

URPETH PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of Urpeth Parish Council held on Tuesday 18 January 2022 at Edenfield Communal Room, West Pelton at 6.00pm.

Councillor A Batey (Chair)

Present:

Councillors B Anderson (remotely), A Batey, W Barrett, G Holmes, I Stewart-Fergusson and B Scott

County Councillor D Wood

79. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor I Mullaney and County Councillor P Pringle

80. Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

81. Minutes of the meeting held on 16 November 2021

The minutes of the meeting held on 16 November 2021 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

82. Public Questions / Representations

The Clerk advised that there had been no questions submitted in advance of the meeting and no members of the public were present.

83. Update on Moss Close Farm – Miller Homes

The Clerk advised that following a discussion with planning, it was noted that it was unlikely that there had been a formal arrangement signed up to by the developer to attend parish meetings as this could not be conditioned on approval. It had therefore been suggested that another attempt be made to engage with the developer to provide update reports to future meetings.

84. Police & Neighbourhood Warden Report

The Clerk reminded members that the PCC Joy Allen would be attending the next meeting of the council to be held in February. Members should consider in advance any questions or topics of interest that they wished to discuss.

85. County Councillors Report

County Councillor D Wood provided an overview of issues relating to current County Council business and those issues affecting the parish area including:

- Notification that works had commenced on West Pelton play area refurbishment
- Work on the BMX Track at Urpeth Grange was also likely to be commenced soon following successful award of the tender.

- Storm Arwen – Councillor Batey noted that a lot of lessons had been learned from the storm which had saw power cut to a significant portion of properties in the area, some for over 2 weeks. She explained that the storm had highlighted the lack of a joint up approach to deal with emergency situations such as this and felt that the council should consider developing their own strategy for dealing with events such as this, to improve communication and provide adequate support when needed.

86. Correspondence and Clerks Report

(i) Queens Platinum Jubilee

The Clerk reported that further to previous discussions the council should consider and agree what they would like to do to commemorate the Queens Platinum Jubilee. She explained that the woodland trust along with other organisations were offering to help councils and that the council may wish to consider planting a tree or similar with an appropriate plaque.

Members agreed to consider this further and think about ways in which local school children could get involved.

(ii) Section 106 Funding and Potential Projects

The Clerk reported upon various opportunities as discussed at previous meetings for major improvements to Eden Place car park, improved signage, and relocation of the Pit Wagon on the A693.

If members were in agreement that the three projects be taken forward, then the Clerk would seek to obtain the required permissions and quotes where required.

Resolved: that the Clerk progress the following three applications:

- Eden Place Car Park
- Relocation of Pit wagon on A693 to Beamish roundabout
- New signage at Beamish and High Handenhold

(iii) Request for Dispensation Under Section 85 (1) of the Local Government Act 1972

The Clerk advised that they should consider whether to extend dispensation for a further period for non-attendance for Councillor B Anderson, further to that which was agreed in June 2021.

Resolved: That a dispensation under section 85(1) of the Local Government Act 1972 be given to up to 31 March 2022.

(iv) Roseberry Playing Fields

The Clerk advised that the parish council had submitted an objection to DCC regarding the proposed asset transfer of Roseberry Playing Fields to Hilda Park FC, noting that there had been no consultation on the proposed transfer. A response had not yet been received.

87. Monthly Accounts

Resolved: That the following amounts be approved for payment for December 2021 and January 2022:-

December	
Clerk (Wages and Expenses)	804.49
HMRC PAYE 8	174.40
Litter picker (Wages)	342.08
HMRC PAYE 8	85.60
Litter picker (Wages)	427.68
January	
Clerk (Wages and Expenses)	807.69
HMRC PAYE 8	174.20
Litter picker (Wages)	228.12
HMRC PAYE 8	57.00
Litter picker (Wages)	285.12

88. Council Budget 2022/23 and Precept 2022/23

The council considered a report of the Clerk which set out a proposed budget for the Parish Council for 2022/23 and recommended a budget and precept level to be charged for 2022/23.

It was noted that whilst the parish council had frozen the precept in 2021/22, this had resulted in funds being drawn from reserves to meet the budget deficit and would if repeated in 2022/23 would significantly impact upon the council's plans for the forthcoming year and beyond.

In addition to those projects highlighted within the report already earmarked it was reported that the parish council had made a commitment previously to look at highway improvements for traffic calming, however this had not been factored into the budget as the cost at this stage was unknown. The council therefore may wish to set aside an amount for this initiative which could be released to the projects on the proviso that the proposals and costings received were acceptable and formally agreed.

Following lengthy discussion and debate it was

Resolved:

- (i) That the draft budget for 2022/23 be approved
- (ii) That the council issues a precept of £37,930.00 plus accept the LCTRS grant of £2070.00 giving a total cash sum of £40,000 available for the 2022/23 financial year.
- (iii) That the sum of £6,000 be earmarked for Highway Improvements to be taken from earmarked Election reserves and to be reviewed when proposals were forthcoming.

- (iv) That allotment rents be reviewed when setting the 2023/24 budget.
- (v) That the council consider its remaining earmarked reserves, projects, initiatives and budget implications.

89. Suspension of Standing Orders

In accordance with Standing Orders (Suspension of Standing Orders), Councillor Holmes moved that Council suspend Standing Orders to allow an extension of the meeting to consider all items of business. Councillor Barrett seconded the proposal.

Resolved:

That the Standing Orders be suspended to allow for continuation of the meeting and further items of business to be considered.

90. Allotments

The Clerk advised that following the storm she had been notified that broken and fallen trees had caused some damage at West Pelton. The trees were the responsibility of the Care Home and it had been suggested that they be cut back in the Spring. The Clerk had agreed to contact the home to discuss.

It was further noted that there had been an issue with the pest control visit earlier that day at High Handenhold and the Clerk would pick the issue up with the Association Secretary.

It was further noted that a full audit of all sites was still required in order to address many of the issues which had been ongoing for some time. Once the weather started to improve a meeting should be convened with the Allotment Committee.

91. Beamish

Councillor B Scott further noted areas of concerns or issues for action within the area as follows:

- Parking on double yellow lines and issues at Nicholson Terrace
- Car parking on the highway and footpath increasing at the garage
- Possible relocation of noticeboards
- Grass verges in poor state again at Eden Place
- Complaints from residents regarding noise pollution from A693

92. Urpeth Grange

- i) Urpeth Grange Play Area

No further update on transfer at this stage, however noting financial constraints of County Council and parish council funding it was noted that the issue needed chasing as a matter of urgency. Further contact would need to be made with residents to determine how things could be moved forward.

93. Pelton Lane Ends

Councillor Stewart-Fergusson noted that issues which he intended to raise had already been covered and discussed earlier in the meeting.

94. High Handenhold

Councillor Batey reported that whilst spending time up at Baytree following Storm Arwen she had noted that whilst rock salt was being left by the council, a salt bin would be beneficial to those residents and suggested that the council should make a request to have one sited here.

95. West Pelton

Councillor Anderson reported that he continued to report various issues from his area directly to DCC, however the main issues ongoing were surrounding, refuse left on streets following bin collection and an issue which had occurred elsewhere in the division regarding rubber bands being dropped by postmen.

96. Any other business

There were no further items of business to be discussed.