



**Minutes of the Hurworth Parish Council Meeting held
on Thursday 7th March 2024 starting at 7:00pm
at Hurworth Grange**

Attendees

Parish Councillors present:

Cllr Andrew Leigh, Cllr Dorothy Oughton, Cllr David Crisp, Cllr Peter Williamson, Cllr Lennox.
Cllr Peter Willis, Cllr Janine Forster. Cllr Debbie Williamson

Also

Peter Allan (Parish Clerk), Cllr Lorraine Tostevin, Cllr Paul Walters and 10 members of the public.

1. Chair's Opening Address

The Chairman welcomed the Councillors and members of the public.

The Chairman introduced and welcomes our new Councillor, Debbie Williamson, who joined the council today, and signed her Acceptance of Office.

2. Apologies for Absence

Cllr Peter Foster, Cllr Lynsey Probert, Cllr Paul Walters.

Also, Cllr Kelvin Russell was not present.

3. Declaration of Interests

- Cllr Leigh – Hurworth Albion
- Cllr Crisp – allotments

4. Minutes from the Meeting Held 1st February 2024

The Minutes were accepted by the Council, proposed by Cllr Oughton and Seconded by Cllr Crisp.

5. Matters Arising

a. **Bellway estate.** Cllr Willis reported that

After the last Council meeting I sent an invite to DBC planning representatives, Michael Conyer and Dave Coates to come to the Bellway development to discuss outstanding planning issues

I have not received any response from them – however I copied in Bellway directors inviting them to be involved

I eventually received a response from their MD Frank Lincoln who apologised for the delay in completing outstanding issues and informed me that he is holding a Technical Review and will get back to me once he has clarity. He did indicate that there is an issue between the LA Highway inspection manager and Bellway technical team.

This email was received on the 16th February – I have had no response since

I emailed the MD last Thursday asking for an update and inviting him to our meeting – no response to date.

Two members of the public expressed their concern about the lack of action being taken by the Bellway management, and also the lack of any response from Darlington Borough Council.

Cllr Willis told the meeting that he will escalate the issue, and continue to pursue both Bellway and DBC. **Action Cllr Willis**

6. Hurworth Grange Lease

The Chairman reported that the six councillors have now submitted the credentials to the solicitor, so the lease can now be drawn up. There are two items still to be agreed between the two parties. The termination clause, and the definition of ‘All repairing’ lease, which may need some revision. The solicitor is drawing up the draft, and it should be concluded this month. **Action Cllr Leigh.**

7. Ward Councillors Report

Councillor Lorraine Tostevin reported: -

- 1) The Highways works being advertised on notices on Roundhill Road are to extend the full length of the Road. The scheme has not been fully designed yet but it will include filling of potholes, haunching and resurfacing as so required.
 - 2) The entrance on Neasham Road (opposite Strait Lane) which is currently with planning for determination as a retrospective application has had some drainage works progressed in order to reduce the flooding in that area.
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- 3) Funding for Hurworth Schools was signed off at DBC Cabinet this week. The funding is for educational improvements and has come from Miller Homes. This funding does not include the monies for the 20 mph scheme outside Hurworth Comprehensive that is expected later this year subject to approval of the design of the scheme

8. Annual Assembly

The Annual Assembly, which is a Public Meeting, hosted by the Parish Council will be held at Hurworth Grange on Friday 12th April stating at 6.45pm.

The first section will be short presentations by community groups, highlighting all of the many amenities, families and community events which our vibrant village embrace.

The second session is open to the public, who can make any suggestions, put forward any ideas, and make observations, all of which will be taken into consideration when the Parish Council formulate the Parish Plan for the next three years. There will be a free buffet and free bar, and it is hoped that at least 100 residents will attend. There will be ample advertisement of the event.

