

HEPSCOTT PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of meeting held on 15th March 2012

1. **Present:** D.Melia (Chair), J.Lewis, D.Cowans, S.Connell,
A.Finlay, N.Barker, A.Parr (Clerk)

Apologies: D.Towns, I.Lindlay, P.Raper.

P.Ashmore attended with a view to becoming a Parish Councillor

2. **Minutes of last meeting:**

These were agreed with one amendment under Item 10. 4000 to be altered to 400 and areas of Morpeth to be less specific.

3. **Matters Arising:**

3(c) Briarlea - the problems of erosion of verges was brought up at this point. There was long discussion regarding what could be done to negate this eg. 'proper' kerbs, reflective posts, stones etc. Each area discussed had its pros and cons and it was decided to write to Highways and ask for their advice as to what should be done to ensure safety/staying within the law etc.

Action: A.Parr

6(a) Telescopic Mast. There had been a reply from Melanie Thew of the North Planning Department. This stated that neighbours objections would be followed up, together with the situation regarding noise. Before contacting the Planning Department again regarding all of our objections/concerns, DM would contact the owner of the mast and try to arrange a visit to discuss the matter.

12(b). Stephen Connell gave his official resignation at the meeting and the committee conveyed their thanks to him for all his work during his tenure on the Parish Council.

4. **Stobhill Play Park:**

Climb and Slide would be contacted as the best people to attend to the issues raised in the Digley safety report.

Action: D.Melia

5. **Parish Council Website.**

A meeting had been held to discuss format/costs etc., for the website(meeting on 16.2.12). Another meeting was planned for 29.3.12 when types of website/content/design etc., would be determined and appropriate website providers contacted. Morpeth would also be contacted to see who they use.

Action: A.Parr

6. **Planning Applications:**

(i) Fir Tree Close had been approved, and JL expressed his concerns about this. He had attended the Planning Meeting when it had been approved.

- (ii) See Matters Arising regarding the telescopic mast.

7. Financial Issues.

(I) A handout was given showing the current financial situation for the Parish. The figures had been completed up until 31.3.12 thereby showing what would be included in the audit. A.Finlay agreed once again to help A.Parr with the audit. The Parish clerk had yet to apply for VAT refund and would do so for the coming financial year.

(ii) PAYE and the Parish Clerk - this was seen as a 'fait accompli' in that all Parish Councils must now be registered as employers and the deduction of Tax for employees should be shown in the accounts. A.Parr had already completed the registration and was liaising with HMRC to ensure compliance.

(iii) Northumbrian Groundcare quotation for hedge cutting was agreed for 2012/13. This would be confirmed in writing to R.Slater of N.Groundcare

Action: A.Parr

(iv) Of the many requests for donations it was agreed to donate £40 each to CAN and Age UK.

Action: A.Parr

8. Times and Dates for Parish Meetings.

Altering the time of day for Parish meetings was discussed but it was agreed to keep matters as they are. By altering to daytime meetings, there could be problems with councillors attending these.

The meeting in November would have to be altered because the Parish Hall would be used for elections for Police Commissioners.

9. Meetings attended by Councillors.

N.Barker attended the Joint meeting of the NCC and Parish/Town Councils on 12th March. Topics discussed included Service and asset transfer, an up-date on the Charter and Codes of Conduct and its implications for Parish councils. There may have to be increased precepts to accommodate the new criteria. The Charter is being discussed with NALC as it would not be possible to visit/discuss with 158 councils individually.

D.Cowans reported that he was no longer involved with the Pupil Referral Unit.

N.Barker reported on the Patient Representative Group which was concerned about the lack of parking at the health centre and the problems of access, especially where there is no public transport available. There should be a bus service to the new centre.

10. New Chairman.

D.Melia reiterated his intention to stand down as Chair at the AGM (May).

11. Litter bins - NCC and maintenance.

The Parish had provided its own litter bins in the past and these are emptied by the NCC. This should remain the same. NCC would be reminded of this.

Action: A.Parr

12. Correspondence.

Hard copy correspondence received by Parish Clerk was available at meeting.

13. Any Other Business.

(i) The Parish Hall Management Committee was checking its insurance for the Parish Hall and required details of our insurers (Came and Co). These were given to D.Cowans.

(ii) Hedge cutting and grass cutting - Northumbrian Groundcare tender accepted for 2012/13. The good job that he does was commented upon.

(iii) The printers at Sunderland City Council was closing and it was necessary to find a new printer for the Hepscoth Herald. Printing companies would be contacted and costs ascertained.

Action: A.Parr.N.Barker, A.Finlay.

14. Date of next meeting:

The **AGM**, followed by the usual meeting will take place on Thursday 17th May, 6.30pm.

The meeting closed at approximately 8.30pm.