Weighell also reported on an incident 7 weeks ago when a tractor had demolished a light standard on the corner of Dibdale Road, which had been reported to Highways. The lamp standard had been replaced but still no light has been installed, a retrospective defect notice was raised.

23/077 – FINANCE

1. Previously approved payments made in July/August:- J Weighell £60.11 (Manure etc), Pretty Gardens £20.00 (Weeding), Reading Rooms £100.00 (Room Hire), AC Media £9.60 (Domain), G Crute £35.66 (Expenses).
2. Three quotations have been received for the renewal of insurance as follows:- A J Gallagher £612.90 (3 year option £612.90/year), Zurich Municipal £537.70 (3 year option £507.74/year) and BHIB Councils Insurance £578.03 (3 year option £552.02/year). Several queries had been raised on the quotations submitted including Safeguarding and Reasonable Care. It was resolved that the 3 year option of the quotation submitted by Zurich be accepted and the clerk was instructed to place an order with them for the first year of cover at £507.74. It was also agreed to prepare brief notes relating to actions required in the event that Neasham PC'S activities involved consideration of Safeguarding or of certain types of actions which were regulated by the HSE.
3. L Tostevin reported that the Banks Renewables (Moor House Wind Farm Community Fund) was now available to Neasham for grants of up to £1k. The clerk was instructed to contact their trust fund manager with a view to submitting an application for a Christmas event aimed at growth in in community involvement and increase in numbers attending events.
4. Concerns had been raised with the Notice Board Company about the Village Green board, who then gave unqualified assurances that it was "fit for purpose" and the only problems being a result of vandalism.

23/078 – REACHING OUT AND COMMUNICATIONS

1. A posting had been made on Facebook asking for volunteers to water the flower tubs over the next 3 weeks while the regular volunteers were away. It was agreed not to display the regular volunteers names.
2. J Grainger had designed a poster suggesting that Neasham residents should join the Neasham Parish Facebook page which had been posted. The Vice Chair volunteered to prepare a poster for the Remembrance Day Service. Members were reminded to make it clear whether a Facebook posting was a formal or personal post.
3. The Vice Chair had attended the NALC/CLCA meeting on 24/07 and reported that it was mostly attended by councils from East Cleveland. There had been a representative from Sadberge PC at the previous meeting and that it may be useful to co-operate with him in the future.

23/079 – WARD COUNCILLOR MATTERS

L Tostevin reported that the residents of 31A Teesway had been refused permission for a driveway across the verge, however Highways had agreed to install yellow lines to front of her property to ease parking issues.

23/080 – CORRESPONDENCE

1. Various emails from NALC regarding Newsletter (19/07, 26/07, 08/08, 16/08, 23/08), Chief Executive's Bulletin (10/08, 24/08), Events (08/08, 17/08). For information only.
2. The following documents have also been circulated to the members:-
 - NALC Guide to the 80th Anniversary of the D-Day landing due to be held on 06/06/24.
 - LGA letter (17/08) on support and delivery of Remembrance services and parades.
 - Durham Police and Crime Commissioners Office (12/07) Report and Newsletter.
3. The Vice Chair had responded to an email from a student at Durham University who is researching Net Zero Strategy operated by parish councils upwards.
4. An email had been received requesting assistance in researching an ancestor. It was reported that the person whom had previously been worked with Neasham PC had agreed his details of a could be forwarded to her.

23/081 – OTHER VILLAGE MATTERS

1. The CLCA/NALC Annual General Meeting is to be held on Thursday 21/09/23 at Guisborough. The Vice Chair reported that the current secretary is retiring next month and received authority from the members to endorse the appointment of her current second in command to the post.
2. The Chair and Vice Chair are liaising on the arrangements for the Neasham PC Remembrance service in November, but to date had been unable to contact the ex military man residing in the village. In answer to a query by J Weighell as to which flag to fly on the day, it was confirmed that it was to be the Union Jack.
3. The clerk has updated the status of the defibrillator. G Conlin has agreed to record inspection dates of the flotation device on Liz Conlin's monthly report which the clerk will record separately.

4. An electronic copy of the documents prepared by the late M Townsend on the history of Neasham are now available to the public. It has been confirmed that there are no copyright issues.

23/082 – DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Date of next ordinary parish meeting is Tuesday 3 October 2023. The meeting concluded at 8.05pm.