9. Public Participation

1. A resident asked if the council had identified the pathway which runs from the Glebe to the railway, backing the Grange. Cllr P Williamson said that this is still not clear, but StreetScene are making further enquiries.
2. A trustee of the Rogers Trust addressed the meeting, and explained why the Trust exists and that their mission is to provide grants to both individuals and =community groups, who are within Hurworth Parish, and who are in need of assistance. Each application is considered on its worthiness for the financial aid.
3. A resident asked about plans for new housing estates in Hurworth. He had heard that planning permission has been submitted for more houses on Roundhill Road.
Cllr Tostevin responded and explained the DBC has a 15 year Plan, which is now into its third year. The Plan states that Hurworth will not be required to have any more major houses built, except for infills, on a case-by-case application. There have been applications for further development, but there have been and will be denied, as they will fall outside of the DBC Plan. However, the Plan is reviewed every five years, but at present this is the situation.

10. Planning Applications

Cllr Willis submitted the following report: -

HURWORTH PARISH COUNCIL PLANNING APPLICATIONS – February 2024

The have been 4 planning applications during February and March

- 1) 44 Manor Road Hurworth Place

Crown reduction of ash tree

2) 2 Croft Road

Conversion of garage into garden room

3) Danby Cottage 8 The Green

Listed building consent for repair to storm damaged wall at rear of property

4) Four Winds Strait Lane

Erection of single storey extension, Timber double garage and workshop to front garden

A resident raised the question about the rerouting of the pathway at Timmies Lane.

Cllr Tostevin said that this was now being addressed at the Planning Department, that the matter should be resolved within the next month

Councillor Reports

11. Tree Report

Cllr Foster reported: -

All the trees have been inspected, and despite rain and strong winds. the trees are in good health,

The trees in Goblins Wood have been cut back to allow the light from the street lights to function more effectively.

The inspection of the trees in the Grange has identified two large trees which are dead, and will need to be felled. We are waiting for the ground to dry out, to make the felling of the trees both easier and safer.

12. Open Spaces – Cllr Lennox gave the following report: -

Open Spaces and Environment – Fiona Lennox – March 2024

Environmental Agency

As discussed at the last meeting on 1st February, we had a request from the Environmental Agency for the work on the river near Croft, for the installation of new equipment. HPC unanimously agreed to give permission for this work to commence but only with the proviso that we had a written statement from EA that we would have no liability for the new installation either during installation, or in the future. So, we now have a letter from the Environmental Agency clearly stating that they take on the liability in the event that any incident occurs.

Point of note – EA actually have legal authority to enter our land, with or without our permission but did ask us for permission.

Waste Bins Update

Also, as mentioned at the last meeting: -

- The waste bin at the Green, with the hole in the bottom, has now been replaced - DONE
- Still discussing the need for a bin at the layby at Hurworth Place going towards Darlington, where there used to be one but there isn't one currently.

Village Flowers

Nigel Goddard, who buys the plants and looks after the planters at the Village Hall, near the Comet notice board and at Hurworth Grange, asked if he could spend a little more money this time compared to previous years. This is because he wants to buy different types of plants that require less watering during the dry summer months. We have agreed to this as it makes sense to have easy to maintain plants in these public areas.

Also, we would like to take this opportunity to thank Nigel for the work he does in the village. Nigel carries out all this work voluntarily and has done for several years now.

Tees River Trust

In the past we have contributed £1000 each year to Tees River Trust. TRT spray the hogweed twice a year, plus extra if we request it. HPC covers the stretch from the Ringfield to Newbus Grange.

Can we continue to do this? It comes from the Open Spaces budget.

A motion was tabled by Cllr Oughton, seconded by Cllr Forster that the council will contribute £1000 to the Tees River Trust to assist funding for the Giant Hogweed removal. The motion was passed unanimously. **Action Clerk**

Civic Pride - Anti-Litter Campaign

Not specific to Hurworth, but Civic Pride have advised us of an upcoming anti-litter campaign, “The Big Spring Clean”. This is their annual anti-litter campaign run in conjunction with volunteers and partners and aims to encourage us all to take pride in where we live, work and play, by way of litter picking the local area.

