



*The Council of the
Parish of Esh*

Minutes of the Ordinary meeting of the council

Held on Wednesday 11th December 2024 at the Miners Institute, Langley Park

Meeting commenced at 6 p.m.

Item 1 Record of Attendance:

Cllr Ollie Moat (Chair), Cllr A. Wardman (Vice Chair), Cllr Edwin Simpson, Cllr Kathryn Thompson, Cllr Pat Short, Cllr Jackie Clark, Cllr Andy Walker. Cllr J. Duddy, Cllr C. Greenham-Denny, Cllr M. Quinn, County Cllr B. Coult

There were 2 members of the public present.

Item 2 Apologies for absence:

Cllr J. Crumbie.

Item 3 Declarations of Interest:

Cllr Moat item 8

Resolved: councillor items of interest noted

Item 4 Minutes of previous Ordinary meeting on 13th November 2024:

The minutes from the ordinary meeting held on November 13th had been circulated to councillors via email, prior to this meeting. It was proposed by Cllr Wardman that it be noted that the minutes are a true and accurate representation, this was seconded by Cllr Simpson.

Resolved: It be noted that the draft minutes are a true and accurate representation of the meeting on November 13th 2024.

Item 5 Opportunity for members of the public to raise matters of interest:

There were two members of the public present, one local resident and a member of Langley Park Banner campaign.

The representative from Langley Park Banner campaign introduced himself and gave a brief outline of the aims and goals of the banner campaign. They are hoping to raise awareness and for local

residents to take pride in having a banner that represents the mining heritage of the area and for that banner to represent Langley Park in Durham Miners' Gala, a sight that has not been seen for over twenty years. An estimate to create a new banner is between £10,000 – 15,000 which includes the design, materials and labour. Once the banner is created the banner will have to be stored and insured, which will incur costs. The banner campaign group request that an exhibition take part next year to celebrate the mining heritage of the area and also coincides with the closure of the pit in Langley Park. It is hoped that the exhibition will take part in the spring.

The banner campaign group are in the process of registering as a charity, they were advised that once this happens, Esh Parish Council would be able to accept an application for a grant to help with funding.

The clerk had received emails from local residents regarding issues, firstly an email requesting that the railings of the Miner's Institute be used to advertise a slimming group at four promotional times of year. Cllr Moat proposed that this be granted for a period of two weeks each promotional time. Cllr Simpson seconded the proposal.

Secondly, an email from a resident that lives near to The Old Rec, they have said that the ground is very muddy and is a slip hazard, they have fallen over and asked if a path could be made to rectify this. Cllr Moat proposed that the matter be investigated further and prices from contractors sought for the installation of a path. Cllr Simpson seconded the proposal.

Resolved: in relation to Langley Park Banner Campaign, the clerk will liaise for a suitable time for the exhibition and email a grant application to the organisers of the banner campaign.

Clerk to email the resident that runs slimming group to let her know the outcome of using the railings at The Miner's Institute for advertising.

The last enquiry, the clerk is to seek quotes for the installation of the paths and to let the resident know of the progress.

Item 6 County Councillors report:

County Councillor Coult presented her report which highlighted county wide issues such as grants for welcome spaces, warnings for being aware of scam emails and texts messages over the festive period and activities taking place over the festive period. The report also mentioned information regarding matters arising from a multi-agency meeting in November which highlighted concerns with drugs and residents are encouraged to report incidents of anti-social behaviour through appropriate channels. Locally there has been planting of daffodil bulbs on Clifford Street and following recent walkabouts, a number of problems with fly tipping have been noticed. Funding has been allocated to various groups around the parish and several projects have come to fruition because of funding allocated by Cllr Coult.

Cllr Moat thanked County Cllr Coult for her comprehensive report.

Resolved: to accept County Councillor Coult's report.

Item 7 Clerks' report:

The clerks report included updates on FOI requests that had been responded to and the outcome of those response. There was also news of a new FOI request regarding an ongoing issue with access to the Miner's Institute. Council were reminded of the past history of said person, to which council requested to be updated as information becomes available to the clerk.

A progress report on purchases for Christmas activities was given and council were updated on planned events

The clerk also included in the report timetables for Decembers use of The Miner's Institute to inform councillors of timings of opening and closing when required. Cllr Simpson thanked the clerk for the report.

Resolved: To accept clerks report

Item 8 Chairpersons Allowance:

The annual payment to the chair of £300 was discussed by the council. Cllr Simpson proposed that the payment be made to Cllr Moat to be spent however she chooses. Cllr Thompson seconded this, a vote was taken by the councillors, which was unanimous that chairperson Cllr Moat receive the allowance.

Resolved To pay the allowance to Cllr Moat.

Item 9 Money Claim Update;

There is an ongoing money claim against a contractor who asked for a part payment for allocated work, the contract was not fulfilled on their part, therefore Esh Parish Council are seeking monies owed through the court process. Councillors were updated on the fact that the defendant had had the necessary time to respond and that the claim had been escalated to include bailiffs. The clerk has made several attempts to ring HM Civil Claims and has been kept on hold for over an hour each time, therefore not a great deal to update council on. Cllr Moat suggested that the clerk keep a contact log for records.

Resolved: Clerk to create and keep a contact log for reference.

Item 10 Christmas Events:

The clerk gave an update of Christmas events, all food had been ordered for the Christmas afternoon tea, which is due to take place on Friday 13th December, all tickets have been allocated and there is a reserve list should tickets be handed back to the clerk. A request was made by the clerk for councillors to help assemble the tea stands in preparation for the event. Prizes have been sought to play bingo. The Santa sleigh was discussed which will take part on Saturday 21st December throughout Langley Park and the rest of the parish on the 22nd December. It is with special thanks to RER Estate Maintenance that the Santa runs is going ahead with their generous donation of the sleigh and vehicle to pull the sleigh. There will be collection buckets on both nights which will be donated to DH7. Councillors volunteering to help on the nights of the Santa run are Cllr's Moat, Quinn, Thompson and Clark, also the clerk will assist on both nights.

Esh Parish Council would also like to thank Olivers Tree Services for their part in erecting Christmas trees in Quebec and Esh Village.

Resolved: Preparations are in full swing for the Christmas events, selection boxes and gifts to distribute on Santa runs have been sought. Food for the afternoon tea is ordered and volunteers to staff all events have been sought.

Item 11 Cleaners and clerk's review:

Cllr Moat highlighted that bi-annual reviews of the cleaner and clerk are impending. Cllr Quinn and Cllr Moat are the HR representatives for Esh Parish Council and both are to liaise on a suitable time to hold the reviews.

Resolved: Cllr's Quinn and Moat to liaise about suitable time to hold reviews.

Item 12 Grant Application:

An application has been received from a resident requesting reimbursement of costs incurred for signage to a residential area in the village. The clerk has sought advice from CDALC regarding this. They have advised that because the purchase has already been made then council cannot reimburse this, also grants allocated should be for the benefit of the community as a whole, therefore, the application has to be denied on the grounds that it is not benefiting the whole community.

Resolved: Clerk to contact the resident to convey the news to them

Item 13: Payments to be made and bank reconciliation

The clerk distributed information on payments made, petty cash income / balance and bank balances for councillors to take note.

Resolved: Accounts are correct and that payments are authorised by the Council.

Item 14. Date of next ordinary meeting:

The date of the next ordinary meeting for Esh Parish Council is Wednesday 8th January 2025.