

Lanchester Parish Council

Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held in the Conference Room in Park House,
Lanchester on Tuesday 12 February 2013 at 7.15pm

Present Mr O Johnson (Chair)

Mr K Harrison, Mr B Glass, Mr C Burton,
Mr K Leary, Mr A Myers, Mr A Nairn,
Mr D Lindsay, Mr S Walker, Mr M Clarke

County Councillor Richard Young – Observer

Apologies Apologies for absence were received as follows:

Mrs M Gray - sick
Mr P Jackson - away
Mr M Wardle - other commitments
Mrs A Cook - sick
Mr B Gray - work commitments
The above apologies were received and accepted

27/13 **Dispensations**

No dispensations were presented

28/13 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

29/13 **Public Participation**

The public participation policy was distributed for the benefit of the public present.

30/13 **Minutes of the last meeting**

Resolved that:

(i) the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on 8 January 2013 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairperson

31/13 **Committees**

Resolved that:

(i) the minutes of the Finance, Development & General Purposes Committee Meeting held on 30 January 2013 be confirmed as a correct

record and signed by the Chairperson and any recommendations contained therein be approved and accepted

32/13

Police Report and Neighbourhood Warden Report

PCSO Lisa Jackson attended the meeting and presented the police report which gave information regarding incidents / crimes in the area for the period 28/11/12 – 21/01/13 as follows:

Number of community related calls 18

(These calls are outlined below. Other calls not listed refer to incidents such as road traffic collisions, stray farm animals, concern for safety reports, false alarm)

Dwelling Burglaries 1

1 x report of two unknown masked males entering unlocked front door of occupied dwelling and were challenged by the occupiers whereby the offenders ran off without the property they were demanding

Burglary (other) 2

1 x shed broken into by unknown person overnight at Hollinside Terrace
1 x secure barn on farm broken into by unknown person who decapitated a number of hens

Bogus Callers 1

1 x elderly female subjected to a distraction burglary on Durham Road where two males have attended the address at the rear stating they wanted to test the water. Whilst one male distracted the female the other performed a search of the premises and stole items. The males left on foot.

Anti-Social Behaviour 9

1 x report of youths causing a nuisance at The Garths. Gone prior to police arrival
1 x report of gravel hitting window at Percy Place.
1 x report of unknown youths knocking over wheelie bin at rear of takeaway on Front Street. Gone prior to police arrival.
2 x reports of unknown youths kicked rear door of takeaway on Front Street. Gone prior to police arrival
1 x report of unknown youths congregating outside college on Durham Road. No offences disclosed
1 x report of youths banging on window of takeaway at Front Street. Police patrols at rear of premises gave chase and caught two youths which led to a further group of youths being identified causing anti-social behaviour. A further 4 youths were issued harassment notices, further 4 were warned and guardians advised in person, parents of one other youth to be seen
1 x report of youths throwing snowballs at takeaway on Front Street. Gone prior to police arrival.
1 x report of quad bike off road very late at night at West Butsfield. Gone prior to police arrival

Criminal Damage

2

1 x report of rear of door of takeaway on Front Street kicked by unknown person causing damage to security chain

1 x report of damage to 18 feet of wooden fencing rear of dwelling on Railway Street adjacent to Lanchester Valley Walk. County Council have been requested to consider erecting a robust metal fence underneath and around railway bridge on Lanchester Valley Walk to deter adhoc congregation of youths

Thefts

3

2 x reports of batteries stolen by unknown person from temporary traffic lights on the A68 West Butsfield

1 x report of a gas meter removed by unknown person from long term empty property on Lanchester Road

From February 2013 the new Police Officers for Lanchester and Burnhope will be PC Ian Bradley and PCSO Lisa Jackson.

Members received the Neighbourhood Warden performance report for December 2012.

33/13

Correspondence

(i) Campaign to Protect Rural England – Newsletter

Resolved - that the newsletter be received

(ii) Lanchester Partnership – Letter - 2013 Litterpick

Members considered the request for use of the Village Green for the annual litterpick on March 23

Resolved - that permission is granted for Lanchester Partnership to use the Village Green for this event

34/13

Grass Cutting Contract 2013

Resolved - that under the powers contained in Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 the Press and Public be excluded from the following item of business as publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted

Members discussed and compared the returned tenders.

Resolved - that the grass cutting contract be awarded to A D Purves Landscaping

35/13 Grassed Area – Lanchester Valley Railway Path – between Station Road and Newbiggen Lane (min 276/12)

The Chair gave the background to this item in that the County Council have stopped cutting the grass in this area which they own and have approached the Parish Council to ask if the Parish Council would wish to take over responsibility.

Following discussion at a previous council meeting, information had been sought from the County Council on maintenance and liability issues particularly in relation to the burn, culvert and trees in this area.

The response from the County Council to these enquiries was reported and discussed. Members discussed concerns they had regarding taking on ownership and responsibility for this area including the potential legal costs that may be incurred.

A number of residents attended the meeting and spoke and also raised a number of concerns and issues

A discussion took place on whether the parish Council could cut the grass if the land remained in County Council ownership.

Resolved - that the County Council be approached to consider whether a formal agreement could be put in place which would mean that the County Council would retain ownership, management and liability for this area and which would allow the Parish Council to cut the grass.

36/13 Area Action Partnership (AAP) / Parish Councils Committee (PCC) (min 9/13)

Members received an update. Members were informed that the next PCC meeting will take place on 16 February.

Resolved - that the minutes of the PCC meeting be received

37/13 Newsletter

Members discussed the draft newsletter

Resolved - that the Newsletter be approved for distribution

38/13 General Power of Competence

The Government as part of the Localism Act 2011 introduced a new 'General Power of Competence' for local councils. The Power gives eligible local councils 'the power to do anything that individuals generally may do' providing it is within the law. In order to adopt the Power, Councils need to demonstrate that they fulfil the criterion which includes:

(i) having a qualified Clerk

(ii) the number of Councillors elected at the last election or at a subsequent by-election must equal or exceed $\frac{2}{3}$ of the total number of seats on the council

Members considered adopting the General Power of Competence.

Resolved - that Lanchester Parish Council meets the criteria for the General Power of Competence and adopts the Power

39/13 Financial Information

The Lead Officer presented report G.

Resolved - that the report be received.

40/13 Accounts for Payment

Resolved - that the following accounts be approved for payment:

| | | |
|------------------------|---------------|----------|
| S Laverick | Salary (Jan) | £1115.75 |
| D Maddox | Salary (Jan) | £374.79 |
| Durham County Council | Pension (Jan) | £357.56 |
| A D Purves Landscaping | Tree work | £324.00 |
| Marmax Products Ltd | Seat | £128.88 |
| Talk Talk | Phone | £18.72 |
| S Laverick | Expenses | £15.24 |
| CCL Office | Stationery | £146.78 |

41/13 Chairperson's Announcements

There were no Chairpersons announcements

42/13 Questions from Members – Information only

Members were informed that there have been recent incidents of dogs fouling on the football field at Kitswell Park and of damage being done to the playing surface from dogs being exercised on this area.

Resolved that:

(i) the signage in this area be assessed

(ii) the problem of dog fouling in this area be reported to the Neighbourhood Warden

43/13 Date of next meeting

Resolved - that the next Ordinary meeting of the Council be held on Tuesday 12 March 2013 at 7.15pm.

Meeting ended at 8.40pm