Further information can be found at <https://www.durham.gov.uk/bigspringclean>

This year they will be out and about in County Durham holding open sessions and community litter picks. These sessions are open to all and you’ll be able to meet staff and take away your own free litter picking kit. They will be at various locations below between 10:00 & 12:00 on the dates shown.

- **21/02/2024 The Durham Dales Centre (Stanhope)**
- **06/03/2024 Green Lane Spennymoor**
- **20/03/2024 Library Barnard Castle**
- **27/03/2024 Byron Shopping Centre (Seaham)**
- **03/04/2024 Durham Town Hall**
- **10/04/2024 Bishop Auckland Town Hall**

If you'd like to join in one of the group litter picks, they'll be at the locations below from 10:00am on the dates shown, a full safety briefing and equipment will be provided.

- **23/02/2024** **Playground outside Durham Dales Centre**
- **08/03/2024** **Immediate Area of Green Lane Reception, Spennymoor**
- **22/03/2024** **Main Street in front of The Witham, Barnard Castle**
- **28/03/2024** **Seaham Vane Tempest beach**
- **05/04/2020** **Market Place outside Durham Town Hall**
- **12/04/2024** **Bishop Auckland Market Place**

If anyone is interested and you'd like any further information on the above, please do not hesitate to contact the team on litterfreedurham@durham.gov.uk.

13. Highways and Traffic

Cllr Dorothy Oughton reported:

Traffic Report

The averages for the month of February 2024 are as follow, also the highest speed recorded: -

The highest and average speeds are as follows: -

Metal Bridge	fastest mph	average speed mph	Not operational
The Green	fastest 66 mph	average speed 26.4 mph	
Hurworth Road	fastest 63 mph	average 27.2 mph	
Linden Court	fastest 63 mph	average 27.8 mph	
Roundhill Road	fastest 45 mph	average 22.1 mph	

The monitor at Metal Bridge was repaired an were unable to download the data. The monitor will have to be returned for repair

Action Clerk

Full details of the traffic volumes and statistics are available for your perusal on the HPC web site.

14. Rights of Way Report

Cllr P Williamson reported as follows:-

Footpath update for 7th March 2024

Footpath 11 (Teesdale Way) section from Blind Lane to the Hotel complex.

This section of footpath is suffering badly with flooding, due to the field on one side and the owner's driveway on the other, being higher than the footpath. DBC are in discussions with the landowner, about the driveway. We are awaiting a further update from DBC.

Footpath 19

This short piece of path that runs off Croft Road, opposite Elmfield Road and up to the Grange playing field by the dog bin.

Peter Allen and Peter Williamson had a meeting with Brian Graham (DBC) about this issue and what could be done to resolve the problem. We have not received any feedback from our discussion.

Also, we have decided to investigate further options to rectify the problem and will be contacting some drainage consultants for information and estimates on how to rectify the fault.

Footpath 9

Peter Williamson has been asked by DBC Rights of Way Officer to revisit this footpath in the small wood section, this is due to fallen trees/branches that are causing walkers to bend double to pass.

Although the DBC has sent letters asking the landowner to rectify this issue. There has been no response.

Also, I have reported back to DBC Right of Way Officer that nothing has been done to rectify the reported issue.

Dog Fouling

The DBC Right of Way Officer has just supplied me with some stickers to fix where necessary, asking residents to pick up after their dogs defecate.

15. Crime and Security Report

Cllr Oughton reported that we have now received the January report, but not the February report.

January 2024 report

ASB	1 incident
Suspicious behaviour	2 incidents
Burglary	1 incident

16. Allotment Report

Cllr Crisp reported as follows: -

All the allotments at Strait Lane have now received tenancy agreements and paid their rent for 2024. There is nobody currently on the Strait Lane waiting List.

