

Lartington Parish Council
Minutes of Meeting held on Jan 12th 2016

Present

Mrs. Parsons Munn, Mr. Champion, Mrs. Cross, Mrs. Stephenson, Mr. Whetstone, Mr. Crawford, Mr. Jerred (Clerk).
PCC Ron Hogg and Inspector Kevin Tuck of Durham Constabulary were both present.

01. Recording of the meeting

The Chair opened the meeting by enquiring whether anyone present intended to make a recording of the meeting. No one had such an intention.

02. Apologies

The clerk reported that Mrs. Hinchliffe had submitted an apology because she had an important professional commitment. It was unanimously resolved that this be accepted and approved.

03. Disclosures of Interest

There were none.

Police and Crime Commissioner Hogg then addressed the meeting. His presentation included reference to:

- The role of the PCC

- The objectives of the Police and Crime Plan

- The financial constraints under which Durham Constabulary had to work – in particular to consult on his proposal to increase the Police Precept by 1.98%, the maximum permissible

- Recent developments in Barnard Castle and Weardale – the development of a “quad-service station” and the recruitment of “trisponders”

- Rural Crime – referencing the Forum Meeting of Feb 2nd

- The role of the Special Constabulary

- The possible deployment of new Automatic Number Plate Recognition cameras in village situations

It was agreed that the Council support the proposal to increase the precept by 1.98% and also expressed a wish to be kept informed of developments regarding the use of ANPR cameras, recognizing that the installation of these could address many of our concerns regarding speeding.

Inspector Tuck then gave an overview of reduced police deployment in Teesdale and Weardale and made reference to Speedwatch, haulage vehicles and speeding on Lartington Straight.

In regard to Speedwatch, he outlined the role of volunteers and described the possible levels of escalation if particular hotspots and times were highlighted. He emphasized the constraints on police availability but indicated a willingness to make it an occasional PACT priority. Mrs. Parsons Munn replied on behalf of the council stressing that a visible police presence was essential if the project was to have validity and legitimacy. Inspector Tuck offered a prominent role for the police in the re-launch of the project and occasional PACT priority but was unable to commit further. PCC Hogg wondered whether there was a role for the Special Constabulary. Turning to the problem of haulage vehicles, Inspector Tuck questioned whether the vehicles in question were actually speeding or whether the fact that they were empty and there was little other traffic made the problem seem worse than it actually. He could promise little police

intervention but PCC Hogg offered to write to the businesses in question reporting residents complaints and requesting their consideration.

Inspector Tuck then addressed the issue of speeding on Lartington Lane and on other local roads. He suggested that the education of young people in regard to issues of speed and safe driving was critically important and described the development of the “Drivewise” project in the Dale. Members welcomed this development and thanked Inspector Tuck for his efforts in regard to this.

The Chair closed discussion by thanking PCC Hogg and Inspector Tuck for their attendance and their evident commitment.

04. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on Nov 10th were read and signed by the Chairman as a true record of the proceedings of that meeting.

05. Matters Arising

- a. Craig Gibson – contacted and reminded. To be completed and invoiced by Feb 2016
- b. Lartington Hall – planning application formally withdrawn
- c. Lartington Hall Footpath – information not yet received
- d. Overhanging branches

06. Items of Urgent Business

1. Access to the Roman Catholic Cemetery. A letter from the Diocese Solicitor dated June 2013 in which the owner of the land was requested to remove the obstructing post was brought to the attention of the Council. Although it was noted that Mr. West now had a key, the post remains in place and vehicle access remains difficult. The clerk was instructed to raise this with the Diocese.
2. Fallen trees in Pecknall Woods. Mrs. Parson Munn agreed to contact the DCC Footpaths Officer in regard to these.

07. Principal Correspondence

- a. Various emails routinely circulated
- b. Heart of Teesdale - newsletters
- c. Teesdale CDALC – next meeting February 17th
- d. Electoral Register
- e. Chief Constable’s correspondence

08. Statement of Accounts/Precept

The clerk reported that there was £1622.68 in the current account and £368.17 in the Deposit Account.

He presented a detailed statement of the accounts to date with a sensible projection for the forthcoming year. He reported that the carry forward was likely to be about £100 higher than in the previous year, largely due to a small “profit” from Transparency Code Funding whilst total reserves stood at about £1300, which was quite satisfactory.

He emphasized particular problems in estimating the cost of redeveloping the website consequent to DCC’s decision to introduce a charge of £550 to continue the current relationship. He also noted that there was currently an intention to raise a £100 audit levy in the next financial year whilst forthcoming elections would result in currently unquantifiable costs.

Finally he pointed out that the tax base had reduced from £63.50 to £61.20 resulting an LCTRS Grant of £53 in compensation

After a careful discussion which took into consideration projected expenditure of £1331, the absence of any increase in the previous financial year and the possibility of a government imposed cap on future increases, it was reluctantly decided that the Band D Council Tax charge be increased by 5% to £21.08.

09. Accounts to be paid

Hall Hire	£15
HMRC	£60
Transparency Code	£655.32 to include
Clerks Time	£240
Computer and Mouse	£304.05
Printer and stationery	£111.27

10. Transparency Code Funding

The Clerk reported that he had purchased a computer, printer and associated stationery as agreed. He reported that although our current agreement with DCC would not end until April 2017, significant changes were to be made to the website in April 2016 and he felt that it may be necessary to make alternative arrangements at this point. It was agreed to discuss this at the next meeting.

11. Highway Issues

None

12. Planning Matters

None

13. Date of Future Meetings

March 8th

May 10th (Annual Parish Meeting)

July 12th