

NEASHAM PARISH COUNCIL

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Minutes of **Neasham Parish Council meeting** held September 2 2019 at 6.30pm in Neasham Reading Room.

Present: Councillors G Conlin, G Crute, D Dodwell, J Grainger, K Sandick, J Weighell (Chair), L Tostevin (Ward), J Walker (Clerk).

Apologies: Apologies from E Miller (working), C Chou (working) and P Dunn (holiday) were accepted.

19/062 J Weighell welcomed Councillors to the meeting.

19/063 Declarations of interest.

There were no declarations of interest.

19/064 Minutes of the last meetings.

It was confirmed that the minutes of the meeting held on the July 1 2019 are a correct record.

19/065 Matters Arising from Previous Meeting / Progress Reports.

- **19/006 Re- Routing of No 12 Bus.** G Crute reported that he had written to Darlington BC (copy to Arriva) setting out Neasham PC's interest in seeking improvements to the current route that we feel would benefit all local parishes. No replies had been received, leaving us uncertain as to the current position and any potential reviews. L Tostevin stated that it was rumoured that the drivers were saying that it would revert to the old route, but agreed to chase G Hutchinson (Darlington BC) for a response to our letter. Although there was some opposition, it was agreed to proceed with the survey of parishioners based on the draft Questionnaire previously presented by G Crute with minor amendments. G Crute stated that second class mail was the most cost effective method of returning questionnaires and a budget of £150 for postage and stationary was approved. It was subsequently agreed to hand deliver the questionnaires and recipients would be asked to participate at that time, Stamped and Addressed envelopes for the return would only be handed out if on-site completion was not possible (returns within 7 days). G Crute agreed to simplify the Neasham PC proposal. L Tostevin is planning a meeting with Arriva and requested a representative of both Neasham and Hurworth PCs.

19/066 PACT Report.

Although there had been no meeting in August, the Chair reported that there had been several incidents of lamping. It was also noted that there had been no rural watch meeting recently.

19/067 Environment Agency Matters.

- G Cutter (Environment Agency) deferred carrying out the trimming back the vegetation and hedges overhanging the dry side of the Tees floodbank until after September 1, following a parishioner's complaint.
- G Crute reported that there had been slight confusion in correspondence over the Kent Bridge which was subsequently resolved, also the point of contact at the EA was now G Cutter and a suggestion that a 6 monthly meeting should be held on site with him to discuss any issues received approval.

19/068 Roads and footpaths.

- Kent Bridge parking sign. Because the Environment Agency had located one of their signs incorrectly, Neasham PC had to find alternative solution, the previously approved planter, sign and plants had now been positioned.
- Although the Clerk had not received any formal letters of complaint from parishioners, K Sandick reported that there had been several verbal complaints regarding HGV (chicken) lorries thundering through the village throughout the night together with daytime operations, additionally there were other lorries making deliveries of biomass fuel. This usage was causing residents on the route severe disruption from noise and vibration throughout the day and night. Additionally this is a popular route for cyclists and there are concerns that a serious accident could occur. It was agreed to check planning records to establish whether there were any conditions attached to the planning application for the premises or any environmental issues that were not being complied with. It was agreed that the Chair should have a direct meeting with the farmer and report back to the Neasham PC next month before considering any further steps should be taken.
- Sockburn Lane had been closed for 2 days for road repairs, however inspection reveals that repair works were not satisfactory and had been limited to the lower section of the road and many deep potholes remain, particularly on the higher section. L Tostevin agreed to follow up with Highways.
- Cars parking on footpath adjacent 30 Teesway. The Darlington BC Enforcement Team had visited the site as requested and agreed that if a 1m wide strip was left, then it would be acceptable. Unfortunately it

is part of a public highway and Neasham PC cannot place planters there to deter parking. It was agreed for the Chair to contact Paul Ibbotson (DBC) to see if they would be prepared to install steel posts in the path.

19/069 Village Green.

- J Alderson is no longer able to maintain the Leylandii hedge around the pump house and Neasham PC should formally take responsibility for it's maintenance. Hedges to the adjacent houses should continue to be the responsibility of the owners. An order for maintenance work this year has been issued and it was agreed to obtain a quote from MissTrees for future maintenance of these hedges at a manageable height. Clerk to clarify with the insurers that the policy covers damage to houses caused by the trees.
- Watering of planters. P Dunn had been moving water around in plastic containers in the back of the car and one had split. It was agreed to purchase a water trolley. G Conlin had covered the watering for P Dunn whilst he was on holiday and volunteered to take over the responsibility for those tubs not already maintained by other volunteers. J Grainger agreed to provide G Conlin with a Hi-Viz jacket for this work.
- The vandalised goal post had been repaired by Martin Harrison and it was agreed that the Chair could instruct Martin for any minor works in the future.

19/070 Planning.

- Applications received since last meeting:-
19/00715/TF Treesworks Old Courthouse Newbus Grange – **not in Neasham Parish, returned to DBC.**
19/00684/FUL Primrose Cottage Cold Comfort Farm Change of Use **NO COMMENT.**
- Decisions received since last meeting:-
19/00464/FUL 10 Neasham Covert – detached garage **APPROVED.**

19/071 Risk Management.

- At August 31 all Scheduled Inspections uptodate. Due in September are trees and village green.
- The two outstanding defects (veg box and goalpost) had been rectified.
- Flood Alert Monitoring Procedures. G Crute reported that Environment Agency actions did not match what was stated on their sign and consequentially our procedures were not compatible. A proposal by G Crute that our previously agreed procedures should be withdrawn allowing him to prepare a proper risk assessment, was accepted, enabling us to demonstrate that we have taken reasonable steps to mitigate the risks.

19/072 Finance.

- It was confirmed that the following payments had been made since the last meeting:- Westwood Timber £43.68, Screwfix £114.99, Signs Express £33.92, Wilkinsons £35.31, J Weighell £21.85, Eden Landscapes £62.50. Payment to CAME & Co of £337.27 for renewal of insurance was approved.
- The quarterly Finance Report was issued showing a projected general reserve of £1616. It was agreed to transfer this year's ring fenced funds (£1235) to the savings account. The clerk had applied to HMRC to reclaim £939.32 value added tax expended this year.
- The clerk confirmed that the Variation to his Conditions of Employment had been issued.
- Three quotes received for tree maintenance, the lowest was Miss Trees £520 - order to be placed.
- Review of the Financial Regulations after update by NALC, members to approve before issue.

19/073 Ward Councillor Matters.

Broadband. L Tostevin reported that she understood from the supplier that they will be making a decision which areas within the parish are covered by the existing agreement in the next 2 weeks.

19/074 Correspondence.

- Following an application by local charity for a donation, it was agreed not to alter the existing policy of not making a donation to any cause, because of difficulties differentiating between the various merits.
- NALC have issued New Councillors Guide, the Clerk agreed to try and obtain a hard copy for a member.
- S Petch (Darlington BC Rights of Way Officer) has asked local councils each to nominate a designated person to work with him in protecting and improving Rights of Way. K Sandick appointed for Neasham.

19/075 Other Village Matters.

- The Clerk was instructed to write to SWARCO again regarding the defective component in one sign.
- G Conlin expressed concern at the overgrown hedgerows in Neasham Road which he considered dangerous.

19/076 Date of next meeting.

Monday October 7 2019 at 6.30pm. The meeting concluded at 8.05pm

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