

# TRIMDON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the September Meeting of **Trimdon Parish Council** held in **Trimdon Community College, Elwick View**, Trimdon on **Tuesday 10 September 2013** at 7:00pm

**Present:** Councillor George Elliott Snr. (in the Chair) and Councillors Bernadette Oliver, Paul Trippett, John Burton, Ian Quinn, Margaret Hughes, Julie Thompson, Keith Thompson and Sheila Appleton.

Anne Delandre, Clerk to the Council, was also in attendance.

## 1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

John Burton declared an interest in the request for financial support to assist with the purchase of Trimdon Village Cemetery Gates.

## 2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Denise Davison, George Elliott, Margaret Elliott and Eileen Dickinson.

## 3. POLICING IN THE PARISH

The Clerk advised that she had contacted Sergeant Alex Clarke, who has taken over from Sergeant O'Connor. Sergeant Clarke has confirmed that he will start attending the Parish Meeting to give a monthly update, commencing on 8 October 2013.

## 4. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

It was noted that the apologies received from Margaret Hughes has not been recorded.

It was further noted that Paul Trippett had declared an interest in the letter received from Phil Wilson, MP regarding Mrs Norton, 19 Skerne Park, Trimdon Village and took no part in the discussions.

It was **resolved** that with the above amendments, the Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 16 July 2013 (copies previously circulated) be confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

## 5. MATTERS ARISING

County Councillor Peter Brookes advised that tenders have been received for the provision of the Trimdon Village Cemetery Gates, however, there is a shortfall in funding of £1,800. Both he and County Councillor Hovvels have increased their financial contribution by £900 but he requested that the Parish Council make up the remainder of the shortfall of £900.

It was **resolved** that a contribution of £900 be made towards the Trimdon Village Cemetery Gates.

## 6. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

The Clerk confirmed that there were no planning applications for consideration.

## 7. CLERK'S REPORT

### ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT

The following accounts were submitted for payment:

403518	Brown Accountants	312.00	Audit of Accounts 2012/2013
403519	BT	180.94	Telephone - Office
DD	BT	33.51	Internet
DD	BT	80.96	Telephone - Cemetery Lodge
DD	Ford	379.86	Van Lease
403520	North End Garage	342.83	Fuel
403521			Cheque Cancelled
DD	livin	36.48	Garage Rent
403522	HMRC	1,054.46	Tax & NI
403523	DC Pension Fund	609.83	Pensions
403524	Carrs, Billington	310.17	Equipment
403525	CE & CM Walker	1,375.20	Grass Cutting
403526	D Jordan	186.00	Security - Skerne Playground
403527	BDO LLP	480.00	External Audit of Accounts 2012/2013
DD	Ford	379.86	Van Lease
403528	CDALC	30.00	Booklet - Good Councillor Guide
DD	Carrs, Billington	632.14	Equipment
403529	Mrs S Gibson	120.00	Burial Plot Refund
403530	Anne Delandre	178.85	Clerks Expenses
403531	Dawsons Waste Metals	260.00	Rubbish Removal
DD	Northumbrian Water	129.44	Water Rates - Cemetery Lodge
DD	Northumbrian Water	147.96	Water Rates - Allotments, Trimdon Grange
DD	Northumbrian Water	457.77	Water Rates - Allotments, Trimdon Station
DD	Northumbrian Water	37.87	Water Rates - Allotments, Trimdon Colliery
DD	Integrated Office Systems	44.70	Photocopier Service Agreement
403532	SLCC Enterprises Ltd.	113.50	Reference Books
403533	CE & CM Walker	916.89	Grass Cutting
DD	Ford	379.86	Van Lease
403534	D Jordan	186.00	Security - Skerne Playground
403535	North End Garage	315.24	Fuel
403536	HMRC	1,080.95	Tax & NI
403537	DC Pension Fund	831.99	Pensions
DD	Carrs, Billington	78.50	Equipment
403538	Trimdon Garden Soc.	107.00	Fertiliser

It was **resolved** that the accounts be paid.

### LETTER FROM DCC – MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLANNING AND 2014/2015 BUDGET SETTING

Correspondence has been received from DCC notifying the Parish Council of the changes to the Council Tax Support Scheme Grant and the potential financial implications. The impact on Trimdon Parish Council is forecast to be a reduction of

£3,363 in the financial year 2014/2015. The letter also set out the potential impact for the financial years 2014/2015 until 2017/18.

The Parish Council was also advised of the possibility of the Government extending the Council Tax capping controls to Town and Parish Councils from 2014/2015. The current limit on Council Tax increases is 2%.

It was felt by the Parish Council that any steps to introduce a cap on the level of Council Tax raised by the Parish would be detrimental, especially coming on top of the reduction in the budget to the Parish. It was recommended that this matter be highlighted via Parish Associations.

