

Lanchester Parish Council

Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held in the Conference Room in Park House,
Lanchester on Tuesday 13 November 2012 at 7.15pm

Present Mr O Johnson (Chair)

Mr K Harrison, Mr C Burton, Mr B Gray, Mrs M Gray
Mr S Walker, Mr K Leary, Mr A Myers, Mr M Wardle
Mr A Nairn, Mr P Jackson, Mr M Clarke, Mr B Glass
Mr D Lindsay

County Councillor Richard Young - Observer

Apologies Apologies for absence were received as follows:

Mrs A Cook - sick

The above apologies were received and accepted

267/12 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

268/12 **Public Participation**

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

269/12 **Minutes of the last meeting**

Resolved that:

(i) the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on 9 October 2012 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairperson

270/12 **Committees**

Resolved that:

(i) the minutes of the Planning Committee Meeting held on 9 October 2012 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairperson and any recommendations contained therein be approved and accepted

271/12 **Minutes of the Special meeting**

Resolved that:

(i) the minutes of the Special Meeting held on 29 October 2012 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairperson

Police Report

The police report gave information regarding incidents / crimes in the area for the period 26/09/12 – 20/10/12 as follows:

Number of community related calls 16

(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 0

Burglary (other) 0

Anti-Social Behaviour 11

2 x reports of unknown youths reportedly congregating in alley way near Leehill Court and banging on door of resident

1 x report of unknown youths reportedly congregating in private residential grassed area in Station Cottages across from Lanchester Valley Walk

1 x report of group of unknown youths carrying bread crates on Lanchester Valley Walk. Concerns that crates may be set on fire. Police attended. No sign of youths or crates in location

2 x reports of group of unknown youths banging on doors of dwellings and setting off fireworks at Percy Place / Percy Crescent. Youths gone prior to police arrival.

2 x issues at school with pupils. Dealt with by school staff. No offences disclosed, no police action needed.

1 x report of pupils causing a nuisance inside store on Front Street. No police action needed however police are visiting school to give suitable advice

1 x report of unknown youths setting off fireworks near Woodlands. Gone prior to police arrival.

1 x incident of youths throwing litter on ground at rear of store. Police found youths who were taken back to clear it up.

Criminal Damage 3

2 x incidents of window smashed at library in Newbiggen Lane

1 x report of vehicle door scratched by unknown person overnight at Deneside

Thefts 2

1 x unknown person took central caps from parked unattended vehicle in Manor Grange

1 x report of unknown person removing Harris Hawk from secluded cage at rear of dwelling in Durham Road

Members discussed the high levels of anti-social behaviour incidents

Resolved - that the police be asked to make this a PACT priority.

- 273/12 Correspondence**
- (i) Durham County Council – National Tree Week 2012**
Members considered an application for a grant
Resolved - that a grant be applied for to provide additional trees at Kitswell Park
 - (ii) Durham County Council – Warm Homes Campaign**
Resolved that:
 - (i)** the information be received
 - (ii)** the information be displayed in the Parish Council notice board
 - (iii) Durham County Council – Council Tax Support Scheme – consultation**
Members discussed the action taken in response to this consultation
Resolved - that the action be approved
 - (iv) Durham County Council – Winter Salting Routes**
Resolved - that the information be received
- 274/12 Area Action Partnership (AAP) / Parish Councils Committee (PCC) (min 255/12)**
- Members received an update.
- 275/12 Hollinside Play Area (min 254/12)**
- Members discussed the prices obtained for seats and benches.
Resolved that:
- (i)** permission be requested from the owner of the land to install the bench in this area
 - (ii)** a bench be purchased for Hollinside Play area at a cost of £103.00
- 276/12 Grassed Area – Lanchester Valley Railway Path – between Station Road and Newbiggen Lane**
- 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.
- Members were informed of information received from the County Council regarding responsibilities for the stream and the culvert and information obtained regarding prices for cutting the grass and the option to create a wildflower meadow.
- Members discussed a range of issues and concerns including concerns of the culvert and stream and costs of grass cutting.

A number of residents attended the meeting and spoke and raised the following issues:

- Could the number of grass cuts in the area be reduced thereby reducing the costs
- Volunteers who have recently undertaken some grass cutting had to work hard all day to achieve what they did
- Does the County Council have a legal responsibility to cut the grass in this area
- The area is an eyesore and untidy
- This is an amenity area which should be maintained
- There will be an impact on the value of houses

Members agreed that they needed further information from the County Council to clarify a number of issues before a decision could be made.

Resolved - that a letter is sent to Durham County Council seeking clarification on the following:

- Maintenance responsibility for the stream and the culvert if the Parish Council take ownership of the land
- Maintenance history and costs for the stream and culvert over recent years
- Whether Durham County Council could remain responsible for the culvert and stream in a formal agreement
- Whether, if Durham County Council retained ownership of the land, they would remain responsible for the culvert and stream
- In the event of any legal fees being experienced would the County Council pay both parties fees
- Clarification on the land and whether it is an amenity area and does the County Council have any responsibility to continue to maintain it

Members discussed the recent work undertaken by the Countryside Rangers and a group of volunteers.

Resolved - that a letter of thanks is sent to the volunteers

277/12 Christmas Tree Lights – Village Green (Min 257/12)

Members were informed that the maintenance work to snag and test the existing lights on the Village Green would take place as soon as the ground conditions allowed. In addition the new LED lights to replace the lights on the centre tree had arrived and again the County Council were waiting for suitable ground conditions to undertake the work.

Members were informed that arrangements for the Christmas Light switch on event were progressing.

278/12 Financial Information

The Lead Officer presented report G.
Resolved - that the report be received.

279/12 Accounts for Payment

Resolved - that the following accounts be approved for payment:

S Laverick	Salary (Oct)	£1115.75
D Maddox	Salary (Oct)	£374.79
Durham County Council	Pension (Oct)	£357.56
Talk Talk	Phone	£22.86
Lanchester Brass Band	Donation	£60.00
S Allison	Buffet	£210.00
S Laverick	Expenses	£36.98
A D Purves	Tree Work	£384.00

280/12 Chairperson's Announcements

The Chair informed Members that Mavis Datta would not be attending future Council meetings in the capacity as the Village Voice reporter. The Chair formally thanked Mavis for all her hard work over the years.

281/12 Questions from Members – Information only

Members were informed of a letter received from a resident regarding flooding in his garden

Resolved - that a response is sent advising him to contact Durham County Council and the Environment Agency for advice

Keith Harrison informed Members that following a site visit to the football field at Kitswell, a concern has been raised over an area where the grass is struggling to grow

Resolved - that a soil sample is sent away for testing

Members were informed that the County Council have undertaken some works in the cemetery which seems to have addressed the issue of water flowing into the bike track area.

Paul Jackson informed members that Durham County Council highways have placed Kitswell Road in their schedule to be examined in 2013.

282/12 Date of next meeting

Resolved - that the next Ordinary meeting of the Council be held on Tuesday 11 December 2012 at 7.15pm.

Meeting ended at 8.30pm