

THE MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF
THE MONK HESLEDEN PARISH COUNCIL
HELD ON MONDAY 21st MAY 2018

Councillors Present: Mrs G Crute (Chair),
R Bowes, Mrs L Davison, Mrs A Mason, O Deinali, N Thompson, P G Ward,

Also present:
Mrs A Marley Lawson and Mr B Johnson.

mh18-1901 **ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL**

Councillor Crute sought nominations for the position of Chairman, one proposal was received and this was for Councillor Crute to be re-elected.

RESOLVED that Councillor Mrs G M Crute be elected as Chairman of Monk Hesleden Parish Council for the Municipal Year 2018/19.

mh18-1902 **TO RECEIVE THE CHAIRMAN'S DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE**

Councillor Mrs G Crute accepted her election to Chairman; she declared her Acceptance of Office, signed the required form and proceeded to chair the meeting.

RESOLVED the Chairman's Declaration of Acceptance of Office be received.

mh18-1903 **ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN**

The Chairman sought nominations for the position of Vice Chairman and received one proposal, Cllr R Bowes.

RESOLVED Councillor R Bowes be appointed as Vice Chairman of Monk Hesleden Parish Council for the Municipal Year 2018/19.

mh18-1904 **TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Councillor Stanley.

RESOLVED Cllr Stanley's apologies be received and accepted

mh18-1905 **TO APPOINT MEMBERS TO SERVE ON PARISH COUNCIL COMMITTEES/WORKING GROUPS**

Details of current committees were distributed to members with the agenda for consideration and review.

After discussion, it was **RESOLVED** that the following members be appointed:

- Appeals Committee: Cllrs Mrs A Mason, Mrs L Davison, R Bowes
- Blackhall Community Youth Group – Cllr Crute & Clerk
- Environment Committee: Cllrs R Bowes, Mrs A Mason, K Stanley, N Thompson, PG Ward, O Deinali.
- Events Committee: Cllrs R Bowes, Mrs G Crute, Mrs L Davison

- Staffing Committee: Cllrs K Stanley, N Thompson, P G Ward, O Deinali
- Welfare Park User Group: Cllrs Mrs G Crute, K Stanley, N Thompson.

RESOLVED the information be received and noted

Details of the Council's current representatives on outside bodies and organisations were also distributed with the agenda for consideration by members. After discussion, it was **RESOLVED** that Parish Council representatives be appointed as follows:

- Blackhalls & Hesledens Community Partnership- Mrs A Mason, O Deinali
- County Durham Association of Local Councils & Larger Councils Forum
Councillors Mrs G Crute, PG Ward and the Clerk.
- Durham Heritage Coast – Councillor G M Crute
- East Durham Association of Parish & Town Councils
Cllrs Mrs A Mason, Mrs G Crute,
- Hesleden Restoration Liaison Committee: Cllr N Thompson & Clerk
- Housing/ASB Working Group: Cllr R Bowes & Clerk

RESOLVED the information be received and noted.

mh18-1906

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

There were no declarations of interest were received

mh18-1907

TO FIX THE AMOUNT OF THE CHAIRMANS'S ALLOWANCE IN PURSUANCE OF SECTION 15(5) OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT

The matter was discussed by members.

It was **RESOLVED** a Chairman's allowance of £250 be allocated and budgeted under this heading.

mh18-1908

TO FIX THE DATES AND TIMES OF ORDINARY MEETINGS AND COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR THE ENSUING YEAR

A provisional list of Parish Council meetings for the forthcoming municipal year was distributed to members with the agenda for agreement by Council.

RESOLVED all meeting dates be approved.

mh18-1909

TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 23rd APRIL 2018

Copies of the minutes of the above meetings were circulated to each member before the meeting.

RESOLVED the minutes of the above meetings be approved, confirmed and signed as an accurate record.

mh18-1910

TIME SET ASIDE FOR QUESTIONS/ISSUES RAISED BY MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

No members of the public attended the meeting.

mh18-1911

TO CONSIDER CO-OPTION TO COUNCIL

Members had been forwarded copies of requests for co-option to the Council from Mrs A Marley Lawson & Mr W H Johnson. Both applicants were given the opportunity to introduce themselves and to explain why they wished to become members of the Parish Council.

After consideration **RESOLVED** to co-opt Mrs Marley Lawson & Mr, Johnson onto the Parish Council, **FURTHER RESOLVED** the Clerk informs Durham County Council of the appointments.

mh18-1912

CLERKS REPORT

Blackhall Cemetery

A visitor to the cemetery has reported finding empty cans of alcohol next to a memorial bench in the cemetery. It is hoped this will not be a regular occurrence, staff have been alerted to extra vigilant and to report any incidents directly to the Parks & Facilities Manager.

The Clerk has submitted a challenge to the Valuation Office regarding the rateable valuable for the cemetery as at present the annual cost has increased nearly 300%, this in turn has affects the relief received on the business rates paid for the Resource Centre, with an increase from nil to £2600 per annum.

Concerns over pedestrian safety Middle Street, Blackhall Colliery

A number of residents have raised concerns about vehicles mounting the pavement to park outside the shops on Middle Street, Blackhall Colliery and have requested action be taken. Yellow lines are in place at this location but are ignored and not enforced by Durham County Council. An option would be to install bollards on the pavement thereby ensuring the safety of pedestrians, Durham County Council do not have a budget to undertake this measure. The estimated cost of the scheme is £11,000 and the Parish Council are being requested to consider meeting this cost with some financial support from the County Councillors Rob Crute and Lynn Pounder.

