



*The Council of the
Parish of Esh*

Draft Minutes of the Ordinary meeting of the council

Held on Wednesday 14th February 2024 at the Miners Institute, Langley Park

Meeting commenced at 6 p.m.

Item 1 Record of Attendance:

Cllr Ollie Moat (Vice Chair), Cllr Allison Wardman, Cllr Kathryn Thompson, Cllr Jillian Crumbie, Cllr Edwin Simpson, Cllr Pat Short, Cllr Carole Greenham-Denny, Cllr Louise Dudden, Cllr Mike Quinn

County Councillor Bev Coult was present. There were no members of the public present.

Item 2 Apologies for absence:

Cllr John Duddy, Cllr George Hawxwell,

Item 3 Declarations of interest:

Cllr Jillian Crumbie – items 9.

May it be noted that Esh Parish Council have received resignations from Councillors Hughes, Bushell and Lardner. There has also been a resignation from the Chair of the parish Council. Cllr Wardman proposed that Vice Chair, Cllr Moat become Acting Chair, this was seconded by Cllr Dudden, a vote was taken and returned a unanimous decision.

Resolved; Cllr Moat become Acting Chair until elections are taken.

Item 4 Minutes of Previous Meetings:

Minutes of the ordinary meeting held on 8th November 2023

Accepted as a correct record. Proposed by Cllr Edwin Simpson and seconded by Cllr Pat Short

Resolved: to accept Minutes of the meeting on 10th January 2024 as a correct record.

Item 5 : Opportunity for Public to raise matters of interest:

There were no members of the public present.

Item 6 County Councillors Report:

County Councillor Bev Coult presented her report to councillors on local issues. Councillor Coult stated that there would be possible disruption to the main thoroughfare through Langley Park. This was due to updates of the fibroptic system by Virgin Media and will last up to three months. It was noted that the links for council services be added to the Parish Newsletter and that Cllr Greenham-Denny would take responsibility for this. Councillor Simpson thanked County Councillor Coult for providing a report to the parish council.

Resolved: To accept County Councillor Coult's report.

Item 7 5G mast at Esh Hill Top:

The clerk has received information from Clarke Telecom in relation to a 5G mast that is due to be erected at Hill Top Farm, Esh, Durham. The proposed works are to include the removal of 3 antennae and 3 RRU's to be replaced with 6 replacement antennae and 15 replacement RRU's and 1 600mm dish on the existing lattice tower and 1 GPS module on the existing cable gantry. There is also the planned removal of 4 equipment cabinets to be replaced with 3 equipment cabinets. Clarke Telecom are inviting objections to the proposed work to be submitted during a two-week consultation period. Cllr Quinn proposed that there be no objections due to the fact of connectivity issues in the surrounding area and the fear of being left behind in the digital world. Cllr Wardman seconded the proposal, a vote was taken by councillors present which returned a unanimous decision.

Resolved: Clerk noted that there no objections from the Parish Council to the proposed work going ahead.

Item 8 Newsletter:

A copy of the Spring Newsletter that Cllr Greenham-Denny has been working on was distributed amongst councillors to ascertain their views. A few tweaks were suggested and with the addition of the links from County Councillor Coult's report, the newsletter would be ready to send to the printers. A vote was taken which was unanimous giving the go ahead for the newsletter, once updated be sent for publication.

Resolved: Once completed, the clerk to contact printing companies to publish the newsletter and a advertise a call for volunteers to help to distribute.

Item 9 Allotment sub-committee;

A group of councillors are to attend an Allotment Management Programme run by Northern Counties Allotment Association. The course starts on Thursday 15th Feb and runs for four weeks. The knowledge gained will assist in the development of a sub-committee and updating of the Management Agreement Plan. The allotment sub-committee is to consist of councillors that have attended the Allotment Management programme. Cllr Greenham-Denny has agreed to update the existing management plan and bring to the meeting in March for approval from councillors.

The small holding tenancy agreement is also in need of updating. Proposed changes being looked at are to decrease the notification periods from twelve months to three months.

Resolved: Cllr Greenham-Denny to update the allotment management plan and the smallholding agreement to circulate among councillors at the meeting in March.

Item 10 Events Committee:

There is a need for an events committee that is responsible for the preparation of various events throughout the year. An events committee requires cooperation from the parish councillors and will promote cohesion between the parish council and the community. Councillors Wardman, Quinn, Greenham-Denny and Short were keen to set up an events committee. Cllr Greenham-Denny had proposed a calendar of events to take place throughout the year, with the first being a Easter competition that would involve co-operation of the local business. A meeting of the events committee was proposed to discuss upcoming events and was scheduled for Wednesday 21st February.

