

LOW CONISCLIFFE & MERRYBENT PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of Parish Council Meeting held on 10 July 2018

St Edwin's Church Hall, High Coniscliffe, 7pm

ATTENDANCE: Cllrs: M Ellerton (Chair), L Steel, P Ellerton, C McLay, A Craggs, WCllr G Lee (from 8pm), WCllr P Crudass, M Bailey (Clerk).

S Clark and K Marshallsay were co-opted to the Parish Council to fill the 2 vacancies due to the resignation of Cllr T Stuckey and the death of Cllr S Gatenby.

1 Apologies: None

2 Declarations of Interest: None

3 Public Forum: None

4 Minutes of Last Meeting:

The minutes of the meeting held on 22 May 18 were signed by the Chair.

5 Matters Arising from the Minutes of the Previous Meeting:

5.1 Register of interests / Acceptance of Office Declarations. Forms have been completed.

Action: M Bailey to forward the completed forms to DBC. By 20 July 18.

5.2 Certificate of Exemption. This has been sent to the External Auditor and written confirmation has been received.

5.3 Annual Return 2017-18. Notices for Exercise of Public Rights have been displayed. The period concludes on 14 July 18 and a copy of the Annual Return is to be made available on the PC web-site.

Action: M Bailey to upload Annual Return to web-site. By 20 July 18.

5.4 Planning application for untidy land in Low Coniscliffe. It was reported that the landowner hopes to shortly submit a proposal for preapplication advice. DBC have requested a tidy up of the land. A suggestion was made that the PC employ a handyman to clear the land and then charge the landowner for the services.

Action: WCllr P Crudass to meet with landowner to discuss a potential resolution to the matter. By 15 Aug 18

5.5 Neighbourhood Plan (NP). Comments arising from the consultation on the draft Plan have been sent to the NP Consultant for inclusion in a revised Plan where necessary. A further grant of £6392 has been received. The revised draft plan is to be subjected to a 'healthcheck' by a Technical Consultant (w/c 23 July 18).

Action: Cllr M Ellerton to report on progress at the PC meeting 11 Sep 18.

5.6 Damage in Community Forest. No further updateThe matter will be carried forward to the PC meeting 11 Sep 18.

Action: Cllr M Ellerton to give update at next PC meeting.

Signed: (Chair)

Dated:

5.7 Recruitment of Clerk. A new Clerk has been recruited and commences 1 Aug 18. M Bailey was thanked for his services over the last 2 years.

Action: M Bailey to advise DBC of change of Clerk. By 31 July 18

5.8 Planting of Floral Displays. It was confirmed that it is not advisable for a P Cllr to undertake these services for financial gain. The work has been placed with Elmridge Garden Centre.

5.9 Registration of the PC as a data controller. The online application process requires the PC to be designated as 'other' rather than 'public body' since it does not need to appoint a Data Protection Officer. The application will be made by the new clerk.

6 Finance and Accounts:

6.1 Balance in bank account as at 1 July 18 was £20494.90 and £40.44 in petty cash. This includes a Neighbourhood Plan grant of £6392 and £500.59 from donations residue. The estimated bank balance at the end of financial year is £5405.

6.2 Expenses approved since the last meeting: CDALC subscription (£82.45), Speed visor electricity and clips (£13.24), verge strimming (£40.00), Elmridge planting and maintenance (£1259.71), donation for summer event (£250.00).

6.3 Expenses approved at the meeting: speed visor battery charger (£96.00), stamps / printer paper (£10.96), NP website hosting fee (£85.00 from grant), Clerk salary Jun / Jul 18 (£220.00), Tax on clerk salary to HMRC (£55.00), Consultant fees for planning objections (2 x £190.00).

7 Planning applications and decisions:

Application for outline planning permission for development of up to 14 dwellings, Low Coniscliffe. A large volume of objections have been raised by residents and forwarded to DBC planning.

A further archeological study is in progress on the site where permission has been approved for up to 37 dwellings.

Consultation between Highways authority and DBC is in progress regarding road infrastructure for the proposed development of 1520 dwellings to the north of Coniscliffe Rd. An environmental impact assessment has not yet commenced.

8 Highway Matters:

8.1 It was reported that volunteers from Merrybent are now completing the regular battery charging of the speed visors. The PC expressed thanks to the volunteers and to W Cllr P Crudass for arranging this.

8.2 DBC have agreed to strim the embankment and trim hedgerows on Gate Lane.

9 Parish Matters:

9.1 Summer event. This was held on Sunday 8 July and was reported to be a huge success. Suggestions to make the event even better are being considered by the organising committee.

9.2 Initiative to enhance the heritage of the Parish. It was reported that the water pump from the ancient well in Low Coniscliffe is now installed in Darlington Town Centre. It was suggested this should be returned to its original location.

Action: M Bailey to make enquiries with DBC. By 31 July 18.

Signed: (Chair)

Dated:

9.3 A general matter was raised regarding PC access to legal services. Legal advice is available from CDALC and the PC insurance company. The PC wish to determine what legal representation is available.

Action: M Bailey to seek advice from DBC legal. By 31 July 18.

9.4 It was reported that crime in the Parish is increasing although much lower than in urban areas. Residents are urged to keep property secured.

10 Items for future consideration:

A suggestion was made to organise a Parish Christmas do in addition to the Carols Concert. To be raised at the next Events Committee meeting.

11 Correspondence: An e-mail has been received from a concerned resident regarding potentially dangerous redundant metal fixtures near the river. There is uncertainty about who should be contacted to have these removed.

12 Feedback from meetings attended: It was reported that a CPRE meeting was attended and that they have objected to the recent planning applications.

13 Date of next meeting: 11 Sep 18 at 7.00pm.

The meeting closed at 8.45pm.

Signed: (Chair)

Dated: