ELDON PARISH COUNCIL

ORDINARY MEETING

Community Centre	**Tuesday**	**Time: 7.00 p.m.**
Eldon	**27th September 2022**	

Present:

Councillors Diane Pennington, Graham Scott and Toni Wallace.

Tom Bolton – Parish Clerk

County Councillor Shirley Quinn.

RESOLVED:

That in the absence of the Chairman, Councillor Toni Wallace be appointed as Chair.

Councillor Toni Wallace in the Chair

55/22 APOLOGIES AND REASONS FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors John Gibson (illness) and Paul Henry (family commitments) and County Councillors Matt Johnson and Samantha Townsend.

RESOLVED:

That the absences of Councillors Henry and Gibson be approved.

D56/22 DISCLOSURES OF INTERESTS

Councillors Pennington and Wallace declared interests in relation to Agenda Item 10 (Eldon Community Partnership) and Item 16 (Applications for grants).

D57/22 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meetings held on 26th July and 6th September 2022 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

D58/22 APPLICATIONS FOR DISPENSATIONS

There were no applications.

D59/22 DEATH OF HER MAJESTY QUEEN ELIZABETH II

The Clerk reported on the recent sad loss of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II and reported on exchanges of correspondence with CDALC about any actions to be taken. An announcement by the Chairman had been placed on the Parish Council Website expressing the Parish Council's condolences.

RESOLVED:

That the actions be noted and confirmed.

D60/22 ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR ISSUES IN ELDON

The Clerk provided an update on developments linked to anti-social behaviour in Eldon, including the Parish Council's involvement in the joint project bid from the Towns and Villages Fund.

The Clerk advised that he had sent copies of previous correspondence from 2021 with the County Council and the Chief Constable, as well as the PowerPoint presentation to the Police and Crime Commissioner, to the County Council's Community Safety Officer to assist in preparation of the bid in respect of the Eldon Parish Council issues and a bid had now been assembled, details of which had already been sent to all members and would be the subject of a discussion at a special working group online meeting involving representatives from Dene Valley and Eldon Parish Councils and relevant officers on Wednesday 28th September 2022. There were a number of points of clarification to be resolved at the meeting about some of the items included in the draft bid, but the Council would need to decide whether it was willing to provide a 30% contribution towards those elements of the bid in relation to Eldon, including any shared costs with Dene Valley Parish Council for issues such as CCTV monitoring. The total maximum cost of the Eldon contribution was expected to be approximately £7,000. The Clerk advised that he hoped to attend the online meeting the following day, with some members of the Parish Council present.

The Clerk further reported that in line with the previous wishes of the Council, he had written to the local Member of Parliament seeking a meeting about crime and ASB in Eldon Parish and was awaiting a response.

RESOLVED:

1. That the Parish Council support the joint bid and that it authorise the Clerk and Councillors to attend joint project bid meeting on 28th September to clarify any outstanding issues and to offer a 30% contribution from the Council to the proposals within Eldon Parish and any jointly shared costs (i.e. for CCTV monitoring).
2. That the position regarding the letter to the local MP be noted and a response be awaited.

D61/22 QUESTIONS – TO DEAL WITH ANY ISSUES RAISED BY MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

There were no questions.

D62/22 REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES OR FROM COUNTY COUNCILLORS

(a) Outside Bodies/Meetings

There was nothing to report.

(b) County Councillors

The Council received an update from County Councillor Quinn about forthcoming litter picks. There had been a recent meeting of full Council. Councillor Quinn stressed her ongoing support for improving the lives of local residents in Parish Council areas within her Division and working with all agencies to achieve this,

RESOLVED:

That the position be noted.

D63/22 ELDON COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP

Information was provided about recent and forthcoming events at the Community Centre, including a proposed Halloween disco and Christmas disco as well as a Christmas lunch for older people within Eldon Parish. An application for a grant from the Parish Council in the sum of £300 (£150 for each of the Christmas events) had been submitted by the Partnership and would be dealt with later on the Agenda.

RESOLVED:

That the information be noted.

D64/22 BISHOP AUCKLAND AND SHILDON AREA ACTION PARTNERSHIP ISSUES

Councillor Quinn referred to the AAP funded scheme for provision of healthy activities and food during the forthcoming school holidays and reported that it had been oversubscribed.

D65/22 CORRESPONDENCE/DOCUMENTS RECEIVED

The Parish Council considered correspondence/documents received since the last meeting as follows:

(a) Correspondence with CDALC following Her Majesty the late Queen's death.
(b) Letter of thanks from Durham Hospital Radio following a recent donation from the Parish Council, including an offer for members to tour the studios at Durham.
(c) An email received Adopt Coast to Coast, the Regional adoption agency for the Counties of Durham and Cumbria and Sunderland City Council.
(d) Action on Energy Poverty – Local Initiatives and Warm Spaces.
(e) Request from North East Air Ambulance for donation.
(f) Survey by Durham County Council about effectiveness and operation of Area Action Partnerships.

