

THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF HEXHAMSHIRE PARISH COUNCIL
HELD ON **THURSDAY 9th MAY 2024** AT 7.30 PM
IN WHITLEY CHAPEL PARISH HALL

1. Apologies for Absence – Ed Parker, Greg Finch.

Councillors present – Gill Whatmough, Hilary Kristensen, Marge Rastall, Lauren Porteus, John Austin, Nicola Matthews, Roger Rutherford, Davy Short.

2. Election of Chairman

The Clerk invited nominations for the post of Chairman.

Marge Rastall was proposed by John Austin and seconded by Nicola Matthews.

Marge Rastall was duly re-elected as Chairman and took the Chair.

3. Election of Vice-Chairman

Nicola Matthews was proposed by Marge Rastall and seconded by Davy Short. The post was duly accepted.

4. Appointment of Scrutineer for Annual Accounts

It was agreed to ask Marion Henderson as in previous years.

5. Appointment of 3 Councillors to sign cheques/access on-line banking

Gill Whatmough, Hilary Kristensen and Greg Finch.

6. Appointment of 3 Councillors onto the Resilience Hub Sub-Committee

Lauren Porteus, Nicola Matthews and Marge Rastall.

7. Appointment of 3 Councillors to the Highways Sub-Committee

It was deemed that, due to the ability for anyone to report problems with roads via fixmystreet.com, this Sub-committee was no longer needed. The parish council will continue to monitor, discuss and report road issues as standard practice.

8. Appointment of Parish Council representative to the Board of the Parish Hall Trust

Nicola Matthews.

9. Appointment of Parish Council representative to the Board of School Governors

Roger Rutherford.

10. Annual Governance and Accountability Return for 2023/2024 –

10.1 To consider and agree any actions arising from the report of the internal auditor.

10.2 To approve the Annual Governance Statement.

10.3 To approve the draft annual accounts for 2023/2024.

10.4 To approve the Accounting Statement and Explanation of Variances

10.5 To confirm and approve the Certification of Exemption – Not needed this year.

Due to the need to conduct an internal audit of our accounts this year, the AGAR forms will be completed and approved by the next meeting.

Minutes of the Meeting of Hexhamshire Parish Council held on Thursday 9th May 2024
in the Malcolm Caisley Meeting Rooms, Whitley Chapel Parish Hall

1. Present – Marge Rastall (Chair), John Austin, Gill Whatmough, Roger Rutherford, Nicola Matthews; Davy Short; Hilary Kristensen, Lauren Porteus; Jonny White (Clerk), Colin Horncastle (County Councillor).

Apologies for Absence – Ed Parker, Greg Finch.

2. Minutes of the previous meeting of the Parish Council held on Thursday 18th April 2024

It was agreed the minutes were a true record of the meeting.

3. Declarations of Interest – None.

4. Matters Arising

4.1 Verges:

- Following on the meeting with the CEG in April, the council are going to contact David Hunt to find out where signs are going up at the end of May. Lauren Porteus agreed to put together a map showing the 4 verge cutting restricted areas, plus an explanation of how the signs worked to go into the Parish magazine and on the website. This was considered important to inform as many people as possible of how the system works to avoid the confusion of last year.

4.2 Rushwood complaint:

- Colin Horncastle has emailed & asked for an update, but no further action taken on formal complaint. Colin Horncastle will follow up.

5. Resilience Hub

5.1 Fuse board work will commence – Sunday 12th may

5.2 Updating emergency lighting also to take place.

5.3 The Sub Committee of Marge Rastall, Nicki Matthews and Lauren Porteous will draw up procedures for running the generator, purchasing of fuel, storage of keys, etc to provide a reference for any users.

6. Public Participation - None

7. Matters for discussion with the Unitary Councillor

7.1 Planning application at Guards Lane -

The council disagreed with Alex Campbell's view. There are two structures onsite now, not one. The caravan is also still there. We would like Colin (or Alex) to explain why the current shed is allowed under permitted development, and to ask what the situation is with the proposed shed, which formed a recent planning application.

7.2. Cattlegrid at Westburnhope -

Colin also mentioned the cattle grid that has been causing concern near Westburnhope, stating that if it is not yet repaired, it hopefully will be soon. It is now an emergency and to be done asap. It has not been fixed yet. The parish council are worried

about the danger to the public over the lack of repair to the cattle grid. Lauren recorded it at least 6 weeks ago, including logging it as an emergency via the telephone. The Clerk has also reported it several times. The Clerk will follow up on these points with Colin,

7.3 Whitehall Chapel Junction –

It was raised that Cllr Colin Horncastle did not mention the missing road markings at Whitehall Chapel junction.

7.4 Lilswood Caravan Park –

Cllr Colin Horncastle will also raise the Lilswood Caravan park issue, which we raised last time.

7.5 Hexham roadworks -

Hexham is now back to 2 way traffic. Resurfacing will be taking place over night for the final bit of work to be done in the following weeks.

8. Correspondence

Alan Kind correspondence on Restricted Byway - Blanchland to Slaley Forest requested the Council to withdraw our previous objection as it was outside the accepted criteria. Any review by the Secretary of State would reject our objection and incur considerable legal costs. The Council agreed to withdraw their objection.

9. Finance

£30 payable for 6 months Microsoft Office Subscription for Council Laptop

9.1 Balances as of 28th April 2024:

Treasurer's Account	£17,018.45
Sportsfield Account	£2,099.88
Dukesfield Account	£5,325.00
Wetlands Account	£1,191.28
Resilience Account	£7,020.05

10. Planning–

Noted that in the Hexham Courant there were notifications of Prior Approval for the following -

Burntshield Haugh – tin shed
TC tree services – shed & road

11. Highways, footpaths and BOATS

Footpaths/BOATS:

Roads:

Highways

11.1

- DS Rennys Barn was raised as a matter of urgency for reporting by Davy Short. It appears the road is hollow and road material has washed away under the road and into the stream. It was advised that photographs and videos were sent to the Highways Agency Team.

Dipton Mill update

11.2

- John Austin reported the road is open at night only with traffic light controls. Talks of works being completed by 11th May lunchtime if all goes to plan. The road is wider than it was and resurfacing will be done (300m) and will commence after Northumbrian Water have completed works. Expect short closure.

12. **Reports**

Wetlands:

Juliet Rogers will graze the fields from May 01st to September/October at the discretion of the council with regards to the weather.

Dukesfield Arches: No reports.

Sportsfield: No reports.

School: 2 new teachers have been appointed. Mr Harrisson – Early years. Mrs Robinson year 2.

The Septic tank issue was raised with regards to a high quote for repairs. Whitley Chapel School would need to raise 10% of £260,000.

A 2nd opinion will be required to confirm the septic tank can continue as it is.

A for a report from the school will be taken it to Cllr Colin Horncastle needed to be discussed further.

13. Any Other Business:

Hexhamshire garden trail takes place on 16th June 2024 – raffle tickets are now available

Meeting closed at 9:25pm.

