

Coxhoe Parish Council Meeting Minutes: Events, Environment and Finance Committee

Date & Time: Monday 16 November 2020 6.00pm

Venue: via Zoom

Councillors present:

K Simpson (Chair); S Dunn, W Lavelle, K Lowes.

Also present:

C Llewelyn, Parish Clerk; A Searle, Administration Officer.

EEF101 Zoom meeting information and Parish Council Public Participation Policy

Councillor Simpson gave guidelines for the meeting and reminded everyone of the Parish Council's Public Participation Policy.

EEF102 To note apologies

Apologies were given from Councillor C Thirlaway and also from Councillor N Brown (non-Committee member). It was **Resolved** the apologies were noted.

EEF103 Declarations of interest in items on the agenda

Cllr Lowes declared an interest in the Youth staff team. Cllr Simpson declared an interest in Item 7 d). It was **Resolved** the declarations of interest were noted.

EEF104 To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 14 September 2020

It was **Resolved** that the minutes of the Events, Environment and Finance committee held on 14 September 2020 be approved, confirmed and signed as an accurate record.

EEF105 Public participation

No members of the public were present.

EEF106 Feedback from community organisations in relation to events

There are currently no events due to Covid therefore no feedback.

EEF107 To consider and plan for Parish Council events and related activity

a) Current advice on events

The Clerk referred Councillors to the updated guidance she had circulated from the Events Industry Forum. Outdoor events are not permitted under the current lock down (5 November to 2 December). There are no Parish Council events planned now until 2021.

It was **Resolved** the updated guidance from the Events Industry Forum and the report was noted.

b) To consider a potential programme of events for 2021 including Merchant Navy Day, Remembrance Ceremony and Fireworks Display

The Clerk suggested dates for 2021 for events:

- To mark 22 April World Earth Day
- 3 September Merchant Navy Day

- 6 November Fireworks Display
- 13 November Remembrance Ceremony
- End November or beginning of December Christmas Tree light-up

It was **Resolved** to approve and agree the programme of events for 2021 for Officers to arrange.

c) Christmas Tree

The Clerk advised the Parish Council was unable to get the Christmas Tree from the current supplier this year. Therefore, authorisation from the committee was required to get as tall a tree as possible with the lights fitted for Coxhoe Village Green for £600.

It was **Resolved** to approve and delegate authority to the Clerk

d) Christmas shop window competition

The Scouts are happy to judge the competition and an online form will be arranged. The Clerk is to speak with a business owner just to consider any business needs in the current climate.

It was **Resolved** to note the information and an update to be provided at the next meeting.

e) Christmas Tree light-up

This will not be an event this year under the current guidelines. Other Christmas ideas were discussed, such as a Christmas Tree trail working in partnership with the School, Village Hall and Quarrington Hill Community Centre.

It was **Resolved** the Clerk and Councillor Simpson would discuss further with the Village Hall, Quarrington Hill Community Centre and the School.

EEF108 Consider the Council's current and future budgets

a) 2020 to 21

The Clerk had circulated an up to date budget document with projected expenditure for the current year and advised it is difficult to forecast some sections due to the pandemic. The Parish Council's reserves policy is reserves are 25% of expenditure. The Clerk advised the Council should consider earmarking some of these reserves for expenditure in the next financial year particularly on elections, and that there are no contingencies in the budget for the sports field and pavilion, or for taking on other projects such as Quarrington Hill Churchyard. Councillor Dunn raised concerns over the reserves policy and stated that 25% should be of the budgeted expenditure not the overall expenditure. Councillor Dunn suggested a number of possible changes to the budget to be put in writing to the Clerk.

The following were **Resolved**:

- (1) the budget, the information on the reserves policy and the potential and actual overspends were noted.
- (2) the Clerk to bring a reserves policy to full Council for agreement.
- (3) the Clerk to consider Councillor Dunn's amendments and re-present the budget to the Committee.

b) 2021 to 22

The Clerk had begun to complete some parts of the next financial year's budget. The Action Plan had also been circulated and the Clerk asked for suggestions for next year's Action Plan.

