

# NEASHAM PARISH COUNCIL

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## MINUTES

Minutes of ordinary meeting held 2 November 2020 at 6.30pm (held remotely via Zoom).

**Present:** Councillors G Conlin, G Crute, D Dodwell, P Dunn, J Grainger, E Miller, K Sandick, J Weighell (Chair),  
Ward Councillors C Chou, L Tostevin, J Walker (Clerk).

**Apologies:** None – all present

**20/091** J Weighell welcomed Councillors to the meeting and it was agreed that the meeting could be recorded.

### **20/092 Declarations of interest.**

A declaration of interest in agenda items was made by G Crute (Website) & G Conlin (18 New Lane)

### **20/093 Minutes of the last meetings.**

It was confirmed that the minutes of the Neasham PC meeting held on 5 October 2020 are a correct record.

### **20/094 Matters Arising from Previous Meeting / Progress Reports.**

There were no matters arising.

### **20/095 PACT Report.**

No meeting had been held. The Chair reported no incidents in Neasham, but a Land Rover and quad bike had been stolen in Girsby.

### **20/096 Roads and footpaths.**

- At the last meeting four defects in respect of road repairs were outstanding, there is currently no progress by Darlington BC in effecting these repairs. Review position at next meeting, if no progress consider sending reminders.
- Despite L Tostevin having raised with S Petch the issue of confusing signs around the New Lane Development site there was still no action. The validity of the notice displayed was queried and L Tostevin agreed to send another email and the position would be reviewed at the December meeting.

### **20/097 Environment Agency Matters.**

- Following the meeting on site between Neasham PC and Environment Agency who confirmed they would carry out fencing works which have now been carried out and a fence erected for the full length from the snake path to Kent Beck mouth. G Crute commented that whilst it was a satisfactory result it had taken almost four years to achieve this. It was also confirmed that the EA had provided the risk assessment for that area to G Crute.
- The Chair confirmed that an EA operative had been on site and the moles in the embankment eradicated.

### **20/098 Village Green.**

- It was agreed remove the item of the dedication of the flagpole from the future agendas and that would be considered as part of the proposal to form a communal seating area adjacent the Millennium Garden.
- Because of Covid restrictions, a proposal by D Dodwell that there would be no official memorial service and that he should informally lay a wreath on behalf of the parish was agreed. Members of the public would be welcome to lay their own personal tribute at any time thereafter and this should be posted on the Facebook page. It was also agreed that the Union flag should be flown for the duration of the memorial week.
- The Chair updated the members on the proposal to provide a communal paved area of approximately 35m<sup>2</sup> at the Millennium Garden. He had obtained an order of cost of £2,000 from a local builder which confirmed the Neasham PC budget cost of £2,500 was realistic (allowing for minor extras) and it was agreed to consider this as part of the precept proposals.
- G Crute reported that because of adverse weather and other commitments he had not been able to install the identification numbers to the village seats, but it would be carried out shortly.
- G Crute reported that he received an email from Miss Trees confirming their meeting on site next Tuesday (10 November) to carry out the maintenance work to the trees.

### **20/099 Planning.**

- Applications received since the last meeting – **None**.
- Decision notices received since last meeting – **None**.
- It was confirmed that a letter from Neasham PC had been sent to Darlington BC, supporting the Hurworth PC objection to the traveller development at the junction of Neasham and Burma Roads.
- G Conlin had sent a letter to DBC expressing concern over a possible breach of planning regulations at 18 New Lane querying whether planning permission had been granted for the new entrance gates and a new obscure glazed window in the gable (replaced with clear). To date he had not any response

except receipt of his letter). L Tostevin agreed to take up the matter with D Coates (DBC Planning). A proposal by G Crute that the letter sent by G Conlin should be formally endorsed as being on behalf of NPC, was agreed.

- The Chair reported that there had been unauthorised development by travellers in the field opposite EuroJag with a new entrance from Neasham Road, gates, fencing and hardstandings and that he had reported this to M Conyard (DBC Compliance) who eventually responded stating they were taking legal advice. L Tostevin reported similarly to D Coates who stated that they were taking out an injunction.