It was agreed that the contents of the letter from DCC be noted.

#### INDICATIVE BUDGET STATEMENT FOR 2013/2014

The Clerk presented an indicative budget statement for 2013/2014, showing the projected expenditure for the financial year, together with the actual spend to the end of Quarter 1 (April – June). Two particular categories of spend (Donations/Grants and Bus Shelters & Seats) need further consideration to establish the budget for the year.

It was **resolved** that the budget statement be noted and that the categories of spend - Donations/Grants and Bus Shelters & Seats - be placed on the Agenda of the next meeting for further discussion.

#### PARISH CLERK – CONTRACT OF EMPLOYMENT

The Clerk advised that she has drafted a Contract of Employment (based on the NALCC template) and this now needs to be agreed by the Parish Council. It was suggested that the Personnel Committee be re-established, following the changes in members of the Parish Council, to consider this.

It was **resolved** that the established of a Personnel Committee be placed on the Agenda of the next meeting for further discussion.

#### UPDATE ON TRIMDON ALLOTMENT ASSOCIATION

The Clerk reported that she had attended a Special Meeting of the Trimdon Allotment Association where it was reported that both the Chair and Treasurer had resigned and that no replacements had been found. The Clerk had suggested that she work with the Secretary to draft a suitable letter to all members of the Association advising them of the situation and encouraging suitable volunteers for the vacant positions. This would be dealt with at the November meeting of the Association. It was felt that support at the meeting by members of the Parish Council would be appreciated.

It was **resolved** that the Clerk works with the Secretary of the Trimdon Allotment Association to encourage volunteers for the vacant positions of Chair and Treasurer.

#### RENEGOTIATION OF PHOTOCOPIER AGREEMENT

The Clerk reported that, following the renegotiation of the photocopier agreement, a desk top photocopier is now surplus to requirements and is available to donate to a suitable voluntary organisation.

It was **resolved** that the above be noted and that members of the Parish Council advise the Clerk if they are aware of any voluntary organisation that may benefit from the photocopier.

## QUOTATIONS FOR FENCING AT TRIMDON GRANGE ALLOTMENT SITE

The Clerk reported that quotations for both wooden and mesh fencing had been requested from two suppliers – Peart Fencing and Willowcrete.

The quotations provided were as follows:

Peart Fencing – £3069 for timber and £3085 for mesh fencing

Willowcrete - £3204 for timber and £3101 for mesh fencing

It was **resolved** that the contract for the provision of mesh fencing be awarded to Peart Fencing at a cost of £3085.

## FEEDBACK ON EXTERNAL AUDIT OF ACCOUNTS FOR 2012/2013

The Clerk reported that feedback had been received from BDO that they had completed the audit of annual accounts for 2012/2013. They highlighted the issue of fixed assets, raising their concerns that the value of fixed assets included in the Annual Return could be undervalued. There is a requirement that the Parish Council display the Notice of Conclusion of Audit in one or more conspicuous places for at least 14 days.

It was **resolved** that the feedback on the Annual Return be approved and accepted and the Notice of Conclusion of Audit be displayed on the Parish Notice Board for a period of 14 days. It was further **resolved** that the Clerk look into the issue of fixed assets in preparation for the audit of annual accounts 2013/2014.

## LETTER FROM LIVIN – UPDATE ON TREMEDUNA GRANGE

The Clerk reported that correspondence has been received from Livin advising that a final decision has now been taken by the Board to agree the proposals to demolish Tremeduna Grange and build new homes on the land in 2014/2015.

It was agreed that the above be noted.

## C24 HURWORTH BURN – NOTIFICATION ON TEMPORARY ROAD CLOSURE

This item was withdrawn as the work has already taken place.

## REQUEST FOR FINANCIAL SUPPORT – ST. ALBAN'S CHURCH, TRIMDON GRANGE

This item was withdrawn as a decision has already been taken.

## REQUEST FOR FINANCIAL SUPPORT – TRIMDON CONCERT BRASS BAND

A request for financial support has been received from Trimdon Concert Brass Band towards their cost of competing in the finals of the country-wide Brass Band Championships to be staged in Cheltenham in September.

It was **resolved** that a donation of £500 be made to Trimdon Concert Brass Band.

## UPDATE FROM TRIMDON ANGLING CLUB – TRIMDON POND IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

The Clerk circulated an update from Trimdon Angling Club – after managing to secure sufficient funding for the project the work (as at 26 July 2013) is approximately 80% complete.

It was agreed that the update be noted.

#### DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL CONSULTATION – STREET LIGHTING POLICY

The Clerk reported that DCC is currently carrying out a consultation exercise on street lighting with the aim of reducing carbon emissions by 7,500 tonnes per year, and reduce energy consumption and generate savings of £24 million over 25 years.

