WINDLESTONE PARISH COUNCIL

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Minutes of Ordinary Meeting held 13th August 2024 at Hutton House, Chilton

Present:	Councillor Dave Willshaw (DW) (Chair)	ACTION
	Councillor Derek Cattell (DC)	
	Councillor Phil Woods (PAW)	
	Councillor Allison Morris (AM)	
	Councillor David Oliver (DO)	
	Karen Younghusband, Clerk & Responsible Finance Officer (KY)	
	8 Members of the Public were also in attendance.	
18/24-25	Apologies N/A	
19/24-25	Declarations of Interest Declarations of Interest were received regarding Agenda Item 6 - Planning from:	
	Councillor Allison Morris Councillor David Oliver Councillor Phil Woods	
20/24-25	Minutes	
20/21/20	Members agreed to approve the following Minutes:	
	 AGM of Windlestone Parish Council held 14th May 2024 	
	Ordinary Meeting of Windlestone Parish Council held 14 th May 2024	
21/24-25	Matters Arising from the Minutes There were no Matters Arising.	
22/24-25	Public Participation Eight Members of the public were present at the meeting. It was agreed to permit members of the public to join in discussions under individual Agenda Items as appropriate.	
	Members raised safety concerns regarding motorcycles cutting through the various access points in and around Rushyford. The area had become blighted with youths on motorbikes wearing balaclavas (with no helmets) since the recent fatalities near to the entrance to Rookery Gardens, with youths cutting through to visit the shrine that had been erected for the two youths, beeping their horns, and causing a general nuisance for residents. KY had suggested to the Local Authority that the shrine be relocated as it was distracting for drivers and was causing unwanted attention. Unfortunately, the Police had recommended that the shrine be left in situ for the time being. KY would raise the matter again and organise a site meeting with Highways Officers from DCC to request that kissing gates or steel barriers be installed to assist with the ongoing motorbike problem, and to once again ask if the shrine could be moved. There was a concern that the laying of flowers and balloons etc. would become a regular event on Birthdays and Anniversaries.	KY
	Residents raised several other issues including overgrown footpaths, trees not being trimmed, bins not being emptied and the concrete bollards at the end of Eden Gardens repeatedly falling down. KY requested that residents email her a list	KY

of bullet points detailing outstanding issues that she could include in a letter to the Clean & Green Team at DCC, to try and chase up all outstanding issues including those already reported through the DCC 'Do It Online' System.

23/24-25 Correspondence

An email had been received from Councillor Sue Reece from Chilton Town Council inviting the Chair and Parish Clerk to a meeting to discuss Chilton TC's plans to develop a Neighbourhood Plan. DW explained that as neighbours of Chilton and users of the various services in Chilton, Chilton Town Council were keen to consult with residents of Windlestone as part of the Neighbourhood Planning process, and accordingly DW & KY had met with Sue and offered to assist with the community consultation process, in terms of helping to consult with residents of Windlestone parish. A Neighbourhood Plan it was explained can be a useful tool in the development process. It can be used to give communities a better say over new housing developments, protection of green spaces and restricting activities such as placing a cap on the number of take-away outlets being established in a community. A Neighbourhood Plan once adopted becomes a legal document, which the Local Authority have to consider when making planning decisions.

A copy of a letter sent to Durham County Council from Chilton Town Council had been received for information. The letter reinforced the points made by residents of Windlestone including the need for a speed reduction and pedestrian crossings at Rushyford, as part of the ongoing works to upgrade the road infrastructure.

Correspondence had been received regarding the proposed boundary changes across the County. The main concern was that Windlestone Parish going forward would be lumped in with Spennymoor, Aycliffe and Coxhoe and would therefore have to compete with these much larger areas for any type of external funding.

24/24-25 Finance

Members Approved several items of expenditure previously circulated. Orders were signed by the Chair, and the corresponding payments list signed by the Chair and Vice-Chair.

25/24-25 Planning

One Planning Application had been received by DCC to convert a garage into a dog grooming salon at 15 Rookery Gardens.

Ordinarily Parish and Town Councils can make comments on planning applications submitted in their Parish. A Parish/Town Council can even request that instead of being decided by a single officer, that an application be decided by a full planning committee. Unfortunately, in order to make comments, Council's need to be fully quorate. For Windlestone Parish Council this means that a minimum of three Councillors must take part in any deliberations. As three out of the five Councillors for Windlestone had declared an interest in this particular application, this left the Parish Council inquorate and therefore unable to submit comments on the application.