#### **20/100 Risk Management.**

- Scheduled inspections due in October (Flower tubs and Millennium Garden) had been carried out. P Dunn & J Weighell agreed to clarify with J Alderson the responsibility for inspections to the Millennium Gardens.
- There were no defect notices raised in October, 4 Defects remain open (all roadworks forwarded to DBC).

#### **20/101 Finance.**

- The Clerk that the balance reported for the end of September had been overstated by £107.45 due to a cheque issued in May having gone missing.
- Approved payments made in October: Zoom (via J Walker) £14.39. Anticipated November payments: Zoom £14.39, Wreath £50.00, Replacement cheque to NALC £107.45.
- New website. The Clerk reported that there had been some confusion regarding approvals and authority to proceed between himself and AC Media, which has been resolved and Adam is proceeding.
- As previously approved to proceed with a communal seating area the issue of funding was raised. It was suggested that parishioners would not welcome a large increase arising from inclusion of the full £2500 in the precept. A proposal, that as the emergency grass cutting fund of £2060 would be unlikely to be drawn on and therefore that fund could be closed and £1000 used to supplement the seating area cost and the remaining £1060 into the general fund, was agreed.
- A draft budget for the year 2020/21 was presented showing a precept of £9415 which would be reduced, by the transfer of £1000 from the reserves, to £8415. G Crute queried two items included in the draft and the clerk agreed to provide historical information. Members are reminded that the precept must be agreed by December. A budget of £125 was agreed to purchase seeds for a wild flower area near the "snake path",
- In view of D Dodwell's potential departure and the current banking difficulties over Covid it was felt that the third signatory on the bank accounts should be amended. It was agreed that J Grainger should replace D Dodwell.

#### **20/102 Ward Councillor Matters.**

- L Tostevin reported that the Small Business Grants would still be available.
- C Chou reported that Darlington Memorial Hospital are planning to carry on normal business in addition to the Covid patients, thankfully at the moment there is not a steep rise in cases. He would be based at Woodlands to create space at Darlington Memorial Hospital.

#### **20/103 Correspondence.**

- All as listed in the agenda with no issues raised by the members.
- Email 13/10/20 from P Allan stating that Lee Tate has taken over as Chair of Darlington Association of Parish Councils and his clerk would join him.
- The clerk advised that he had circulated an email 02/11/20 outlining the updated Covid Guidance Notes.

#### **20/104 Other Village Matters.**

- In view of D Dodwell's proposed relocation, in order to ensure continuity, it was proposed that an acting vice chair should be agreed to take over when D Dodwell move on. K Sandick was unanimously approved to take over the post then.
- Broadband. BT are continuing with the installation works. However the Chair reported that a parishioner had been given an 0800 number to Government department which guarantees high speed broadband within a month. It was agreed to review the position at the next meeting.
- The flower tubs had now been cleared, many thanks to P and P Dunn, G & L Conlin for all their hard work in producing a wonderful display. P Dunn enquired as the availability for winter pansies, however Neasham Nurseries provided them at no cost and it was agreed that P Dunn should send a letter of thanks. P Dunn is concerned over the second Laurel at the bridge and would monitor it. It was agreed to add the new planters in that area to the Inspection Schedule.
- E Miller reported on the difficulties he had experienced in applying for planning permission at the farm and also despite his recent health issues, he is still able to take an active role with Neasham PC, much to the members relief.
- G Conlin stated he was inspecting the flotation devise weekly, but members felt that 2 to 3 weeks was sufficient.

- D Dodwell reported that the improvement works had started at the golf club.

**20/105 Date of next meeting.**

- Monday 7 December 2020 at **6.30pm.** The meeting concluded at 7.30pm

**Post Meeting:** The words “the new entrance gates and a” were deleted from the fourth paragraph of item 20/099 at the meeting held 7 December, prior to confirmation as a true record.

CONFIRMED (AS AMENDED AT MEETING 7 DECEMBER 2020) AS A CORRECT RECORD AND APPROVED BY COUNCIL

Signed .....(Chair) Date .....07/12.2020