

Longhorsley Parish Council Meeting – 16.11.11. – Church Room – 7.00pm

Present Cllrs Elliott (Chairman), Hughes, Lowrie, Truscott, Pagan (part), Cllr Sanderson, PC Teasdale, the Clerk, Rolf Chicken (PC Allotments Officer), and three parishioners.

1. Apologies for Absence Cllrs Savage and Pringle.

2.Co-Option – One eligible nomination for co-option was discussed. It was agreed by all present that Victoria Pagan should be co-opted onto the Parish Council following the resignation of Cllr Walker. Victoria was invited into the meeting.

3. Declaration of Acceptance of Office of Co-opted Councillor – Victoria Pagan was invited to and agreed to become a co-opted councillor for the Parish Council and the declaration of acceptance of office was signed.

4. Completion of Declaration of Interests & Undertaking of Compliance of Model Code of Contract by Co-opted Councillor – completed and signed by Cllr Pagan

5. Minutes of the meeting from the 12.10.11. had been circulated and were approved and signed.

6. Declaration of Interest - none

7. Date of Next Meeting(s) Wed 14th Dec (6.30pm start for Parish Award Presentation), Wed 11th Jan (the clerk will be absent due to holidays)

8. County Matters – Cllr Sanderson provided an update to the meeting in relation to the break down in post office service provision at the village hall. The previous postmistress no longer works for the post office and, whilst there is now a replacement in situ, there is uncertainty at this stage as to how long this replacement will be there. Cllr Sanderson shared his concern about the long-term sustainability of the facility and urged the Parish Council to spread the word and to encourage the village to use the post office as much as possible. **Speeding through Village** – Cllr Sanderson confirmed that he would be able to purchase a flashing speed sign but the PC would have to pick up the ongoing maintenance costs. This would flash 30 rather than advise on individual speeds as these are not permitted in Northumberland. The PC is to consider this idea. In addition Cllr Sanderson is due to meet with some residents near Linden Hall who have raised speeding concerns. **NCC Budget process** – the budget setting process at NCC level continues. **Wind Farms** – NCC has a serious issue as there is an absence of accurate, up to date plans and therefore the consideration of planning applications is often difficult. It was confirmed that Fenrother is not at planning application stage as yet. **Affordable Housing** – Cllr Sanderson advised that he will be putting forward a proposal to restart the introduction of more council houses utilising the funds that are acquired from second homes. This will hopefully be positively received and will look to tackle the 13000 people that are currently on the waiting list for council properties. **Public Transport Consultation** – Cllr Sanderson advised that feedback from the North Area Committee would be useful as this topic was discussed – this will be sought.

9. Update by PC Andrea Teasdale

Speeding initiative continues. **Poacher operation** – a large scale operation across the county resulted in some arrests and equipment being seized. This initiative will continue in the future on a smaller ad hoc basis. **Theft** of Parrott from a village residence – the police are continuing to investigate and have made a number of arrests but unfortunately as yet the parrot has not been recovered. A reward has been offered.

10. Accounts

10.1 Monthly Accounts – The monthly accounts summary, circulated with the agenda, was discussed and approved in addition to all subsequent entries.

Expenditure

2.11.11	PCC re Nov Mtg	£10.00
9.11.11	PCC re graveyard maintenance	£250.00
9.11.11	npower re haining 22/7/- 24/10 est	£70.18
9.11.11	L. Douds Telephone/Internet claim Oct	£15.00
9.11.11	L.Douds re Mileage Claim 6.10.11-9.11.11	£41.60
9.11.11	Stuartia Horticultural Services re Adamson Park Oct	£130.94
14.11.11	L.Douds Salary 6.10.11-14.11.11 33 hrs	£328.05

Income

12.10.11	Opening Balance handed over from Former Rec Committee	£61.00
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Petty Cash Balance as at 16.11.11.

£52.28

10.2 Budget Position To Date - Budget position as at 16.11.11. was circulated and reviewed. No issues to date

10.3 New Accounting Software Trial – The clerk advised that Longhorsley PC had been involved in a pilot for a new accountancy software package which as a result was available for use at no cost. The clerk proposed that this new system run in parallel to existing spreadsheets from the beginning of the next financial year. This was agreed by all.

10.4 Expiry of 12 Month Bond – the existing Barclays fixed bond of 2.2% is due to mature on the 3rd Dec. It was agreed that subject to a similar arrangement being available, the £30000 should be reinvested.

