



Birtley Parish Council

Minutes of the Meeting of Birtley Parish Council held in the Supper Room of Birtley Village Hall starting at 7.30 pm. on 6th March 2012.

Present Cllrs EN Coulson (Chairman), DRB Burn, J Robson, Mrs SW Crone and WG White. Also Clerk Robert Macfarlane and Unitary Cllr E Heslop

Apologies Cllr Ms A Lowes and PC. I Robertson

Declaration of Interest

Cllr DRB Burn all matters relating to the Village Hall, and Planning Application 11/03305/FUL . Cllr WG White. Planning Application 12/00379/CLPROP.

Cllr E Heslop all matters relating to planning. The named councillors took no part in the discussion or decisions made on the items noted above.

Minutes

Minutes of the meeting held on 6th December 2011 were agreed and signed by the Chairman.

Matters Arising

➤ **Play Area** The park bench has been acquired and will soon be installed in the play area. The Chairman will seek out estimates for the second phase development of the play area, the artificial surfacing. There are a number of holes in the park wall – the Chairman will find a suitable workman to do the necessary work.

➤ **Road Works and Consultation** It seems that the contractors and service operators appear to be taking the lead role when it comes to road closures and road works and the associated consultation. The Council believes that the County Council should be more prominent and be the lead agency. The many closures at present have overall gone quite smoothly but the estimates of the time for closure can be quite inaccurate. Cllr Heslop was asked if the NCC could provide more up-to-date information on road closures. The Clerk added that the notices provided by Carolyn O'Brien TTRO Officer (Temporary Traffic Regulation Orders) as part of the Strategic Transport Local Services, have been very helpful.

➤ **Drainage Issues** M Banks (NCC Highways) has visited the village and cleared out one drain. In the new year others will be inspected.

Correspondence

All councillors were circulated with a full list of correspondence.

Thank You Letters The Council has received letters of thanks from: Tynedale Hospice – Light up a Life, CAB, Tynedale Sports Council, GNAA and Age UK.

Grant Aid Requests have been received from Age UK, Tynedale Hospice and CAN.

Circulated amongst councillors:

Joint NCC/PC Meetings 13th March at Ponteland, Hexham Courant Tynedale Visitor, Local services & Council Assets, NALC Meeting 13th December, MTCT Wind-up., NCC Recycling Waste, BDO Audit Briefing, CPRE Guide to Planning, Housing Developer Funds, NCC Maintenance and Provision of Litter Bins/Bus Shelters, and NCC Handyman Service, ISOS re vacancy at Hawkhope Hill.

- **Private Water Regulations Act 2009** There is some concern that NCC has announced that it intends uninvited, to enter private property, sample the water, examine the water supply equipment and then charge a sum in the region of £500. The Clerk and Cllr Heslop will follow this up.
- **Clerk's Training** The Clerk has attended a training course on Business and Accounts Training and PAYE Training. The Clerk has also been invited to attend Public Access Training Workshops 12th and 14th March in Queen's Hall Hexham.

Roads

Some of the street lights are not working (case reference number is 101001422462). Clerk to report faulty lights 5BK opposite Manor House and at the road end opposite Woodbine Cottage.

Footpaths No issues

Planning

Planning Applications

11/0300/FUL Construction of one agricultural workers dwelling Buteland House Bellingham NE48 2EX Birtley PC has no objections.

12/00123/CLPROP made to NCC Certificate of Lawful Use for Proposed Solar Panels Howletts Law NE48 2HL BPC has no objections

12/00379/CLPROP made to NCC. Certificate of Lawfulness for construction of single storey side and rear extension and replacement of existing side extension. The Cottage Birtley NE48 3HL BPC has no objections

20101060 made to NCC Construction of single storey sun room to rear. The Copse Buteland Heights Bellingham NE48 2EB BPC has no objections

11/03305/FUL made to NCC Proposed first floor extension above family room. Whiteside Farm Birtley NE48 3JH NCC permission granted 3rd February.

Queen's Diamond Jubilee

The Queen's Diamond Jubilee Beacon Display takes place first week in June 2012. It was RESOLVED to give every school child a commemorative mug. Clerk will look at prices and get some samples. Clerk to design a pro forma to be circulated in the parish inviting residents to a meeting in the Village Hall (20th March at 8pm) to discuss possible activities and events.

Reports

Village Hall Hazel Pittick is the Treasurer; the new caretaker, Judith Ridley started in February. The biennial "Garden Walk About" will take place on 1st July 2012.

Northumberland County Council Cllr Heslop described the difficult decisions that the County Council has had to make in deciding the 2012/13 budget which has been subject to detailed consideration by the Strategic Management Team, the Executive and the Risk Appraisal Panel. The Northumberland County Council and Police elements of the Council Tax have not increased from last year. However, some of the parish charges have gone up (this was not subject to the freeze). He alluded to the acceptance of non recurrent Government funding to freeze Council Tax for a second consecutive year which has the impact of suppressing the recurrent baseline funding of the Council. The requirement for a Council Tax referendum for Council Tax increases beyond a level specified by the Secretary of State (3.5% in respect of 2012/13) means that this income is effectively lost and cannot be recovered in future years. The requirement to achieve savings of c £51m over the next three years on top of the c £101m already achieved since the new Council was formed on 1 April 2009. It is inevitable that future cost reduction measures will have a more significant impact upon the services provided by the Council given past performance in this area.

Further work will be carried out on Wark Bridge and it is expected to close during January. Scaffolding will be in place from October.

Cllr Heslop reported on highways issues and the winding up of the Mid Tyne Community trust (included elsewhere in these minutes). The Chairman thanked Cllr Heslop for the very generous donation from MTCT and pledged that it would be used in the spirit of the Trust.

Risk Management and Financial Procedures & Regulations

These documents were reviewed and approved by the Council.

Financial Matters

Bank Statements 1st March 2012: Treasurer's Account £737.20, BMM £4336.87

Income To date: vat £70.71, PCC £100 and two half precepts £1250, MTCT £1036.60

Approved Payments The following were agreed: Clerk's salary £200, Clerk's expenses £36.80 (£34.47 plus £2.33 vat), Hire of Hall £10 (March), The Northumberland Estates £1 field rent, Lawn Mower Insurance £220.48, OneandOne £25.16 (£4.19 vat), Play Equipment Insurance £108.86 (Grant to Village Hall), CAN £15 Total £617.30

Next Meeting

Tuesday 15th May 2012 at 8pm in the Supper Room of Birtley Parish Hall

There being no other business the meeting was closed at 9.15 pm.

Signed Chairman.....

Date.....15th May 2012.....

**Chairman: Mr EN Coulson, Vice Chair: Mr DRB Burn,
Councillors Mr J Robson, Mrs SW Crone, Mr WG White and Miss A Lowes**