Resolved: Events committee to meet to discuss upcoming events on February 21st at 6pm.

Item 11 Parish Room:

Upon the completion of works to the vacant room that was occupied by the Area Action Partnership, the clerk is to move into this room making this the parish room. This means that the current parish room becomes vacant and is eligible for hire. There were some suggestions discussed as to what the room could be utilised for, one being a playgroup as there is a need for this within the local community. This was a point raised from the surveys during the consultation period for the proposal to purchase The Methodist Chapel. A contact will be made with a local childcare provider to assess the feasibility of the current parish room being used for a mother and toddler group.

Resolved Clerk to make contact with childcare provider to arrange a meeting with Acting Chair, Cllr Moat.

Item 13 Garage Door:

Cllr Thompson was called to an incident at the lock up owned by the parish council. The doors were open and the securing bar at the back of them was displaced. The wood that the doors are constructed of is rotten and it was agreed that this is no longer a secure option for the lock up and that a new garage door be sought with the recommendation of a roller shutter door.

Resolved: Clerk to make contact with companies supplying roller shutter doors to obtain quotes.

Item 14 Toilets at the Miner's Institute:

Two of the toilets are in need of repair. In addition to this, the skirting in the toilets needs replacing, Cllr Moat suggested that UPVC skirting could be an option for its durability and ease of cleaning. Cllr Moat suggested that quotes for the work be sought, Cllr Thompson seconded this, a vote was taken, returning a unanimous decision.

Resolved: Clerk to obtain quotes for both toilet repair and UPVC skirting, including fitting.

Item 15 Grass Cutting Contract:

Esh Parish Council have received a quote from their current company who cut the grass around the parish. The quote is priced similar to that of last year with a small increment for additional cutting at The Old Rec. There is also another company who have expressed interest in pricing for the contract. Cllr Thompson has volunteered alongside the clerk to meet with these contractors to show them the areas around the parish in order for them to formulate their quote. This quote will be taken to the next parish meeting in March.

Resolved: Cllr Thompson and clerk to meet with second company, obtain quote for the grass cutting contract for comparison with original quote.

Item 16 Intruder alarm system:

The clerk gave an update on the intruder alarm system. Following the annual inspection in December, it was highlighted the SIM in the alarm was no longer active. A new SIM was purchased and the engineer was called to replace new for old. This highlighted a problem with the sender box which needed replacing. This work has been carried out. The alarm system is fully functioning and will ring designated numbers should there be an intrusion to The Miner's Institute.

Resolved: The Miner's Institute has a fully functioning alarm system.

Item 17 Roof Repair Quote:

A quote has been sought for a repair to the roof on the bay windows on either side of the building. One company has replied and given a quote. Other companies were sought but returned a full schedule. Therefore, the quote that was given was discussed with council and it was decided to go ahead with the repair to the roof.

Resolved: Clerk to make contact with the contractors to obtain a date for work to commence

Item 18 Smallholding Clearance Quote:

A quote has been obtained for the clearance of the smallholding towards the rear of the allotments. This quote is favourable and is lower than those obtained in the past. The quote was discussed with council, Cllr Moat proposed that the contract be given, which was seconded by Cllr Thompson, a unanimous vote was returned.

Resolved: Clerk to make contact with company for work to commence.

Item 19 Co-Option Application:

Esh Parish Council currently has vacancies for Parish Councillors and has received an application for a co-option. This application was discussed and as per protocol it was decided that the applicant be invited to take part in a discussion about the application at the next parish meeting in March.

Resolved: Clerk to make contact inviting applicant to parish meeting in March.

Item 20 Clerk's report:

The clerk presented her report to council which highlighted several ongoing projects including an update on the progress of the play area at Quebec and the expected time frame for the work to take. Ongoing updating of the phone system to VOIP at the Miner's Institute was also mentioned. The report included email correspondence in regard to The Bobby Robson Play Area and removal of the palisade fence that surrounds it. The email also included information on the application process for S106 monies to help towards the refurbishment of The Bobby Robson play area.

Resolved: Council accepted the clerk's report

Item 21 Payments to be made and bank reconciliation

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

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

Item 22 Date of next ordinary meeting

Date of next ordinary meeting Wednesday 13th March 2024, 6pm, The Miners Institute