

HEPSCOTT PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of Meeting held on 19th July 2012

Present: John Lewis (Chairman), Derrick Melia, Phillip Ashmore, David Cowans, Norma Barker, Anne Finlay, Angela Parr (Parish Clerk).

Apologies: Philippa Raper.

2. Minutes of meeting held on 17th May:

These were signed as an accurate record of the meeting on 17th May 2012

3. Matters Arising:

Item 10: The latest edition of the Hepscoth Herald had been produced by the new printers and was considered very good. AF had also put some information re. broadband for the village into the HH.

Item 16: AOB: The library was coming at the prescribed times now and it was important that it kept to the schedule. A note would be kept of when it does come to the village to monitor this.

4 Northumberland Local Development Plan:

JL had given each councillor a disc containing full details of the issues and options for the core strategy. It was important as it refers to the whole County. There were 105 questions raised and Morpeth Town Council are making a detailed response. It was decided to have a separate meeting to discuss the issues in detail and to prepare a response to the NCC before the deadline of 15th August.

Action: John Lewis.

5 Morpeth Neighbourhood Plan:

Hepscoth Parish Council had decided to become a partner in the plan and it was agreed with the Town Council that we would meet our financial commitment in three instalments. There were 4 themes identified and each would be chaired by a member of the steering group. In late September there would be an open day to launch the plan to the public and engage the public and the parishes involved would launch the plan at their village halls and by newsletter at later dates in October/November.. The other parishes committed to the plan are Mitford and Pegswood. To date, Hebron had not committed themselves. They need to respond within a month. This will be a lower level plan to the NCC Core Strategy. It was considered important to be part of the steering so that we 'keep in the loop' and provide input for Hepscoth.

Action John Lewis.

6. Code of Conduct:

The old Code of Conduct has now ceased (July 2012) and the new draft code was given as a handout. It should be read through and discussed and adopted at our meeting in September. PA asked for a copy of the old CoC to be emailed to him so that he could compare the two. It was felt important to adopt the new code as to alter it would require legal knowledge and not be good practice. There would be a monitoring officer to ensure that all matters are adhered to in the code. It was thought that only new councillors (ie.PA) would have to sign the new register of interests at present - all councillors would have to sign in May 2013. AP would find out name of monitoring officer and also email all councillors with the old code for comparisons to be made.

(Since then, the NCC Chief Legal Officer has said that both NCC and NALC would seek to encourage all councillors to adopt the new Registration regime now)

Action: A.Parr

7. Planning Applications:

(i) The mast at Fieldhouse Close had been granted permission. On checking it was found that this is only for another 12 months, whilst the noise levels are monitored.

(ii) Selworthy infill pond - permission granted.

(iii) Cladding to 9 Fieldhouse Close - JL, DC and AF had met Mr.Fleming the architect just before our meeting and it had been agreed that the stone cladding was acceptable. Mr.Fleming would submit a revised Method Statement which included no weekend working and send to North planning. It was agreed that we withdraw our objection provided appropriate conditions can be imposed to cover our concerns, since the revised method statement was better than before.

(iv) Extension of planning application to The Coach House - no objections

(v) 3A Hepscott Manor Farm - garden shed.. JL and DC had visited the site. It was agreed to raise no objection.

8. Stobhill Play Park:

DM reported that renovations have been made but not quite finished. To date, AP had not received an invoice for the work done. There would be a Safety Inspection in August by Digley (we have a 3-year contract) and DM and PA would attend the inspection.

9. Financial Issues:

The audit papers were with the External Auditor and had been submitted in due time.

The current financial situation was stated on a handout.

AP had attended a training session for Parish Clerks re. keeping accounts by computer and had the software as part of the course. She considered it a very successful course.

10. Website Development:

AP had contacted two of the website designers identified previously and had examples of their websites. Mike Henson was specifically geared up to provide Parish Council websites whereas the second provider was more generalised. JL wanted to see documentation from Henson in order to judge more fully the websites he provides for various parishes (countrywide) before a final decision was made. AP would provide documentation from MH and from the website sub-committee.

Action: Angela Parr

11. Terms and Conditions for Parish Clerk/RFO:

These were presented via handout, the only addition needed was a start date for the existing incumbent. However, the changes to the position since this date (May 2008) were also briefly discussed, particularly in view of hours worked and this would be put on the Agenda for more detailed discussion at the September meeting.

12. Barmoor Bank Footpath:

Withdrawn until next meeting as PR not at meeting.

13. Local Transport Plan:

The three items on the plan, considered to be most important, were prioritised. It was also considered that a chicane on the main road through Hepscott could be advantageous as it is still used as a rat run.

14. Meetings attended by Councillors:

JL and DC had attended the Steering Group meeting for the Neighbourhood Plan and JL had attended the public inquiry into the proposed development at South Loansdean.

15. Dates for Joint NCC/Parish Council meetings:

The date for the next meeting for our area (North) would be 8th October. NB would attend.

16. WI - request for placing of Jubilee Bench:

A letter had been received from Hepscott WI, asking for permission to place a bench to mark the Queen's Jubilee. They wished to place the bench near the entrance to the Parish Hall. It was considered that this would be acceptable providing they were responsible for its up-keep, insurance etc and that there would be no costs incurred by the Parish Council. There was also concern expressed that it might be an area where youths could congregate, possibly causing a nuisance and also that the bench could suffer from vandalism. However, a bench across the road from the proposed site had not suffered any

long term damage. They had also considered planting a tree and it was felt that the area close to the village hall was not appropriate and that a fruit tree in the area known as the orchard would be much more appropriate. It was noted that there is a plum tree called Jubilee.

Action: A.Parr

17: Parish Hall Drain Collapse:

DC had brought this up at the Parish Hall Management Committee meeting and they have been in touch with the contractor. All was in hand to remedy the problem. AF would put up the 'uneven surface' warning signs.

Action: A.Finlay

18: Sign-post not repaired:

Mr.McKenzie at NCC would be contacted regarding the now missing sign-post on the A192 (Morpeth towards Hepscott) and ask that it be reinstated asap as this was at a hazardous area at this spot on the road. It was a signpost for a bend where there is now a bare pole.

19: Correspondence:

Since the Agenda had been prepared there had been a letter from the Planning Inspectorate regarding the proposed Morpeth Northern Bypass. It was important that we looked at the environmental issues with this development and the Environmental Statement would be requested. We had been in favour of the Northern Bypass as it can be used by traffic travelling too and from the Ashington area to the A1, some of which uses the Hepscott village road at present.

20: Any Other Business:

PA was to meet with Councillor Ian Lindley to look at the 'leaky ponds', developed following the flooding of 2008. He asked if any one else would like to attend and JL and DC expressed an interest.

PA stated a Declaration of Interest as he was now the Monitoring Officer for the National Parks Authority for Northumberland (under the Localism Act). He was the 'independent person' representative.

21: Date of Next Meeting:

This would be on 20th September at 6.30pm at the Village Hall.

22: Change of date for November Meeting:

It was noted that the date for the November meeting would now be 8th November (2nd Thursday of month) to allow for the elections for Police Commissioner on the

3rd Thursday when the Village Hall would be in use all day.

The meeting finished at 8.35pm.