

URPETH PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of Urpeth Parish Council held on Tuesday 17 January 2023 at Edenfield Communal Room, West Pelton at 6.30pm.

B Scott (Chair)

Present:

Councillors B Barrett, A Batey and I Stewart-Fergusson

County Councillor D Wood

89. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor G Holmes and County Councillor P Pringle

90. Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

91. Minutes of the Meeting held on 15 November 2022

The minutes of the meeting held on 15 November 2022 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

92. Public Questions / Representations

The Chair welcomed Mr T Smith who was in attendance to observe the meeting with a view to a potential future co-option.

(i) Fencing at Baytree Terrace

The Clerk advised that residents of Baytree Terrace were to be consulted and results would be circulated to members prior to the next meeting.

Mr Smith, expressed his frustration at the time taken to bring this matter forward and felt that there was little need for consultation, adding that they themselves as residents had not been consulted prior to the installation of gates on the allotment site.

Councillor Barrett advised that the council as owners of the allotments had a duty of care to its tenants and the gates were necessary to prevent further criminal damage to tenants' property.

County Councillor Woods advised that the quote which had been received from DCC for the work to be undertaken to install low-level fencing would be part funded via his budget and matched by the parish council, which had been agreed in principle at the previous meeting. A decision however was ultimately up to the parish council to make.

93. Policing and Neighbourhood Warden Update

It was noted that whilst PACT meetings were no longer taking place, the police were attending councillor surgeries where possible. In addition, Pelton Parish Council now held an agreement with the local Neighbourhood Warden who attended meetings regularly and provided a separate report on local matters. This may be something that the council wish to request in the future.

(i) Community Speedwatch

County Councillor Wood reported upon recent speedwatch sessions, noting results on Urpeth Lane which had recently been completed. It was suggested by T Smith a resident of Baytree Terrace that this stretch of road should be identified as a problem area, with a view to a future speedwatch session being undertaken.

(ii) Santa in a Van

An update was provided on the success of the free 'Santa in a van' event which had been held across the division in December. The event had been the best attended event in recent years and this highlighted that more families were being impacted by the cost-of-living crisis.

94. County Councillor Report

Councillor D Wood provided an update and overview of County Council activity relating to the division and wider area, including:

- Grit and salt bins – discussion around adding salt bins to new locations, County Councillors would be supportive of putting some funding in towards their initial costs, however the parish would need to maintain in perpetuity and be responsible for refilling.
- Customer Access Points – Consultation undertaken on opening hours given reduction in face-to-face contact with a view to reducing operating hours / open days from October 2023.
- Local Government Boundary Review – Deadline for submission of comments on warding patterns 30 January 2023. Following consideration of the feedback received the LGBCE would be publishing draft proposals of new warding patterns in April / May 2023.

Following discussion, it was

Resolved: That the Clerk prepare and arrange for a response to be submitted to the LGBCE outlining the community ties that it has with both Pelton and Ouston and to support the view that the division should not be split.

Further updates were provided by Councillor Wood in relation to

- Road safety – a catch up meeting had been held with Highways regarding the feedback which had been gathered from all three parishes in the division on the proposed highways safety scheme. It was noted that there had been some significant changes within the highways team and it was hoped that a further detailed report which addressed the points raised would be available for consideration in the Spring.

- BMX track – drawings of the design options for the BMX track were circulated noting that any preference should be forwarded to the Clerk

95. Correspondence and Clerks Report

(i) Neighbourhood Plan

The Clerk advised that in the process of further developing the plan, a request had been received from DCC for the parish council to consider whether they were satisfied with the proposed neighbourhood area and also to offer any suggestions as to what the plan should be called.

Resolved:

- (i) That the Neighbourhood area should encompass, Pelton, Urpeth and Ouston parish areas of the Pelton Division.
- (ii) That Pelton Parish Council be nominated lead council on the project, and.
- (iii) that the preferred choice of name for the new plan be Pelton, Urpeth and Ouston Neighbourhood Plan.

ii) Parish Council Website

Further to the previous meeting the Clerk advised that she had made some initial enquiries with several bespoke providers regarding the design and development of a website for the council with content management capability. It was hoped that a further update on quotes would be available at the next meeting.

iii) Power Cuts and supply issues

Further to power cuts which had again affected parts of the division in the recent weeks, it was suggested that a letter be sent from the council to Northern Powergrid expressing the dissatisfaction at the frequency of cuts impacting residents in the Urpeth Grange and Beamish areas.

