

## HEDLEYHOPE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 26 September 2024 at 7.30 pm  
in the Village Hall, East Hedleyhope

### Present

**Chair:** Sarah Woodroffe (SW)

**Cllrs:** Peter Ayling (PA), Deb Warde (DW)

**Officer:** Gillian Bell (Clerk)

#### 1. Apologies for Absence

Cllr Martin Hurton, County Cllr Marion Wilson, PCSO Paige Hart

#### 2. Declarations of Interest

None to declare.

#### 3. Public Participation

No members of the public present.

#### 4. County Councillors' Reports

A written report from Cllr Marion Wilson had been circulated.

- *Residents' views sought on DCC budget* – the council forecasts a budget gap of £64.1 million over the next four years, with savings of £21.7 million to be made in 2025/26 even if council tax is increased by the maximum 2.99%. This is higher than previously forecast due to growing unfunded budget pressures, primarily in children's social care and home-to-school transport. There are anticipated pressures from pay and price inflation. The council has already agreed £3.2 million of savings for 2025/26 and £8.3 million of savings for the next four financial years, following a public consultation last year. Cabinet has now agreed to a further public consultation on the continued approach of the council to identify these savings and what other services should be prioritised for savings to meet the £21.7 million gap.
- *Food waste collections considered for County Durham* – Cabinet approved changes to County Durham's household recycling collections in line with the Simpler Recycling reforms introduced by the Government. This includes a requirement for all councils to introduce weekly household food waste collections by 31 March 2026, and by March 2025 for large businesses. It is also proposed that glass recycling will be collected in the main blue-lidded bin rather than in a separate box.
- *County Durham to benefit from life-saving health checks to tackle cardiovascular disease:* County Durham is set to receive £119,000 to provide workplace health checks as part of a Department of Health and Social Care pilot scheme. DCC will partner with local employers to offer checks that can detect the preventable causes of cardiovascular disease and other health conditions.

#### 5. PCSO briefing

A report from PCSO Hart was received and noted. Consett Neighbourhood Policing will launch Rurali, a new initiative for rural crime and crime prevention, at a meeting in Satley Village Hall on Thursday 10 October at 6.30pm.

6. **Minutes and recommendations therein agreed from previous meeting on 8 August 2024**

Proposed by DW, seconded by SW.

7. **Parish Councillor vacancy**

Electoral Services have confirmed that the current vacancy can be filled by co-option.

8. **Financial regulations and asset register**

Following discussion of the financial regulations, the debit card limit in section 9.1 was amended to remove the single transaction limit and replace this with a total transaction limit on the card of £500. It was agreed to adopt the updated financial regulations and asset register.

9. **Budget Update**

*Balance as of 26 September 2024:*

Income: £21,502.57

Expenditure: £19,365.30

*Earmarked project expenditure:*

Seat repair and installation: £1000

10. **Completion of the Community Emergency Plan project**

Representatives from Northern Powergrid Foundation had visited the village hall on Friday 6 September for the cheque presentation and to see the results of the project. They had also collected photos and audio for their social media. Thanks were given to Northern Powergrid Foundation for the grant which had made the emergency plan possible.

11. **Matters relating to the village hall, village green and nature reserve**

***Village hall replacement doors and heating system***

Geowarmth would visit on 7 October to commission the heating system and demonstrate its operation. SW agreed to confirm a time for the visit. The new doors had been fitted but Moorview would be returning to complete the work. It was agreed that the Clerk would order four duplicate keys. Trunking was proposed for the new heating pipework in the hall, but the remainder would be painted. Interior paint colours had been suggested and DW would obtain samples. It was also agreed that DW would order the new curtains and thermal blinds.

The WiFi router had been purchased and required a data SIM: 10GB of data would cost around £10 per month and Vodafone and O2 had the best coverage in the village. The primary usage would be to control the heating, but the plan could be upgraded to provide additional data if the hall was more widely used and WiFi was offered to hirers.

***Nature Reserve***

The Clerk had contacted Durham County Council regarding the proposal to register part of the nature reserve as village green and was waiting for a reply. It was agreed that the Clerk would contact Clare Ross regarding the information previously collected relating to use of footpaths in the nature reserve.

### ***Play area inspection report***

The Clerk was waiting for a quote from Bagnalls to repaint the multiplay unit and would contact Wharton's again to arrange a site visit. MH was waiting for a quote from Triple Shield.

### ***External lights for village hall***

A quote of £1329.98 had been received from MH to supply and fit external lights for the hall. DW had spoken to Richard Curtis who could also provide a quote to fit the lights. DW agreed to source and price suitable lights. The cost of the lighting, paving for the new bench and play area maintenance would be added to an application to the Wind Farm Community Benefit Fund.

## **12. Arrangements for Remembrance Day**

The statue, poppy wreath and bunting would be put up around a week before Remembrance Sunday.

## **13. Members' reports**

None to receive.

## **14. Clerk's report**

### ***Financial***

*Payments made in August and September 2024:*

Zurich Municipal	£ 658.91	Insurance
Octopus Energy	£ 58.84	Village hall electricity charges
G Bell	£ 73.97	Reimbursement – WiFi router for village hall
R Nicholson	£ 100.00	Conifer felling
M Hurton	£ 25.00	Projector screen for village hall
G Bell	£ 465.25	Reimbursement – Emergency Plan equipment
G Bell	£ 52.28	Reimbursement – generator fixings and key box
Geowarmth	£ 5397.50	Heat pump contract
Geowarmth	£ 5850.00	Radiator contract
G Bell	£ 427.15	August salary & IT costs
Octopus Energy	£ 26.32	Village hall electricity charges
S Woodroffe	£ 87.90	Reimbursement – website renewal fee
<b>Total:</b>	<b>£ 13223.12</b>	

*Payments received:*

DCC	£ 500.00	Hire of village hall as polling station
CAN	£ 11321.47	National Lottery funding for village hall
<b>Total:</b>	<b>£ 11821.47</b>	

Petty cash float: **£5.90**

- Parish Council savings account – it was agreed to open an easy access business savings account for some of the reserves and the Clerk will circulate information about three suitable accounts with the best interest rates.
- Archiving PC documents – the archivist from The Story will collect these from the village hall.

- First Aid at Work training – a requalification reminder had been received for Clare Ross and had been forwarded to her. It was agreed that first aid training for current councillors was not required at this time.

15. **Date for next meetings:** Thursday 24 October 2024 at 7.30 pm

The meeting closed at 8.50 pm.

Signed

Cllr Sarah Woodroffe  
Chair  
28 November 2024