It was agreed that the report be noted.

#### COUNTY DURHAM ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS (CDALC) AGM

The Clerk reported that the CDALC AGM will be held at County Hall on Saturday 26 October 2013 commencing at 10:30am.

It was agreed that the above be noted.

#### LETTER FROM SEDGEFIELD PATIENT SUPPORT GROUP (SPSG)

The Clerk reported that correspondence has been received from the Chair of SPSG which is part of the new Clinical Commissioning Group's consultation arrangements covering Durham Dales, Easington and Sedgefield. The Chair has requested if the Parish Council is happy for SPSG to circulate their meeting notes for the attention of the Council and for the Council to raise with them any health issues in the parish area that they feel they should know about.

It was **resolved** that the Clerk formally responds advising that the Parish Council would be pleased to receive meeting notes from SPSG.

#### DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL WINTER MAINTENANCE AGREEMENT

The Clerk reported that a request had been received from DCC requesting that the Parish Council enters into a formal agreement to assist the County Council in filling salt bins within the parish boundaries. Following a meeting between the Clerk and the Strategic Highways Department it was agreed that, given the limited resources of the Parish Council, it would not be appropriate to enter into a formal agreement. The County will, therefore, continue to fill the salt bins in the Trimdon Parish.

It was agreed that the above report be noted.

#### UPDATE FROM SMALLER LOCAL COUNCILS FORUM

The Clerk attended the August meeting of the Smaller Local Councils Forum and gave an update on the following issues:

- Reporting of potholes to DCC – Parish Councils and constituents are encouraged to report potholes to DCC Highways Action Line (HAL). DCC Head of Technical Services has confirmed that DCC is able to carry out work to potholes on behalf of Parish Councils, on a rechargeable basis, and is currently preparing a schedule of rates for this type of work.
- 'Clustering' of Parish Councils – in view of the current economic climate, Parish Councils are encouraged to 'cluster'. This could mean two or more Parish Councils procuring services together ie grass-cutting, to benefit from economies of scale.
- Travellers Encampments – meeting to be arranged with MP, DCC and Councillor Lucy Hovvells, Porfolio Holder for Safer and Healthier Communities to discuss

problem of illegal traveller encampments. All Parish Councils will be invited to attend.

- Quality Status – to be introduced December 2013. The new scheme is likely to have 3 tiers – 1\*, 2\* and 3\* and will be more outcome (evidence) based.
- Pension Scheme – as a result of changes to the state pension due to be introduced this will result in an increase in both employer (3.4%) and employee (1.4%) NI contributions from 2016/2017.
- Legislative Reform Order – proposal in place to allow Parish Councils to introduce electronic banking/direct debits.

It was agreed that the above update be noted.

In respect of the issue of potholes, and the offer by DCC to carry out work on behalf of Parish Councils on a rechargeable basis, Councillor Peter Brookes circulated pictures of a number of potholes around the village green.

It was **resolved** that the Clerk obtains a cost from DCC for this work to be carried out.

#### SPORT AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AWARDS 2013

A request has been received for assistance with sponsorship and involvement in the presentation ceremonies for the Sport and Physical Activity Awards 2013.

It was agreed that the above request be noted.

#### REQUEST FOR FLOWER TUBS – GALBRAITH TERRACE, TRIMDON GRANGE

A request has been received from residents of Galbraith Terrace, via County Councillor Lucy Hovells, for flower tubs to be placed on the grassed area in front of the bungalows.

It was **resolved** that two sets of three tubs be provided.

#### CHRISTMAS LIGHT SWITCH ON – NOTIFICATION IN DURHAM COUNTY NEWS

The Clerk reported that DCC has offered to advertise the Christmas Light Switch On in the Durham County News, providing the information is submitted by 9 September.

It was **resolved** that the Christmas Light Switch On be organised for Friday 6 December 2013 at 7:00pm and that this information be provided to DCC Communications Department for publication.

#### 8. REPORT FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR PETER BROOKES

- Durham County Council continues to face financial pressures and will be undertaking a public consultation exercise to obtain the public's view on where cuts should be made.
- A Participatory Budgeting Event is taking place on 23 November 2013 to assess applications for It's Up 2 U funding. Deadline for submission is Friday 12 September – the Trimdon Community Centre Association to be encouraged to submit a bid.

It was agreed that the above report be noted.

#### 9. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

There were no members of the public in attendance.

## **10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

27 NORTH MOOR AVENUE, TRIMDON COLLIERY

A complaint has been received that a compound containing a large number of dogs has been located at the above property.

It was **resolved** that the Clerk writes to DCC Planning Department to raise this issue.

## **11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

It was agreed that the next meeting will be held on **Tuesday 8 October 2013** in the **Community Centre, Trimdon** at **7:00pm**