KY suggested that if residents or Parish Councillors in their capacity as a resident, wanted to make individual comments on this particular application then they should do so, referring to the list of Material Planning Considerations, which the Planning Department must take into consideration when deciding whether to grant planning permission or not.

26/24-25	Parish Council Website KY reported that the Parish Council's new website was now up and running and that she had received initial training on how to update the site.	
	It was agreed that the site needed to be promoted better in the community. DO offered to deliver a flier promoting the new website to residents.	DO/KY
	KY agreed to produce a Draft flyer after her return from holiday in September.	
27/24-25	Update on Windlestone Hall No further updates had been received regarding developments at Windlestone Hall.	
	Residents reported that the Windlestone Hall Instagram Account was very active, and that the Hall had recently posted photographs of the impressive renovation work that had been taking place at the property together with details of future plans.	
	DC reported that the Giant Hogweed that was blighting land belonging to Windlestone Hall had been sprayed and that the Hall was obviously making every effort to eradicate the issue.	
28/24-25	Update on The Eden Arms Residents reported lots of activity taking place in recent weeks at the Eden Arms. A range of tradesmen had been observed entering the building and residents also reported that around seven/eight people were residing at the premises. Fire Safety Inspections had been carried out at the property and the Police had promised to keep an eye on the building. Lights had been observed going on and off during the evening, and residents had reported the sound of works taking place inside the building during the early hours of the morning. KY confirmed that no planning application had been received in relation to the property by DCC Planning Department, but KY agreed to contact Building Control to request an Inspection of the premises.	KY
29/24-25	Update on Changes to Rushyford Roundabout Works were well underway to upgrade the road infrastructure at Rushyford. Residents remained concerned and were still keen to have a meeting with Officers from the Local Authority to discuss safety issues regarding the development, and especially with the number of accidents that had occurred in the area since the works had commenced. The speed of approaching traffic to the roundabout and the lack of pedestrian crossings at Rushyford posed real safety concerns. KY agreed to write to the new MP Alan Strickland to request support in addressing residents' concerns, with the Local Authority.	KY
	KY also agreed to contact County Councillor Julie Cairns to determine if she had managed to make any headway in contacting Senior Officers at DCC regarding the ongoing concerns relating to Rushyford.	KY
30/24-25	Proposal to Install an additional Noticeboard & Litter Bins in the vicinity of Eden Gardens Due to the speed of traffic travelling along the C35 it was very difficult for residents living on the opposite side of the road to Rookery Gardens to cross the road to access the Noticeboard. In light of this, residents had queried if it would be possible to install another Noticeboard in the vicinity of Eden Gardens. Although, Noticeboards could be expensive KY agreed to source prices and contact County Councillor Julie Cairns to enquire if she would be willing to contribute to the costs involved in purchasing and installing a Noticeboard. Residents also queried if there was any possibility of sourcing additional bins, as	KY

	at least two had been removed near the bus stops at the Eden Arms and never replaced. KY agreed to report this to the Clean & Green Team.	KY
31/24-25	Community Bulb Planting Members discussed options for planting bulbs in various locations throughout the Parish. It was agreed that PAW visit Windlestone Nurseries to establish what bulbs (preferably a mix) could be purchased for different amounts i.e. £500, £1,000 or £2,000. KY agreed to ask County Councillor Cairns if she had any monies available through her Small Grants allocation to assist with the costs involved.	PAW/KY
	It was agreed that as part of the flyer to be circulated to residents promoting the Council's website, that the flyer could also be used to gauge resident's views on community bulb planting in the Parish.	
32/24-25	Outstanding Issues / Reports KY gave an update on outstanding issues in the Parish that had been reported to Durham County Council and/or the Police. As discussed earlier in the meeting KY would be sending a letter to the Clean & Green Team at DCC listing all outstanding issues that had previously been reported to the Local Authority but not actioned, including overgrown footpaths in the Parish.	КҮ
33/24-25	Date and Time of Next Meeting KY agreed to book Hutton House (Chilton Town Hall) for the next meeting of the Parish Council as follows:	KY
	Ordinary Parish Council Meeting: - 6.00pm Wednesday, 27th November 2024	

With no further business to discuss the Chair declared the meeting officially closed at 7.45pm.