It was **Resolved (1)** the Clerk to amend the budget as discussed at the meeting, to consider these further and bring to the next Committee meeting for further discussion. It was further **Resolved (2)** taking action at the land near Basic Cottages to be added to the 2021 to 22 Action Plan.

EEF109 Greener Council

The Clerk had circulated a report with the agenda with some actions published by Friends of the Earth in relation to environmental issues. Key messages were discussed for the Parish Council and for work with partners and possible suggestions put forward, including further tree planting, ground source heat system under the village hall car park and electric car charging points. The Parish Council can begin to reduce pesticide use where appropriate, undertake a waste audit and further reduce printing.

The following were **Resolved**:

(1) the report was noted.

(2) the Clerk to make the proposed actions into an audit report so the Committee can consider actions the Parish Council can commit to

(3) the Clerk to begin to act on the ideas above.

EEF110 Update and review of activity in the parish in relation to the environment

a) King's Wood

The Clerk, Councillors N Brown and I Armstrong met Paul Boobyer from Durham Woodland Revival at Kings Wood. The management plan and a new plan for 2021 to 2025 have been updated and Paul Boobyer has asked for feedback regarding open grassy areas, hedges and flailing. Assistance will be provided by Paul Boobyer and Durham Woodland Revival with seeking funding and with community engagement. Councillor Dunn raised queries about the suggestions for ponies and where people passing through would be able to access which the Clerk will investigate.

It was **Resolved (1)** the reports were noted.

It was **Resolved (2)** to approve the continuing activity by the Clerk, Councillors I Armstrong and N Brown.

b) Coxhoe Churchyard

The Clerk has struggled to get quotes for path improvements. She gave details of a quotation and the potential cost of laying tarmac.

It was **Resolved** to approve the Clerk to accept the quotation received approve work to be carried out as soon as possible so the path does not deteriorate any further, using funds from the Contingencies budget.

c) Shaun Henderson Memorial Sports Ground

Quotations have been received for the roller shutter doors, and the Clerk is looking into a solution to a boggy area by the pavilion potentially by adding bark chips, road planings or vehicle mats.

It was **Resolved** the approval of up to £1500 net for the roller shutter doors from the Sports field budget and £250 expenditure to deal with the boggy area by the pavilion using the Contingencies budget.

d) Tommies on Quarrington Hill Village Green

The Clerk had received a request for 'tidying up' around the Tommies at Quarrington Hill village green including an edging and potentially pebbles, and estimated this may cost £200. It was

Resolved to approve the Clerk to undertake a tidying up at the area at a cost within the Clerk's delegated authority.

e) Tender Hanging baskets and planters

The tender is due for renewal from 23 May 2021. The Clerk circulated with the agenda the current tender schedule and service agreement, and recommends that the Council again approaches a three-year tender. Councillors are asked to consider what they may wish to amend for the new

tender. It was **Resolved (1)** to note the tender documents and **Resolved (2)** Councillors to consider any amendments to the tender to bring to the next meeting.

f) Review of all Parish Council Land

The Clerk is to undertake a programme of regular inspections of all Parish Council land, and a list was circulated with the agenda. Councillors can assist with this (a response has already been received). This will take Officer time of approximately one day per month and is a priority to protect the Council against potential claims, to ensure conditions of insurance are complied with and to keep communities as safe as possible. Councillors S Dunn, W Lavelle, K Lowes and K Simpson offered to assist. Councillor Dunn also mentioned Croxdale and Hett Parish Council have just had tree inspections done which may be of interest. It was **Resolved** to note the information.

EEF111 Date and time of next meeting

It was **Resolved** the next meeting of this Committee will take place on Monday 7 December 2020 at 6.00pm (focus on finance)

The meeting closed at 8.00pm.

Certified as a True Record:

Chair (Sign)

Date

DRAFT