

HEPSCOTT PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 19 July 2018

1. **Present:** Philip Ashmore (Chair), David Cowans (Vice Chair), Malcolm Paton, Fred Dye, Carolyn Reid, Anne Colver Sylvia Johnson (Clerk)

7 members of the public were also in attendance, plus Morpeth Town Councillors, D Bawn and R Wearmouth

Apologies: Ken Reed, County Councillor Glen Sanderson, PC Andrea Teasdale

Declarations of interest: None

2. Report from Neighbourhood Policing Team

There was no-one able to attend the meeting from the Neighbourhood Police Team. FD will send email to Malcolm Scott in Andrea's absence to see if anyone can attend meetings whilst she is unavailable

Action

FD

3. Minutes of the meeting held on 17 May 2018 and matters arising

FD reported that part of PC Teasdale's report was incorrect – para 2 stated: *"There was not a good enough uptake by volunteers from other areas to make a meeting a viable option so this will not happen yet but is something that can be reviewed in the future."* FD reported that a meeting **had** taken place on 23 April in Bedlington.

Matters Arising: FD reported that GS had received complaints regarding speeding in the village and had asked for speed monitoring to be carried out.

There had been problems with parking on the roadside at Langdale – MP/FD will have a word with the builders.

MP/FD

4. Proposed Parish Boundary Changes:

This item was a discussion on Morpeth Town Council's (MTC) proposal to redraw the Parish Boundaries to take South Fields and Stobhill Manor East from Hepscott Parish and put them into Morpeth Town.

As this was the main item it was taken second in running order after item 1. HPC had invited MTC spokesmen to explain the reasons for their proposal. David Bawn and Richard Wearmouth, Town Councillors from MTC, said that recently new housing estates had grown up around Morpeth that were suburban satellites of the town. These extra houses were putting financial pressure on the services that Morpeth offered. It wasn't fair that Hepscott council tax, including South Fields and Stobhill Manor East, was much lower than Morpeth's.

PA said that the main issue was the significant impact that MTC's proposals would have on Hepscoth Parish and its residents. South Fields and Stobhill Manor East residents (i.e. half of Hepscoth Parish's population) would be paying £100 to £150 extra in council tax and the Parish's income would be cut by half.

There were already plans to build 1500 extra houses within Morpeth and these would provide considerable income for MTC without the need to take funding from their neighbours in Hepscoth. What extra services would be offered for the extra council tax? PA said he had been advised that nothing could take effect until at least 2021, the next elections.

There was a lively debate for over an hour, including comments and questions from the public and HPC councillors. MTC were thanked for their attendance. MTC explained that they wished to continue to consult with HPC and agreed that, if they decided to take their proposal further, it would be decided by Northumberland County Council.

The public, DB and RW left the meeting at 7.45pm.

HPC continued to discuss the issue. All councillors agreed that it was disappointing that that MTC's case contained little factual information (eg, no answer to 'what are the additional benefits that residents might expect for their extra council tax'). It was the agreed view of HPC that nothing had been said by MTC that gave any convincing justification for the significant impact that such a change of boundaries would have on Parish residents and finances.

5. Update from County Councillors:

Councillor Sanderson was unable to attend but sent a brief report by email:

The road surface dressing programme is due to be carried in Hepscoth in the first/second week of August.

NCC is pretty much on top of pothole filling and will begin a new programme beginning shortly. Grass verge cutting is on target and weed killing seems to have gone better this year with the changes that have been made.

The Country Parks investment programme is underway with a new £100,000 play area at Druridge Bay recently begun.

NCC was glad to have helped with the new Floral Clock and the new statue of Emily Davison is due to be unveiled in September.

NCC has completed the redesign of their website with the aim of making it much easier to access.

Arch is being reorganised and NCC continue to assist regeneration and economic development projects around the County.

6. Planning Applications

Current applications:

- Barratt Homes, South Fields, Hepscott – Re-plan of 271 houses (substitution of house types and addition of 42 houses).
Ref: 17/04652/FUL – permission granted
- Storage Rear of Meadow View, Barmoor Bank – change of use and conversion of an existing building to a single dwelling
Ref: 18/00971/FUL – no decision to date
DC agreed to send our views by email that night.
- 12 Eglington Close, Stobhill Manor – replace existing fencing in back garden with acoustic fencing
Ref: 18/01244/FUL – permission granted
- Collingwood House, Hepscott – TPO to fell T1 and T3 Sycamore and T2 Norway Maple
Ref: 18/01542/FELTPO – permission granted
- Shadfen Park, Shadfen - Variation of condition 11 (landscape planting) to allow the landscape planting plan to be submitted pre-occupation instead of pre-commencement)
Ref: 18/01731/VARYCO – permission granted
- New Field House, 9 Field House Close, Hepscott - TPO to fell T4 Sycamore, leaving the stem at 4m and Pollard T6 Ash to 15m to encourage new growth
Ref: 18/01856/FELTPO – Registered
- High Gables, Hepscott - TPO application to reduce the crown of one Oak (T7) by 35%
Ref: 18/02073PRUTPO - Registered