A discussion took place and members agreed there would be a need for a full costing to be sought from Durham County Council and businesses and residents should be consulted on the proposal.

RESOLVED the Clerk makes a formal request to Durham County Council Highways Officer for a scheme to be drafted and costed and when received a consultation is undertaken to see business and resident's views.

Hesleden Restoration Community Liaison Committee

The Clerk attended the meeting with Councillor Thompson, the removal is well underway, however, to date the movement of vehicles has not reached the intended level. Measures have been taken to reduce the effects of dust from the site and the contractors have taken action against any drivers who do not adhere to the agreed route.

Open space adjacent to Coronation Avenue, Blackhall Rocks

A report was received of fencing being stolen at the bottom of the field adjacent to the garage site and residents are concerned about unauthorised vehicle access, Durham County Council are to install bollards to address this issue.

Open space at Chicken's Green, Blackhall Colliery

A section of fencing which leads onto the bottom of East Street has fallen down and is irreparable, Durham County Council have removed the fencing and have advised they do not see the need for it to be replaced. It has been agreed the area will be monitored and should there be any signs of anti-social behaviour or unauthorised access the erection of new fencing will be considered by the County Council.

Open space at Coleridge Avenue, Blackhall Rocks

A resident has reported flooding at the corner of this piece of land and after consulting with Durham County Council it has been confirmed it is unadopted and therefore neither the Parish Council nor the County Council are responsible for maintenance.

RESOLVED the above information be received and noted

mh18-1913

REVIEW OF STANDING ORDERS & FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

The Clerk advised there was not a need to review the Financial Regulations as this undertaken in February 2018 and no amendments were required.

A copy of revised Standing Orders had been forwarded with the agenda as changes are recommended with regards to the impending change to Data Protection Law.

RESOLVED the revised Standing Orders be approved and adopted.

mh18-1914

FINANCIAL MATTERS

Schedule of Payments

A list of payments for the period 23rd April 2018 to 21st May 2018 issued with the agenda for information and approval.

RESOLVED the payments be approved.

Approval of Statement of Accounts @31st March 2018

A copy of the Council's statements of accounts as at 31st March 2018 had been distributed to members with the agenda for approval.

RESOLVED the statement of accounts @31st March 2018 be received and approved.

To receive Internal Audit Report @ 31st March 2018

A copy of the 2017/18 internal audit report was considered for approval; no issues were raised and the internal auditor confirmed he had completed and signed the relevant section of the annual governance and accountability return.

The Clerk advised the Council's appointed auditor had fallen ill and had been unable to complete the internal audit, fortunately Steve Ragg from the County Durham Association of Local Councils provided the service, declined payment.

RESOLVED the Internal Audit Report be and received and approved and **FURTHER RESOLVED** a letter of thanks be sent to Steve Ragg thanking him for his assistance.

Approval of Annual Return for the year ended 31st March 2018

A copy of the Annual Return for the year ended 31st March 2018 had been distributed to members with the agenda

RESOLVED Section1 - the annual governance statement 2017/18 be approved and the following confirmed:

1. We have put in place arrangements for effective financial management during the year, and for the preparation of the accounting statements.
2. We maintained an adequate system of internal control, including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.
3. We took all reasonable steps to assure ourselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and Proper Practices that could have significant financial effect on the ability of this smaller authority to conduct its business or on its finances.
4. We provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors' rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
5. We carried out an assessment of the risks facing the council and took appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal control and/or external insurance cover where required.
6. We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the council accounting records and control systems.
7. We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit.
8. We considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year-end, have a financial impact on the council and, where appropriate have included them in the accounting statements.

FURTHER RESOLVED Section 2 – the accounting statements for 2017/18 be received and approved.

Review of Council Asset Register

A copy of the Council Asset Register as at 31st March 2018 was sent to members with the agenda, the Clerk confirmed that the register includes items which have an individual value of £1000.

RESOLVED the Asset Register be noted and received and **FURTHER RESOLVED** the current system with regards to recording assets remains unchanged.

Review of Investments

The Clerk advised the Nationwide investment is due to mature, after looking at other options the Nationwide Business 1 Year Saver, paying 0.90% appears to be the best choice available.

RESOLVED the maturing funds are placed in Nationwide Business 1 Year Saver and if possible a further £65,000 be added to the investment from the Barclays savings account.

Monopole rent review

The annual rent for the monopole located in the Welfare Park is due for review, following a discussion it was resolved to request an annual rent of £6,000 per annum.

RESOLVED the Clerk liaise with the contractor with regards to this matter.

Approval of Durham County Council annual contracts

The following DCC contacts were presented to members for approval:

Grass Cutting – Playing fields at Corry Close (Chickens Green) & Chaucer Avenue (Scheme Houses) Rear Council Estate, High Hesleden & Rear Front Street Hesleden
£2427.01 plus VAT

Dog Waste Bin Collections (16) - £3504.59 plus VAT

RESOLVED that the contracts be approved.

mh18-1915

GENERAL DATA PROTECTION REGULATION

The following policies had been distributed for approval together with the relevant notices and consent forms:

- Information & Data Protection
- Retention & Disposal
- Social Media & Electronic Communication
- Removable Data Policy

RESOLVED that the policies and notices be received and adopted.

mh18-1916

PLANNING MATTERS

No planning to report

RESOLVED that the information be noted.

mh18-1917

CORRESPONDENCE

No correspondence to report

RESOLVED that the information be noted.

mh18-1918

DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

RESOLVED the next meeting will be held on Monday 18th June 2018 at 6pm at the Resource Centre, Blackhall.

CERTIFIED AS A TRUE RECORD

CHAIRMAN.....

DATE.....