

## **URPETH PARISH COUNCIL**

Minutes of a meeting of Urpeth Parish Council held on Tuesday 19 October 2021 at Edenfield Communal Room, West Pelton at 6.00pm.

### **Councillor A Batey (Chair)**

#### **Present:**

Councillor A Batey, W Barrett, G Holmes I Stewart-Fergusson, I Mullaney and B Scott  
County Councillors P Pringle and D Wood

5 Residents of Beamish

#### **63. Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor B Anderson

#### **64. Declarations of interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

#### **65. Minutes of the meeting held on 21 September 2021**

The minutes of the meeting held on 21 September 2021 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

#### **66. Public Questions / Representations**

##### **(i) DM/21/01633/FPA – Construction of 24no. luxury holiday lodges on Land North West of Beamish Hall Hotel**

The Chair welcomed members of the public who were present to discuss with the parish council, arrangements for a meeting which was being held with Planning Officers on Monday 25<sup>th</sup> October, and to further provide an update on the current status of the application.

It was noted that County Councillors A Batey, G Binney, P Pringle and D Wood had agreed to attend this meeting and the Clerk had also agreed to attend to take a record of the discussion on behalf of residents.

The council and residents went on to discuss the anticipated timing of the application being heard by a planning committee and whether there were any further issues which required investigation before that time. Discussion ensued regarding the listed status of one of the dwellings and associated boundary wall and issues surrounding a restrictive covenant currently on the land.

In addition, residents had commissioned a separate highways / transport assessment and this had been circulated to members in advance of the meeting for information.

Councillor Batey thanked residents for their attendance and advised members that an overview of discussions held at the meeting held on 25 October would be provided at the next meeting.

## **(ii) Public Questions**

The Clerk advised that there had been no questions submitted in advance of the meeting.

### **67. Update on Moss Close Farm – Miller Homes**

The Clerk advised that no update report had been received in advance of the meeting however she had circulated some revised landscaping plans which had been forwarded by Miller Homes via County Councillor D Wood.

### **68. Police & Neighbourhood Warden Report**

The Clerk advised that the PCC Joy Allen had been invited to attend the next meeting of the Parish Council in November, however had not yet confirmed.

Councillor Batey advised that County Councillors had financially supported an upcoming police community Christmas event. The event taking place in Ouston would be held on 11 December 2021. Further details of locations and time were available via County Councillors.

The Clerk also mentioned that at this time of year the council like to reiterate messages to households about home security during the darker winter months and further details of crime prevention measures that could be taken by the householder were available on the Durham police website.

### **69. 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:

- A693, Traffic survey undertaken – hoping to get some feedback soon.
- Station Lane – Statutory consultation ongoing – one objection withdrawn
- Highways – road safety project to be established and following discussion with officers, all parishes would be consulted in the division and further details provided when possible.
- West Pelton Play Park – no update, however work was expected to start soon.
- Some DCC Neighbourhood Funding had been applied through Pelton Parish Council to purchase 2 outdoor gazebos for outdoor events and to be made available for use across the division as a community asset.
- Full council tomorrow – proposed extension of LCTRS for a further year with a review next year. Pressure to maintain this to lessen the impact upon residents in the poorest households.
- Update on position regarding Social Care Funding and increases in National Insurance and the impact upon County Durham residents
- Lumiere going ahead 18th – 21<sup>st</sup> November – ticketed free event
- Ref to Towns & Villages project funding – pot of funding limited with larger areas in the division likely to outweigh smaller local issues.

- Productive discussion with Beamish Director re: Eden Place Car Park – progressing issue through assets. Further updates to be provided when possible.

## **70. Monthly Accounts**

**Resolved:** That the following amounts be approved for payment

Clerk (Wages and Expenses)	773.99
HMRC PAYE 8	174.20
Litter picker (Wages)	342.08
HMRC PAYE 8	85.60
Litter picker (Wages)	427.68

## **71. Correspondence and Clerks Report**

### **i) Remote attendance at future meetings**

The Clerk advised that as members were aware since May 7<sup>th</sup> 2021, all councils were required by law to hold public meetings face to face, following removal of temporary legislation brought in under Coronavirus regulations in 2020 which allowed for remote meetings.

Further to this, and in considering potential issues of non-attendance due to self-isolation, the Clerk had confirmed via CDALC that whilst remote council meetings were not lawful, there was scope for a member to join a face-to-face meeting in a hybrid manner, however only on the basis that they would not be permitted to vote on any decisions taken. This also applied to non-voting positions such as the Clerk. The Clerk explained that whilst this was useful to know, it did come with some challenges given the lack of Wi-Fi or 4G connectivity at the communal room at West Pelton.

The clerk agreed to discuss this further with Councillor Anderson with a view to him joining a future meeting.

### **(ii) Parish Priorities / Budget Planning**

The Clerk suggested that further to discussions held prior to the pandemic the council should again reconsider setting its priorities for the forthcoming year and beyond which would help to inform future budget setting. She therefore suggested that a zoom session be scheduled to start early discussions before consulting on a wider basis. The Clerk agreed to arrange a suitable time to convene.

### **(ii) Climate Emergency**

It was noted that the council should consider ongoing discussion surrounding climate change and identify ways in which the council could contribute to tackling it through the development of a Climate Change Strategy. County Councillor Wood advised that he was looking at this on behalf of Pelton Parish Council and would be happy to share his findings with the parish council. The Clerk also agreed to look into what other smaller councils were doing and report back to a future meeting.

## **72. Allotments**

The Clerk provided an update on various issues and correspondence made with tenants at all allotment sites with appropriate action and follow up agreed.

It was noted that following the last meeting enquiries had been made regarding insurance, mainly public liability and it was agreed that given the various issues on all allotment sites a full audit of all sites; including buildings, structures and play equipment be undertaken.

It was further suggested that in reviewing the allotment tenancy rules, all tenants should be contacted to advise of the rules regarding allotment use for cultivation only and that other structures not approved by the council be removed.

## **73. Beamish**

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

- Lampposts – repairs still outstanding
- Dog fouling bins – County Councillor Wood to follow up
- Speeding – ongoing issue, however, appreciate comments made earlier regarding potential project to address speeding
- Flower beds – request outstanding
- Parking on double yellow lines at Ill Cancelllo causing obstruction.

It was also pointed out that the A693 round-about at the Beamish end needed addressing due to its poor condition. Given its prominent location it was suggested that there could potentially be scope to apply for a 06 contribution and include Eden Place in any such application.

Other areas which required attention were:

- Absence of litter bins in the area – much needed on road from Fire Station up to Ill Cancelllo and near the bus stop at the Shepherd and Shepherdess.
- Fencing near roundabout at the junction of Beamish village damaged due to continuing issues with road traffic accidents and lack of clear signage warning drivers to slow on approach.

## **74. Urpeth Grange**

### **i) Urpeth Grange Play Area**

No further update on transfer at this stage, however noting financial constraints of County Council funding it was noted that the issue needed chasing as a matter of urgency.

### **ii) Walkabout of Estate**

The Chair suggested that given several issues that she had been approached about, a full walkabout of the estate with a view to identifying areas which needed addressing should be arranged.

**75. High Handenhold**

Councillor Mullaney noted ongoing issues with speeding and parking on grass verges and it was suggested that once Councillor Batey was able to set up a site visit with Clean and Green then she would notify Councillor Mullaney.

**76. Pelton Lane Ends**

Councillor Stewart-Fergusson noted that issues which had had raised previously including flower beds, litter picking and police presence at future meetings had already been covered.

**77. West Pelton**

There were no issues to raise under this item.

**78. Any other business**

There were no further items of business to be discussed.