DC

NCC Draft Local Plan:

We have received a copy of the draft Local Plan from NCC. There are some things that need a response to NCC, ie, Green Belt and The Triangle. PA asked for a couple of volunteers to join him in forming a subgroup to go through the Plan and help formulate a response. AC/MP/DC all agreed to help.

PA

Action

7. Flood Alleviation Sub Group

After 6 months we now have a dedicated phone number for the Environment Agency which should enable any queries to be answered. The Flood Plan is being updated. A meeting of Flood Wardens has taken place recently. One flood warden, Andy Youngs has joined the Flood Sub group.

The pollution incident by Barratt has now been signed off. MP and PA recently investigated a buildup of silt under the bridge, about 6-10 inches on the river bed. It looks very difficult to remove. An email has been sent to the Environment Agency re a FOI request regarding work carried out to the ponds at Redhouse Farm in 2010 (Ponds 1, 2 and 3).

8. Website

PA reported that on 22 May he and KR had visited a website developer in Ashington, Ballsy Media, regarding a new website for the Parish Council. The cost for this would be upward of £1,500. PA to speak with KR for his views on this.

PA/KR

9. Speeding and Parking

PA stated that an electronic speed indicator sign has been requested on the A196 opposite the entrance to Coopies Lane to slow traffic. A rough estimate of price is £4.5 - £5K, but this will be paid for by County Councillors Glen Sanderson's and John Beynon's small projects funds. PA had asked for information before the meeting but it had not been forthcoming. We are happy for the sign to be erected as this will help with safety for residents of South Fields, on the understanding that NCC will provide maintenance and project management for the sign.

FD had received an email from Liz Hall re speed deployment on the A196 out of Morpeth from Stobhill; this was done on 3 July at the junction to Green Lane. The average speed was 37.3 mph, the highest was 43 mph and 18.9% of vehicles checked were speeding.

FD stated that he had been beating the drum regarding communication and feedback. He reported that 4 deployments had been carried out recently, 2 of which were in the village on 7 June at Briarlea and 26 June at The Orchard. The average speeds on these were 28.3 and 29.7 respectively. Compared with results before the 20 mph speed limit was set there has been a reduction of 8.5 mph. FD and the CSW team were thanked for their continuing efforts in Community Speed Watch. PA asked FD to write an article for the Hepscoth Herald.

FD

Action

10. Finances

Monthly financial statements had been circulated to councillors with the agenda and were approved. There were 6 items above £100 and these were approved.

It was noted that we have some reserves should we need to seek expert advice regarding the Boundary Change by Morpeth Town Council.

11. Parish Hall

Nothing to report.

12. Correspondence

A letter had been received from NCC regarding our items for inclusion in the next year's Local Transport Plan. It was agreed that councillors look at this and bring their suggestions to the meeting in September. We need to submit the plan by 30 September.

All

13. Meetings and training attended

Councillors were asked to inform the Clerk.

SJ

14. Any other business

- SJ to send out a copy of our Standing Orders to all Parish Councillors. PA requested that these are read before the next meeting so that they can be reviewed.
- Meeting with South Fields residents: PA had met with several residents who were interested in becoming Parish Councillors should a vacancy arise. At present PA had informed the interested parties that there was no vacancy, but they would be informed if and when a vacancy arose.
- Broken drain in car park: DC had been informed that the drain had been repaired, but unfortunately this was not the case. He had received an email to say that NCC had looked through their logs of bin lorries and no documentation showed any in the area that day. DC agreed to pursue this through Glen Sanderson
- Stobhill Manor Playpark: All repairs have now been completed and the invoice has been paid.

DC

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able Pecuniary and Other Interests Forms: SJ gave all councillors the forms to be completed for this year. It was agreed that a copy of last year's forms be sent to councillors for comparison to enable the new forms to be completed.

15. Date and Time of next Meeting

The next meeting of HPC will be held on Thursday 20 September 2018 in the Parish Hall at 6:30 pm

Minutes taken and prepared by:
Sylvia Johnson, Parish Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer

Signed as a true copy:

Action

SJ