96. Council Budget 2023/24 and Precept 2023/24

The council considered a detailed financial report of the Clerk which set out a proposed budget for the Parish Council for 2023/24 and recommended a budget and precept level to be charged for 2023/24.

Resolved:

- (i) That the draft budget for 2023/24 be approved
- (ii) That the Council issues a precept of £40,162 for the 2023/24 financial year (total cash including LCTRS £41,000).
- (iii) That the council increase allotment rents by £5 across all sites and give 12 months' notice of the increase in April 2023.
- (iv) That the Council consider its earmarked and general reserves.
- (v) That the Clerks contract be amended to increase weekly working hours by 2, to be reviewed annually

97. Monthly Accounts

Resolved: That the following monthly payments be agreed for the months December and January.

Clerk (Wages and Expenses)	873.13
HMRC PAYE 9	184.80
Litter picker (Wages)	425.60
HMRC PAYE 9	106.40
Litter picker (Wages)	532.00
Bugler – Remembrance Service	20.00
Skip at Twizell Lane	297.24

Clerk (Wages and Expenses)	814.88
HMRC PAYE 9	184.80
Litter picker (Wages)	243.20
HMRC PAYE 9	60.80
Litter picker (Wages)	304.00
Wave Utilities – Water rates PV	56.68
Greenhams Safety Boots	153.02

The Clerk further provided an update regarding the unverified credit which the council had been notified of on the allotment water account at High Handenhold. A further update regarding the potential refund would be given at the next meeting. It was noted that new meters had recently been installed on the site, however the Clerk had not been notified of this work being undertaken by the provider.

98. Co-option of Parish Councillor

Councillor A Batey moved that Mr Danny Wood be co-opted to the Parish Council in the Ward of Urpeth Grange. Councillor B Barrett seconded the proposal.

Resolved:

That Mr Daniel Wood be co-opted to the council in the parish Ward of Urpeth Grange and that a declaration of acceptance of office and code of conduct be signed along with a declaration of interests within 28 days of his co-option.

99. Allotments

- (i) High Handenhold – Installation of gates
Councillor Barrett provided an update on the newly installed gates and arrangements for keys to be issued to tenants.
- (ii) Dirty Gardens
The Clerk advised that there were still a number of outstanding issues at High Handenhold and a further update would be provided at the next meeting.

100. Beamish

Councillor Scott reported upon the following areas for information or action relating to Beamish were as follows:

- Eden Place Car Park – previous issues remain, need to revisit previous plans and chase with relevant team at DCC.
- Double yellow lines

Councillor Wood advised that he had referred the parking issue via DCC parking services and also acknowledged the need to review the Eden Place car parking arrangements.

He also advised that he had been attempting to contact a resident in Beamish who had requested acoustic fencing. Further updates on this would be reported when possible.

101. Urpeth Grange

The following issues were reported by both Councillor Baytree and Councillor Barrett for action or information:

- Transfer of Urpeth Grange Play Area to DCC imminent.
- Melbeck Drive – issue with state of verges due to inadequate road width and issues regarding ownership and underground services.
- Walkabout on the estate required and Cherry Trees uprooting continue to remain an issue.
- Increased parking issues around St Bennets.
- Incidents of flytipping at Layburn reported.

102. Pelton Lane Ends

Councillor Stewart-Fergusson commented that the fly-tipping issue he had been actively pursuing was still a huge issue with more waste recently being tipped at the location.

He further referenced discussion at the previous meeting regarding publicising the parish council to the new residents of the Miller Homes estate and queried whether a flyer drop could be undertaken on the estate to raise our profile and let residents know where to come should they have any issues.

Discussion then took place regarding the quote which had been sought from Grounds Maintenance for new flower bed and whether a private quote could also be obtained.

103. High Handenhold

It was reported that dog fouling in this area continued to be an issue and it was suggested that members of the public should be encouraged to report any known incidences via the DCC website.

104. West Pelton

There were no matters to raise under this item.

105. Any other business

There were no further items of business.