

URPETH PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of Urpeth Parish Council held on Tuesday 21 September 2021 at Ouston Community Centre at 6.00pm.

Councillor A Batey (Chair)

Present:

Councillor A Batey, W Barrett, G Holmes and B Scott

County Councillors P Pringle and D Wood

47. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors B Anderson, I Mullaney and I Stewart-Fergusson.

48. Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

49. Minutes of the meeting held on 27 July 2021

The minutes of the meeting held on 27 July 2021 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

50. Public Questions / Representations

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

The Clerk advised that despite initially being advised that the application would be considered by the North Planning Committee in September 2021, she had now been advised that it would likely not be heard by committee until later in the year. Further updates would be provided when possible.

(ii) Public Questions

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

51. Update on Moss Close Farm – Miller Homes

The Clerk advised that no update report had been received in advance of the meeting. Consequently, the Clerk agreed to chase the issue of non-attendance with planning, given that this had been a pre-requisite of the permission granted.

52. Police & Neighbourhood Warden Report

It was noted that there had been no reports received for some time and the Clerk agreed to query this with the policing team and PCC. It was further agreed that the new PCC Joy Allen, be invited to attend a future meeting of the council to discuss local issues.

53. County Councillors Report

County Councillor P Pringle provided the following updates on matters relating to the County and parish area:

- Tender for the play area upgrade at West Pelton now complete and the chosen design would be advertised in the coming weeks.
- Pelton Cemetery – site visit undertaken with Bereavement Services following complaints of dog fouling and overgrown internal areas and footpaths. It had been agreed that a plan for refurbishment of the cemetery be implemented including new pedestrian signage, dog signs, installation of kissing gates and disabled access. It had also been agreed that Neighbourhood Wardens would be actively patrolling the area which should alleviate some of the dog fouling issues. In addition, a Friends of the Cemetery group was to be established to assist with general tidying of the cemetery grounds.
- Roseberry School site – Karbon Homes application to build 110 units. A public consultation event was to be held on Monday 4 October at 6.00 p.m at Grange Villa.

Councillor Wood further provided an overview of topics being discussed by County Council at its meeting the following day including motions submitted relating to Universal Credit and Social Care Funding.

54. Monthly Accounts

Resolved: that the following amounts be approved for payment for months August and September.

August

Clerk (Wages and Expenses)	804.49
HMRC PAYE 8	174.40
Litter picker (Wages)	342.28
HMRC PAYE 8	85.40
Litter picker (Wages)	453.67
Laser-Ex Stationery Supplies	106.50

September

Clerk (Wages and Expenses)	
(includes reimbursement for planting materials at Beamish)	938.49
HMRC PAYE 8	174.20
Litter picker (Wages)	430.30
HMRC PAYE 8	107.00
Litter picker (Wages)	534.60
Wave Water Rates WP & HH	122.91

55. External Audit Annual Review of the Return for the year ended 31 March 2021

The Clerk circulated for information a copy of the Annual Return and External Audit Report for the year ended 31 March 2021. She confirmed that the external audit review conducted by Mazars was now complete and there had been no areas of weakness identified nor any significant matters arising which required action.

Resolved: That the external audit review be noted and that the Clerk publish the return alongside a copy of the completion notice by 30 September 2021.

56. Correspondence and Clerks Report

i) Go North East – Bus routes and timetabling

Councillor Batey provided an update on issues surrounding removal of bus services, timetabling and the impact this was having upon many residents and school children within the division. She reported that due to changes in timings and the withdrawal of school route services approximately 120 children were being disadvantaged and having to make longer and more costly journeys to school. She noted that whilst some earlier issues with some services had been resolved, this remained an issue and it was suggested that the parish council should write to the bus company and DCC outlining the council's concerns.

ii) Remembrance Sunday 2021 arrangements

The Clerk advised that arrangements were being made to hold the service at Beamish memorial stone at 1.00 p.m. on Sunday 14 November 2021. A road closure order would be in place from 12.45-13.30 p.m.

iii) Purchase of Litterpicking equipment for community use.

The Clerk advised that following a request from the Chair, Councillor Batey to price up the purchase of 20 sets of litterpicking equipment for community use, the Clerk advised that the equipment would cost around £450, however some savings could be achieved through bulk ordering should the council wish to agree to their purchase, use and storage.

Resolved: That the Clerk seek to obtain quotes from various suppliers including Durham County Council. Any final decision on their purchase would be delegated to the Chair in consultation with the Clerk.

57. 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. A further update would be provided at the next meeting.

The Clerk further suggested that a full review of the Allotment tenancy rules should be undertaken in advance of April 2022.

58. Beamish

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

- Dog fouling – require a dog bin on the route from Ill Cancelllo to High Handenhold
- Cutting back work required around village signage
- Street lighting still out at posts 439,440
- Verges appear to be okay now that overflow parking had ceased, however agreed that there would be no harm in DCC reinstating them as previously planned.
- Update on Eden Place picnic area / car park

26. Urpeth Grange

i) Urpeth Grange Play Area

The Chair advised that there had been no further progress on the transfer to DCC, however an update would be provided as soon as possible. She further noted that there were significant issues with waste bins overflowing in the play park and whilst the Neighbourhood Wardens had agreed to come out and clear the area, it was noted that the situation would need reviewing as this would continue to be a problem.

Members also acknowledged the excellent work that K Drummond was undertaking to keep the Urpeth Grange area tidy.

Further ongoing issues in the area included:

- Flytipping in Penhill Woods –flytipping is illegal and a crime and could result in prosecution and a fine up to £50,000. On the spot fixed £400 penalty notice fines could also be issued. Therefore, residents were urged to report any sightings of flytipping or known hotspot areas to Durham County Council.
- Tree roots at Walden Close.
- Melbeck Drive overgrown footpath.

27. High Handenhold

Councillor Batey reported that the request for new signs had been made as had the request to clean the bus shelter on a regular basis.

28. Pelton Lane Ends

Councillor Batey advised that she was speaking regularly to the Clean and Green team and would arrange when she was more able to, to do a drive around and identify suitable areas for planting as previously agreed.

29. West Pelton

There were no issues to raise under this item.