10.5 Budget and Precept 2012/2013 – The clerk presented anticipated year end figures for the current financial year and subsequent budgets for the 2012/2013 financial year. Allowances had been made for the cutting of the football pitch as the Parish Council takes over this responsibility from April 2012. Three quotations had been received for this work which were discussed. It was agreed to offer the work to Stuartia Horticultural Services. Further allowances had been made to accommodate the Parish Councils desire to address some of the overgrown trees/bushes around the village (see item 12.6 and 12.7). It was resolved that a budget of £25000 would be set, partially funded by an expected £8356 surplus from 2011/2012. It was further resolved to raise a precept of £16600 for 2012/2013, being an 8.9% increase over 2011/2012.

11. Routine Items for Review

11.1 Review of Planning Applications Considered – a) The Hollies - Some concerns have been raised about whether the property is adhering to the approved planning application. Awaiting feedback from the enforcement officer b) Moor Edge Cottage – Legal guidance has been sought and it has been confirmed that whilst the Moor is Common Land with no owner shown in the register, section 45 of the Commons Act 2006 does allow a parish council to take enforcement action. A letter outlining the PCs concerns about the boundary is to be sent to the owners of Moor Edge

The meeting was adjourned at 8.00pm to allow parishioners to speak. Points rose included:

- A parishioner thanked Cllr Sanderson was his help and input into the post office issue.
- A parishioner agreed to supply the Parish Council with a list of those hauliers who are regularly seen speeding through the village.
- It was confirmed to the meeting that a new village hall committee had been appointed
- It was confirmed that the existing electricity box was safe to use for the Christmas tree. The clerk confirmed that the request to NEDL to move the meter had been submitted and paid for and NEDL are hopeful that the work will be completed early Dec.
- Lighting of the Beacon – it was agreed that this village traditional should occur this year and Cllr Elliott agreed to donate the mulled wine. It was further agreed that the clerk should approach Liz Walker to ask if she would be willing to organise the music

11.2 Moor Management Scheme – An update was provided to the clerk by Cllr Pringle. “The small amount of scrub clearance scheduled for the autumn never implemented. Too late now even though it has been a very dry period. Some areas cleared two years ago are sprouting briars and bracken and will need cutting back next autumn. Regeneration of heather is very slow and sparse. Ponies are looking very happy and healthy

11.3 Wind Farms – Fenrother Wind Farm – Cllr Elliott attended the recent exhibition. In addition Cllr Elliott had released a press statement on behalf of the Parish Council which represented a statement of fact and was no way an expression of opinion. For previous wind farm applications the impact has always been in relation to the movement of construction traffic through the village, whereas this application will have a long term visual impact. The Parish Council is aware that there have been some strong opinions expressed in relation to this application which it has noted. Cllr Elliott had extended an invite to those parishioners concerned about the application, to attend a Parish Council meeting but no-one has attended as yet.

11.4 Donation Requests - Vitalise– declined as no specific benefit to the village and does not agree with PC policy.

11.5 Allotments – An update report was provided by Rolf Chicken, PC Allotments Officer. Rolf provided a useful background on the history of the allotments. Rolf has been chairman of the former allotments committee since 2002 and since that time there have been 29 changes in allotment holders, although there was none until 2004. The first vacancy become available in 2004 and this was filled following an advert placed around the village. Two further vacancies arose in 2006 and the same process for filling the vacancy was followed. Since 2007 a waiting list has started which has slowly built up to its existing eight people. Clearly there is a demand. Cllr Elliott shared with the meeting a complaint received from a parishioner on the waiting list concerned about how the PC is managing the waiting list and the condition of the existing plots. After discussion it was agreed to write letters to all existing plot holders re-enforcing the clauses within their agreements about allotment conditions and confirming there is concern and pressure from people on the waiting list. It was agreed that a letter should be issued now and a further letter in Feb/March to stress the point within their agreement about condition and that a one month turn around would be adhered to commencing beginning of April. In addition the Parish Council confirmed they had no issues with people sharing their allotments as long as this was a private arrangement between themselves and it was understood that the agreement between the plot holder and the PC still stood. Also no changes to waiting lists would be made as a result of informal plot sharing.

11.6 All Weather Pitch – report by PC Recreation Officer. No confirmation has been received as yet from Helen Stephenson as to whether she wishes to take on this role. It was agreed to keep this slot on the agenda.