Councillor Quinn stressed the need to respond to the DCC survey about AAPs and the Clerk undertook to circulate the email to individual members to respond themselves.

RESOLVED:

1. That the correspondence be noted.
2. Consideration be given to how the Adopt Coast to Coast scheme could be advertised by the Council, including on its website.
3. The Council explore with Eldon Community Partnership how the Energy Action Partnership and warm spaces initiatives might be facilitated in Eldon, perhaps by providing greater publicity about refreshments, lunches etc. on Wednesdays at the Community Centre (although new attendees wishing to order lunches would need to notify the Centre in advance).

D66/22 INDICATIVE 2023 TO 2024 COUNCIL TAX BASE AND LOCAL COUNCIL TAX RESOURCE GRANT

The Clerk advised that the Parish Council had now received details from the County Council about the indicative council tax base and local council tax resource grant for 2023 to 2024.
The tax base would increase from 99.1 to 103.9 band D properties resulting in an increase of £570.48 in tax yield, but the grant would reduce from £1422 to £900. The

net gain to the Parish Council if the existing band D rate was maintained would be £48.48.

The Clerk explained that the figures were provisional, but given current and projected rates of inflation, the Council would need to consider seriously when setting the budget for the coming year, the Parish Council budget and precept levels.

RESOLVED:

That the figures be noted.

D67/22 ELDON GATEWAY ISSUES

The Clerk referred to the previous update on Gateway issues.

Following the recent accident at the Gateway, about which a further update was provided, the Clerk had previously advised that it would be prudent to revise some of figures for replacement items on the site and a separate item on the Agenda dealt with this matter. An update was also provided on the solar powered lights where recent maintenance of the lights prior to the onset of winter had revealed that the batteries had been stolen.

As there was no obvious evidence on the battery cabinets of any break-in or when the theft had taken place, figures had now been obtained from the Council's usual contractor for replacement of the batteries in the sum of approximately £3,000.00 plus VAT to include security locks on the battery cabinets, although the contractor had also advised an additional security cage around each cabinet. The Clerk advised that he had consulted an additional specialist contractor based in Northumberland who had declined the work, but which had confirmed that the figures quoted for the replacement of the batteries were consistent with current prices. In the circumstances it was recommended that the Council's usual specialist contractors, JSC Electricals Ltd. carry out the works and Standing Orders/Financial Regulations be suspended as necessary. The Clerk advised that he would ask the AAP to consider the inclusion of these works within the Joint Project Bid and whether the seat improvements could be included.

RESOLVED:

1. That the position be noted.
2. The Clerk be authorised to carry out research in relation to the footpath issues.
3. The lighting repairs by JSC Electrics Ltd. be authorised and Standing Orders/Financial Regulations be suspended as appropriate.

D68/22 CHRISTMAS 2022

The Clerk sought instructions from the Council about the arrangements for a Parish Council Christmas Tree in Community Centre grounds for Christmas 2022.

RESOLVED:

That the Council place an order with the previous contractor for the erection (and subsequent dismantling) of a Christmas tree in December 2022 and that authority be given for any necessary expenditure in connection with the same.

D69/22 PARISH PLAN

There was nothing to report.

D70/22 GRANT APPLICATIONS

The Clerk reported that a grant application had been received from Eldon Community Partnership in connection with a children's Christmas disco and Christmas lunch for older residents of Eldon in 2022 in the sum of £300 (£150 for each of the Christmas events).

RESOLVED:

That the grant application by Eldon Community Partnership for £300 in total towards both Christmas Events be approved.

D71/22 ASSETS LIST

The Council considered a revised Assets list (for copy see file of Minutes). The revisions meant the list was still within the current level of insurance cover, although this should also be reviewed in any event if the Youth Shelter was removed in accordance with the Parish Council's previous decision and also to facilitate obtaining updated insurance cover when the current three-year tie in expired at the end of March 2023. The Clerk also reported that he hoped to draw up a series of risk assessments in the near future.

RESOLVED:

That the revised Assets list be approved.

D72/22 LAND AND ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

The Council considered the following issues:

(a) Dropped Gully outside 17 Office Row – This had been reported to DCC and a response had been received indicating that the work would be carried out as part of forthcoming works in the area, but no works had yet been carried out.
(b) Condition of unadopted highway on the garden side of Office Row – potholes had been washed out and one car owned by a local resident had subsequently been damaged as a result. The land was owned by the County Council.

RESOLVED:

That the issues be noted and reported to the County Council.

D73/22 ANY QUESTIONS FOR THE CLERK OR CHAIRMAN

There were no questions.

D74/22 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Council is on **Tuesday 29th November 2022** at 7.00 p.m.

D75/22 VOUCHERS, INVOICES, INCOME, EXPENDITURE AND ACCOUNTS

The Clerk circulated details of income and expenditure to date **(for copy see file)**, together with a schedule of invoices paid for approval and the bank reconciliation.

RESOLVED:

That the information noted and all of the expenditure to date on the schedules be approved.