

HEPSCOTT PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of meeting on 17th May 2012
(directly following the AGM)

1. **Attendance:** John Lewis (Chairman), David Cowans (Vice Chairman)
Anne Finlay, Norma Barker, Phillipa Raper, Philip Ashmore,
Derrick Melia, Angela Parr (Parish Clerk)

Apologies: David Towns, County Councillor.

2. **Minutes of meeting** held on 15th March were signed by both the outgoing and incoming chairmen as an accurate record of the meeting.

3. There were no matters arising.

4. **Website:**

A report from the Website sub-committee had been distributed and would form the basis of development of the site. It was felt that we should go ahead as soon as possible as many Parish Councils have their own sites. A site provider had been identified by the sub-committee. However, JL wanted some references before we agreed to use this site provider. DC commented that, whilst the initial price seemed quite high, in the long run fewer hard copies of the Hepscoth Herald would be required which would reduce printing costs. Once references had been obtained, the sub-committee would meet again and were given permission to go ahead by the main committee.

Action: A.Parr

5. **Stobhill Play Park Repairs:**

DM had received a quote from Climb and Slide to complete the repairs identified as necessary by Digley and Co. There was much discussion as to the price of some of the tasks to be done and DM would contact Climb and Slide again to see where savings could be made. It was noted that if the safety notice was moved, it could not be installed on the land surrounding the play park as this was not our land. DM said that he would still handle all issues regarding the site as he felt he had a good insight into the issues raised.

Action: D.Melia

6. **Planning Applications:**

The main issue raised was the telescopic mast as the temporary planning permission was coming up for possible renewal. It was reported that an objection with the reasons had been lodged by email with the County Planning Department. DC and PA both declared an interest and were not involved in the decision making. There was much discussion about the height of the mast and how it could be monitored by the county council and it was noted that the new

application would override the first application. AP would notify the chair as soon as notification was received about the planning application going to Committee.

Action: A.Parr

7. Financial Issues:

- (i) The external audit was due by 9th July at the latest.
- (ii) VAT in the sum of £1467.29 had been refunded.
- (iii) A handout showed the current situation for the 2012/13 financial year.
- (iv) Hepscoth Parish Council was now registered as an employer, with the Parish Clerk as its sole employee. The RFO explained how salary and expenses would be paid net and a separate payment made to HMRC. All the relevant paperwork had been received from HMRC and, as it was such a small amount, it could be paid quarterly rather than monthly. Whilst there are website facilities for this, the RFO would initially be making payments at the post office..

8. Insurance Cover:

The annual payments were due to ensure full cover for the Parish Council and the main elements of the cover were noted. It was also noted that the actual building of the Parish Hall is not covered and should be covered by the Village Hall Management Committee - DC as their representative was aware of this. We did, however, have public indemnity should there be an accident at this venue.

9. Job Description:

An up-dated Job Description had been circulated via email to all Councillors and it was agreed that it was representative of the tasks undertaken by the Parish Clerk. Detailed Terms and Conditions would be available at the next meeting.

Action: A.Parr

10. Hepscoth Herald - Printing

AF had received two quotes for printing the HH. The Azure quote, whilst slightly more expensive, was accepted as Azure have a very good reputation and also employ people with learning difficulties, so are an asset to the community.

Action: A.Finlay

11. Morpeth Neighbourhood Plan:

A letter from Morpeth Town Council was circulated which explained the Morpeth Neighbourhood Plan and how it would affect the surrounding parishes. Morpeth Town Council had been selected to trial this under the new Localism Act.

Each of the surrounding Parish Councils (Hebron, Hepscoth, Mitford and Pegswood) were being contacted to ascertain if they wished to be part of the plan. It was noted that, should we decide to join, there would be a cost involved of just over £1000 which would be more than 10% of our precept. The short timescale for discussion was also commented upon, as the letter requested our decision by 28th May.

DM would contact Gillian Turner (Clerk to Morpeth Town Council) in order to arrange a meeting to discuss the matter further. An extraordinary meeting of Hepscoth Parish Council would be called to discuss the above meeting. At this meeting, it was agreed that those present would make the decision on whether to go ahead or not. The time scale did not allow for it to be discussed at a planned committee meeting (next meeting in July)

12. NCC Local Development Plan -Core Strategy Issues and Options:

(note: Items 11 and 12 were transposed in order to discuss the NCC proposed framework first)

This Core Study (when eventually adopted) will supersede the various planning policies for the former District Council areas in the county. The county council will be promoting the new framework through a series of meetings, exhibitions etc. The issues to be addressed include the green belt/employment/heritage/tourism/affordable housing/recycling.

There will be a 12 week period of consultation and the preferred option will be produced late 2012. A hard copy will be produced by the NCC and each parish will receive one copy. Because of its importance, it was agreed that each Hepscoth Parish councillor will have a copy reproduced for them if possible** and that there will be separate meetings arranged (other than normal Parish Council meetings) in order to ascertain all views. Suggestions need to be positive, with the emphasis on growth and the environment. There needs to be emphasis on sustainable development.

*(** please note that since the meeting JL has obtained a CD for each councillor)*

13. Pedestrian Footpath:

A letter had been received and circulated from the residents of Barmoor Bank concerning problems with footpaths. There was a map attached to show exactly the location of the footpaths. There was much concern expressed, particularly with regard to safety matters. This would be forwarded to R.McKenzie and his comments requested.

Action: A.Parr

14. Meetings Attended:

PA had attended a meeting in Hexham for new councillors and had found it most useful.

No other meetings attended since our last meeting.

15. Correspondence:

A letter had been received from the County Council regarding surface dressing to be carried out at some period between May and August on the A196.

16. Any Other Business:

NB was concerned about the times the mobile library was calling and that it did not always keep to the prescribed times. It was now only going down Fieldhouse Lane and not always calling at the Village Hall. AF commented that the car park here was often full because of events at the hall. It was noted that the mobile library also provides a social meeting place for villagers

17. Date of Next meeting: 19th July 2012.

The meeting closed at approximately 8.45pm.