There is one tenant who has given up his allotment at Hurworth Grange, and this has been allocated and accepted by the person at the top of the Waiting List. Two persons are now on this Waiting List.

There is very little activity on the allotments, awaiting better weather

17. Roads and Pathways

Cllr Forster, said that there is nothing to report for February, except one resident has asked for potholes in Greenside Court to be filled in. The Council agree that this will be carried out. Action Clerk

18. Projects 2023-24

- a. Beech tree carving project** – Cllr Forster reported that the project is now getting underway, and the group is encouraging the scouts and Hurworth House school to become involved. They are seeking further funding from an Arts Fund. They are meeting with the Clerk next Tuesday to make further plans.
Cllr Crisp suggested that they involve one or two local companies, who could provide material and give assistance. Cllr Forster said that they want to keep this as a community group, and develop skills and interest for the members of the group.
- b. The Grange pathway entrance** – Cllr Williamson reported that he has project has been discussed with Mr Brian Graham; Head of StreetScene and they had discussed various options regarding the drainage on the field. The option to move the entrance has been dropped, as there are further complications and few benefits, The suggestion of a small bridge appears to be the better option, and further consultation with civil engineers and obtaining quotations is in progress. **Action Cllr P Williamson & the Clerk.**
- c.** Cllr P Williamson drew attention to the deterioration of the pathway bordering the Grange nature reserve. Some maintenance is required. **Action Clerk**

19. Matters of Interest

A. Correspondence –

- a. **Council Notice Boards** – The Chair reported that the three new notice boards have arrived, and will be installed later this month. The Durham dioceses has not yet replied to our request to replace the notice board in the church grounds. **Actions Clerk**
- b. Potholes at Greenside Court – this will be addressed.
- c. The Council has prepared the next edition of the **Parish Chronicle**. This will be going to the printers on 9th March, and will be delivered. Along with the Church newsletter on or about 20th March. The Chronicle features the upcoming Annual Assembly, and the articles within, highlight the vibrant nature of our beautiful environment.
Our thanks go to our newest Councillor, Debbie Williamson, who undertook to consolidate the Chronicle and prepare it for publication, and to Graham Wylie who provided valuable advice and guidance.

20. Accounts for Payment

The schedule of payments for February 2024, having been distributed to all the councillors, were accepted with no queries.

Accounts for Payment February 2024

<u>Name</u>	<u>Cheque No.</u>	<u>Details</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Swarco	103963	Speed monitor repair	531.36
R V Rogers trees	103964	3 cherry trees	142.00
Hurworth Grange CIO			
Insurance	103965	Contribution to Grange insurance	3000.00
Swarco	103966	VAT to Swarco	106.27
David Parker grass memorial	103967	Memorial upkeep & grass cutting 1 year	525.00
DBC Project	103968	Emerson Road pathway	4027.00

Hurworth Grange CIO	103969	Church newsletter printing and photocopying	138.50
M Harrison	103970	Filling potholes	140.00
Johnston trees	103971	<u>Cutting back tree in Goblins Wood</u>	625.50
P Robinson	103972	Salary	514.58
P D Allan	103973	Salary	1220.80
Inland Revenue	103974	PAYE	352.40
Public Loans Board	103975	Loan repayment	258.62
P D Allan	DD	Admin and allotment expenses	140.57
Total Expenditure			£11,722.60

21. Financial Report

The Financial Report, as at 29th February 2024, having been distributed to all the councillors, were accepted with no queries

