

Minutes of Neasham Parish Council meeting held on Tuesday 6 June 2023, 6:30PM, in Neasham Reading Room

PRESENT

K Sandick, P Dunn, M Hannaford, J Weighell, L Tostevin, P Walters

ABSENT

B Crossen, G Crute, J Grainger, E Miller

23/035- WELCOME

K Sandick welcomed Councillors to the meeting. Apologies for absence were accepted from B Crossen, G Crute (Both holiday), J Grainger (Sick relative), E Miller (Working).

23/036 – DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest.

23/037 - MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the Annual and ordinary meetings held on 9 May 2023 were confirmed as a correct record.

23/038- MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETING / PROGRESS REPORTS

There were no matters arising.

23/039 – PACT REPORT

No meeting had been held in May, the next meeting would be held at Hurworth in June (date yet to be published).

23/040 – ROADS AND FOOTPATHS

L Tostevin reported that she had contacted Highways again, to request them to carry out further repairs to the sunken trench causing damage to 38 Teesway. However Highways were adamant that they would not carry any further repair to this trench, they had many trenches crossing roads and this particular trench was of insufficient depth to

warrant further repair. The owner had indicated to the Chair that he would take legal action to recover the cost of repairs to his property and it was suggested that he contact the Borough Solicitor for advice on this approach. It was agreed to close the defect as there was nothing further that could be done by the parish council. The repair to the layby on Teesway had been carried out and it was agreed to close the defect.

23/041 – ENVIRONMENT AGENCY MATTER

There were no matters to report on.

23/042 – VILLAGE GREEN

1. The Asset Management Overseer stated that he was concerned that the two new notice boards that had been purchased were still in his garage and had not been unpacked and checked. The Chair agreed to collect. A safety concern was also expressed on the “John Alderson Memorial” seat and it was agreed that Eden Landscapes should install two anchor bolts. (Post meeting note: The new Dinsdale Park notice board has been fixed and the memorial seat anchored down on 7 June).
2. Progress on the refurbishment works to the Kent Bridge area. A volunteer had done an excellent job on jet washing the area, however there were still low level areas and also some stonework that has a covering of mould/algae and required a chemical spray and power washing (tubs to be protected). It was agreed that the Chair could authorise Eden Landscapes to carry out this work and other associated works.
3. Work in the Memorial and the Millennium Gardens. It was reported that all weeding and planting had been carried out, Pretty Gardens had priced up for chippings, poppies thinned for future monitoring and Eden Landscapes instructed to construct a baffle to the lectern and minor repairs to the raised bed retaining board.
4. It was agreed that if the notice board at Low Dinsdale was found to need replacing it would be inappropriate to use an aluminium one. It was agreed that if required to ask M Blundell to quote for a board the same size as the current village board and utilising the existing door which is relatively new.
5. Bench seat at Low Dinsdale, which Darlington BC have confirmed owning, but whom have indicated to the Vice Chair their reluctance to repair or replace it, but would have no objection if Neasham PC carried out any necessary work to the seat arising from it's temporary removal for access for works to the noticeboard. Assessment required to establish if the work can be done without moving the seat, as we would have to leave it in a safe condition should temporary moving be required.

6. It was agreed that the Parish Council would not apply to the Tees Valley "Trees on Trees" project for an allocation of trees. This would still be available to individual parishioners.
7. The Clerk had issued a letter to the Reading Rooms consenting to their use of the village green to hold the Duck Derby on Saturday 24 June. Also a reminder that fires, stoves and other naked flames were not permitted.

23/043- PLANNING

1. Applications received since last meeting:-
None
2. Decisions received since last meeting: -
None
3. A letter had been circulated to the parishioners setting out possible implications to Neasham, should the planning application by Dinsdale Golf Club be successful. At the Parish Assembly requests had been made for assistance in setting out points of objection and also the use of social media, however Neasham PC consider their brief is to inform the public and not to assist formulation of individual objections.

23/044 – RISK MANAGEMENT

1. Scheduled inspections carried out in May/June:- Planters, Duck Derby pre-use electrical inspection (to carried out prior to the event).
2. No new Defect Notices were raised in the month, two Notices that had previously been forwarded to Highways for action were agreed to be closed.

23/045 – FINANCE

1. Previously approved payments made in May:- The Coffee Pot £10.00 (Assembly coffee, tea and milk), AC Media £367.00 (Accessibility Check and Hosting Charge), Neasham Nurseries £352.92 (Flowers and Compost).
2. A cheque of £953.95 to Noticeboard Co was released as the product had been delivered.
3. The balance of the current and savings accounts totals £23,736.37 (after deduction of one unsubmitted cheque). This includes ring fenced funds totalling £9,540 and the current precept payment for 2023/4 expenditure. A query was raised on the interest rates for the NS&I savings account. M Hannaford agreed to check the rates on the River Trust's savings account for comparison.

23/046 – REACHING OUT AND COMMUNICATIONS

1. Although attendance at the Assembly had been disappointing, it was suggested that perhaps this indicated that there were few grounds for complaint from many of the parishioners. There had been a minor criticism of the layout of the photographic “news sheet” in that it did not immediately make an impact that this was also an invitation to attend the Assembly on 23 May 2023. The Vice Chair had written asking for a debriefing on the distribution of the flyers as he felt there may have been some gaps. The members felt this was unlikely with the possible exception of Neasham Covert.
2. The Vice Chair had indicated to the Clerk that he would be making specific proposals on “reaching out” at the July meeting. However no members took up his suggestion to join him on the NALC webinar on “Engaging on with Local Communities through Digital Engagement”

23/047 – WARD COUNCILLOR MATTERS

1. L Tostevin reported that Labour party were the largest party on the council and had formed coalition with the Liberal Democrats, but would be following the labour manifesto. There was a new mayor Jan Cossins.
2. P Walters reported that Steve Harker (Leader of the Council) was trying to arrange a meeting with Ben Houchen in an attempt to stop the axing of the Hurworth No 12 bus service by Arriva. (Post meeting note: In view of the urgency because of the predicted axing of this service of 9 July, P Walter has also circulated on Facebook a post by Cllr J Dulston setting out the steps he is also taking to prevent this. Both are encouraging parishioners to contact them with their concerns)

23/048 – CORRESPONDENCE

Emails from NALC regarding Newsletter (03/05, 10/05, 17/05, 24/05 and 31/05), Chief Executive Bulletin (05/05), Events (23/05 and 01/06). There were no matters raised by members.

23/049 – OTHER VILLAGE MATTERS

1. An email had been received from a parishioner requesting the installation of speed bumps in New Lane. Unfortunately it was received on the day of the Assembly and so included on the June agenda. Following the discussion it was agreed to contact Darlington BC Highways to seek advice as to the specific criteria to be applied when they consider whether “speed bumps” are appropriate. This question had been raised with them previously. The other

matters raised in the email were not really a Parish Council matter. Clerk to respond to the parishioner's email.

2. It was agreed that the Chair suggests to the parishioner that as the information compiled by the late M Townsend (which she currently holds) is in electronic format, it can therefore be passed to Clerk for holding should anyone request access to it.
3. Both sets of defibrillator pads (active and standby) have been replaced within the last few months which have a "shelf life" of two years. There is a cost implication of £40/year for this backup facility and it was agreed that this standby facility should continue, rather than stand down the defibrillator following use. Special thanks to Liz Conlin who carries out the regular maintenance and investigates any alarms (no actual emergencies to date).

23/050 – DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Date of next ordinary parish meeting is Tuesday 4 July 2023. The meeting concluded at 7.30 pm.

Minutes signed on 4 July 2023 by K Sandick