

HEDLEYHOPE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 27 June 2024 at 7.30 pm in the Village Hall, East Hedleyhope

Present

Chair: Sarah Woodroffe (SW)

Cllrs: Martin Hurton (MH), Deb Warde (DW)

Officer: Gillian Bell (Clerk)

1. Apologies for Absence

Cllr Peter Ayling, County Cllr Dan Nicholls, County Cllr Marion Wilson

2. Declarations of Interest

None to declare.

3. Public Participation

No members of the public present.

4. County Councillors' Reports

Written reports from Cllrs Dan Nicholls and Marion Wilson had been circulated.

- *The Story* – opened to the public on Friday 14 June. It houses the county's archives and the Durham Light Infantry Collection, as well as being home to the County Registration Service.
- *New Mayor of City of Durham* – Cllr Liz Brown is the new Mayor of Durham for 2024/5.
- *New grass maintenance scheme* – areas around the Green Lane offices in Spennymoor have been left free from mowing to protect bee orchids and other wildflower species.
- *UK parliamentary general election, 4 July 2024* – information regarding voting in the election can be found at <https://www.durham.gov.uk/articles/25064/UK-Parliamentary-General-election-Thursday-4-July-2024>
- *Open consultations* – more information about current DCC open consultations can be found at <https://www.durham.gov.uk/consultation>
- *Bin collections and glass recycling* – not affected by the August bank holiday. Residents have been asked not to overload glass boxes and to use two boxes if needed.

5. PCSO briefing

No report was received.

6. Minutes and recommendations therein agreed from previous meeting on 23 May 2024

Proposed by DW, seconded by MH.

7. **New financial regulations**

The new NALC financial regulations for local councils were discussed and limits relating to procurement, delegated authority to authorise payments and payment cards were set. It was agreed that the Clerk will update the regulations and these will be approved at the next meeting. In addition, DW suggested that the council consider obtaining a debit card to use for smaller purchases and it was agreed that the Clerk will contact Lloyds Bank to arrange.

8. **Updating the asset register**

A number of additional assets were identified for inclusion in the register, including items in the village hall and externally, such as the defibrillator and seats. The Clerk will update the register and circulate for approval at the next meeting.

9. **Budget Update**

Balance as of 27 June 2024:

Income: £8,306.93

Expenditure: £3,409.74

Earmarked project expenditure:

Seat repair and installation: £1000

Northern Powergrid Funding for Community Emergency Plan: £746.77

10. **Progression of on-going projects**

Community Emergency Plan: items for purchase and storage options

Northern Powergrid would be visiting the village hall on Friday 6 September at 10.30 am and all councillors were welcome to attend. The Clerk would also invite Tony Reeve, as he had taken the lead on much of the project, and complete the project completion form.

SW had priced the additional items that it was agreed to purchase at the April meeting and these totalled £419.74. MH suggested a lock box and combination lock for the generator plug and extension leads with USB charging, and prices would be obtained for these.

11. **Matters relating to the village hall, village green and nature reserve**

Village hall replacement doors and heating system

SW reported that Geowarmth would begin work on the heating system on 22 July and this was expected to take two weeks to complete. There had been a delay in getting funding from CAN and as a result, the BUS grant had lapsed. SW had reapplied for this and it should be approved shortly. A date was being arranged for the installation of a new main door and fire door. SW also agreed to contact Isla Ballard regarding paying for smaller items which would not be invoiced.

Village hall railings

Richard Curtis had agreed to supply a quote for the work.

New benches/seating

Pictures of the proposed new bench were circulated. The cost would be between £700 - £800 including VAT, depending on colour. As the bench would be sited in front of the

village hall, it would be helpful to create a paved area for it to stand on. It was agreed to ask Jeff Stobart if a team from Northumbrian Water would be willing to carry out this work under their volunteering scheme. MH agreed to look for suitable (free) paving. DW suggested liaising with Suzanne Reeve regarding the grant she had to provide outdoor seating for Cuppa 'n' Cake. It was agreed that if she would be willing to put this money towards the bench, the parish council would fund the remainder. The Clerk would contact Suzanne to discuss.

Nature Reserve

MH reported that a recent walk around the meadow had revealed that an estimated 60-70% of the wildflower areas had disappeared. DCC were unable to allow the Parish Council to get a contractor to carry out cutting and baling of the meadow, even if there was no cost involved. In addition, the sinkhole at the top of the meadow was becoming deeper and two other sinkholes were forming alongside it. DCC had agreed to ask the Coal Authority to investigate and the Clerk would supply a site map showing the location of the sinkholes. Taking on the lease for the nature reserve was discussed again, as well as the possibility of registering the meadow as village green. MH agreed to look into both options.

12. Members' reports

None to receive.

13. Clerk's report

Financial

Payments made in May and June 2024:

G Bell	£ 427.15	Clerk's May salary & IT costs
G Bell	£ 9.77	Reimbursement – card and gift for Ann Barnshaw
Richard Curtis	£ 252.00	Storage shed assembly
Octopus Energy	£ 54.67	Village hall electricity charges
Geowarmth	£ 650.00	10% deposit for radiator contract
Geowarmth	£ 635.00	10% deposit for heat pump
Richard Curtis	£ 280.00	Concrete plinth for heat pump
Total:	£2308.59	

Payments received:

DCC	£ 500.00	Use of village hall as polling station 2 May
Cuppa 'n' Cake	£ 20.00	Village hall hire (May)
CAN	£ 1565.00	National Lottery funding for village hall
Total:	£ 2085.00	

Petty cash float: **£5.90**

- Mid-Durham Parish Councils Committee – email circulated about the meeting. The Clerk had completed the survey attached and agreed to attend as the parish council representative.
- CDALC training for councillors – email circulated.
- DW and MH had been added to the bank mandate.
- Playground inspection – booked and confirmed with RoSPA for June/July.

14. **Date for next meetings:** Thursday 8 August 2024 at 7.30 pm

The meeting closed at 8.50 pm.

Signed

Cllr Sarah Woodroffe
Chair
8 August 2024