Financial Report to 29th February 2024														
BLUE-Allocated	BLUE-Allocated				Ringfenced funds £11,689									
	Apr-23	May-23	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24	Total	Budget
Revenue														2023-2024
Precept	59000												59000	59000
VAT & Litter Picker refund	114	2097			2897							3100	8208	8200
Rent & Interest	20		220	0		236	100		260			550	1386	650
Grants											1540		1540	0
Allotment rent										560	380	140	1080	1180
Total Revenue	59134	2097	220	0	2897	236	100	0	260	560	1920	3790	71214	69030
Expenditure														
Salaries & NHI	2089	2088	2228	2088	2087	2229	2088	2088	2228	2088	2088	2250	25639	27500
Gen. Admin Expenses	352	1165	1374	67	424	217	138	223	490	318	144	300	5212	4060
Trees						220		585	315		767	450	2337	5000
Open Spaces	218	52	794		265		63	0			525	1200	3117	4500
Section 137	382		1230	400	400	500	250	465		250	120	5750	9747	10000
Projects	1459		120	254				378			4027	1200	7438	12000
Repairs, Maint	867									1914		200	2981	3000
H Grange support			600				3244	150	160		3000		7154	0
Newsletters & Posters	60	95		12	659	86	97	60		83	120	750	2022	2500
Paths/ Grit/ Heritage Trail					403			0				450	853	2000
Allotments			137	200		171		250			10	100	868	1400
Highways & Defibs	234						192	0			658		1084	1500
Handyman	130	150	30				220	100				400	1030	1500
Rights of Way & Walks			150					0				400	550	500
Capital Expend & Youth					259						259		518	3517
VAT	146	6	109	60	118	36	25	89	54	397	5		1045	
Total Expenses	5937	3556	6772	3081	4615	3459	6317	4388	3247	5050	11723	13450	71595	78977
													-381	-9847
Funds In Hand less ringed	65106	118303	116844	110292	107211	105493	102270	96053	91665	88678	84188	74385		
Revenue less expenses	53197	-1459	-6552	-3081	-1718	-3223	-6217	-4388	-2987	-4490	-9803	-9660	11499	
Funds in Hand	118,303	116,844	110,292	107,211	105,493	102,270	96,053	91,665	88,678	84,188	74,385	64,725	Ringed	

The Clerk advised the meeting that the financial year end for the council is 31st March 2024.
There are two items in the budget, which he would like to pay before the month end, viz:

1. The Section 137 award to Hurworth Grange CIO as a contribution to the Music in the Air concert in July 2024 £2,000

The Section 137 award to Hurworth Grange CIO for the Hurworth Country Fair 2024 £2,000

The Chairman asked the meeting to confirm the expenditure, and the Clerk asked to pay these amounts. **Action Clerk**

1. The Chairman requested permission to match fund the Rogers Trust in providing £750 as a Section 137 award to fund the new pétanque disabled friendly pathway. Cllr Oughton proposed contributing the £750, and Cllr Forter Seconded the motion. The motion was passed unanimously. **Action clerk**

The intention is to complete the Financial Accounts by 7th April and to hand them to the Internal Auditor. The audit should have been completed by 30th April, in time for submission to the Council at the May meeting.

22. Association Reports

a. HCA – No report

b. Hurworth Village Hall –

Lynn Drumm read the following report for the Village Hall.

The excellent and ever popular Pudding Club was held on 25th February with nearly 200 individual servings for folks to enjoy. The event was very well attended and Linda Normanton was crowned the outright winner with her signature dish - White Chocolate Cheesecake.

And, on 3rd March we had the cinema on your doorstep. Michael Caine and Glenda Jackson in ‘The Great Escaper.’ 60 people attended. By far our biggest crowd ever. Whether it was because of the film or the homemade soup beforehand who knows but it was great to have so many enjoying the hall.

Thanks go to all those that attend events, those that help out at and the Village Hall Committee. We couldn't do it without you!

c. Hurworth Albion –No Report

23. Any Other Business (Non-Financial)

A resident drew attention to the fact that there have been two serious road accidents in the last 6 weeks. In each case vehicles have been written off.

Also, concern was raised about an individual doing wheelies on an escooter. This has been widely reported on Facebook. It is a major concern that it is possible that the rider is not insured, and if or when he has an accident, the personal damages and legal costs could be very high.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 8.02pm