12. Items Carried Forward

12.1 Plants and Flowers in the Village – the work in Adamson Park is progressing and then work on the village planters will commence. Concern as to the condition of the planter next to the bus shelter opposite Whitegates was mentioned. It was suggested that Kevin Woods would make an excellent PC Plants and Flowers Officer and it was agreed by all that Kevin should be approached to see if he would be interested in the position.

12.2 Village Play Areas including Playground Inspections – c/f

12.3 Review of Committees/Councillor Duties – the roles and responsibilities of the councillors were discussed and agreed. A note confirming positions will be issued to all with these minutes.

12.4 Electricity Meter on Village Square – J.Pattison has provided a quote for a new concrete plinth (approx £50) which was agreed by all. NEDL have supplied a quote £1069.20 which was agreed by all. A high priority for the work has been requested and it is hopeful that NEDL will be on site in the first week in Dec – Cllr Elliott agreed to be the site contact.

12.5 Parish Council Award 2011/2012 – Kate Foreman has confirmed her nomination and it was an agreed to hold the ceremony at the start of the December meeting (6.30pm) . Cllr Savage is to be asked to organise the engraving of the shield.

12.6 Tree Surgery around the village- Adoption of a Local Policy – c/f to next meeting

12.7 Cutting Back/Shrub Clearance around the Village – Adoption of a Maintenance Plan/Policy – c/f to next meeting

12.8 Review of Electricity Provider – Due to an annual fixed term contract, the electricity supplier for the Christmas tree cannot be reviewed at present – a diary note has been set. However the electricity supply for the all weather pitch will be moved to British Gas from the 4th Dec. Standing chg will be £76 per annum and £9.84p per unit - currently paying 18.35p per unit and £31.33 per quarter standing charge with npower.

12.9 Feedback from joint PC/NCC mtg (10th Oct) – including discussion on the draft PC/NCC charter issued with the agenda. It was agreed that any feedback should be sent into the clerk who would forward onto Cllr Elliott who will submit the PC response. Dates for the forthcoming North Area Committee meetings are to be forwarded to Cllr Hughes.

12.10 Land Enquiry Near Whitegates – Cllr Elliott had replied direct to a land enquiry near Whitegates confirming that the land in question did not belong to the Parish Council.

13. Other Agenda Items

13.1 Moor Edge Cottage – see section 11.1b

13.2 Street Light on Drummonds Close – The damaged street light has been reported to NCC but no action had been noted at the time of writing. To be chased as a matter of priority.

13.3 Housing Needs Survey – concerns were raised as to the style and content of the proposed housing questionnaire which a property consultant was planning to issue to all residents on behalf of a property developer. It was also felt ownership of the survey was not clear. It was agreed that Cllrs Pagan and Elliott should meet with the consultant to discuss the Parish Councils concerns.

13.4 Consultations – Mobile Library – a six week consultation will commence on 21st Nov providing an opportunity to comment on suggested new mobile library routes. To be forwarded to Cllr Hughes for consideration and reporting back at the Dec meeting.

13.5 Queens Diamond Jubilee Beacons – an information pack was passed to Cllr Truscott who agreed to consider this and report back to the Parish Council at the next meeting for ideas on if and how this could be used in the village.

13.6 Removal of Tree Protectors near Football Pitch – concerns had been raised to Cllr Pringle following the last meeting, and it was therefore agreed to discuss this matter further at the next meeting.

13.7 Christmas Tree – The clerk is to write a letter to Mr Lishman enquiring whether a donation of a village Christmas tree would be acceptable.

14. Other Items for Information

14.1 Broadband Provision for Northumberland – it was noted by all that an initiative driven by NCC is underway.

14.2 Review of Parliamentary Constituencies in England – to be reviewed by Clerk for relevance and reported as appropriately.

14.3 Termination of Bus Service – Following notification by NCC of the termination of bus service 406 with effect from 28.10.11, a poster was displayed to this effect around the village and the village transport rep (Martin Chisholm) was notified.

14.4 Ladyferlonnen – Cllr Lowrie confirmed that he has removed a fallen tree from the path.

15. Any Other Business (arising too late for inclusion on the agenda)

15.1 Problems with Street Lights on Whitegates – Cllr Truscott is to supply the clerk with the relevant pole numbers so they can be reported as appropriate.

15.2 – CAN News – latest edition was circulated

The meeting closed at 9.35 pm.

Items for the next agenda to the Clerk by 5pm Friday 2nd December