MINUTES OF PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 26th March 2024

Attendance: **Councillors: Gibson, Henry, Pennington & Whitlaw**

County Councillors: Quinn & Townsend

Public Participation: 3

Clerk: J Linsley

Item No.		Ref
1.	**Welcome & Introductions, including Filming & Audio Recording Statement** It was noted that the meeting was to be recorded by the Clerk for the purpose of producing an accurate account of the minutes **Resolved:** Noted	D020/24
2.	**Apologies, acceptance or otherwise** Apologies received from Cllr. Anderson **Resolved:** Apologies accepted	D021/24
3.	**Disclosure of Interests, pecuniary or personnel** There were disclosures of interest from Cllr's. Gibson, & Pennington Eldon Community Partnership (ECP) in relation to Ref D028/24 & D035/24 **Resolved:** Noted	D022/24
4.	**Any Applications for Dispensations** Applications were received from Cllr's. Gibson & Pennington (ECP) in relation to Ref D028/24 & D035/24 **Resolved:** Noted	D023/24
5.	**Minutes** Cllr. Gibson, proposed that the minutes of the meeting held on the 9th January 2024 be accepted as an accurate record of the meeting and seconded by Cllr. Whitlaw **Resolved:** the approved minutes were duly signed by the Chair	D024/24
6.	**Crime & Anti-Social Behaviour** **a.** The Pop-up Pact Meeting was attended by a number of residents and representatives from the police, Safer Communities Officer (KW) and Neighbourhood Warden Rebecca Boldon (RB).	D025/24

	A number of questions were raised in respect of ASB, and the residents were updated on the target hardening measures that were going to be installed. The Clerk advised they would convey the thanks of Eldon Parish Council (EPC) to KW & RB for organising the event. **b.** The Police reported via email, the following reports of crime X2 ASB X2 highway disturbances (loose horses) 1x road related incident 1x concern. The Clerk queried the numbers with the attending residents, as there was a known incident where a car window was vandalised. A resident present said that there was also some graffiti sprayed on cars. They were unaware if this had been reported. The Clerk asked that residents report crime and anti-social behaviour and that details of who to contact were on the Parish Noticeboard. **Resolved:** Noted **c.** The Fire Brigade had attended a fire adjacent to 1 Pastures Row, this was a build-up of waste which had been fly tipped and covered with manure, which was left unattended. The area was reported to the Neighbourhood Warden, who has communicated with Environmental Health, an updated report is awaited. **Resolved:** Noted	
7.	**Questions – to deal with any issues raised by member of the public** **a.** The applicant for the planning of a bungalow at the Garth, Mrs Dugdale, thanked the Council for supporting their application and for attending the Planning Committee Meeting. The committee voted 7 to 2 in favour of the application, however the legal team advised that the application could not be granted in full due to the Natural England Nutrient Neutrality Credits still not being awarded. Mrs Dugdale explained that she was awaiting an answer from Natural England in the next two weeks. Then the was a still a lengthy process to go through to have the application presented to the Planning Department and/or Committee. **Resolved:** Noted **b.** A resident reported that the stiles located on Public Footpath C14 had been damaged and that the farmer had installed barbed wire on the stile and that had been threatening to dog walkers crossing the field. Cllr. Gibson said he would look at the area and the Clerk would report it online as damaged.	D026/24

	Cllr. Quinn said that any threatening behaviour from the farmer should be reported to the police. **Resolved**: Clerk to log on DCC Do-it-Online Portal	
8.	**Reports** **a. From representatives on Outside Bodies or attending Outside Bodies** There were no representatives present, however there had been a multi-agency walkabout on the 20th. The Clerks advised that they had not asked for an update, due to the work load of KW on the ASB Project. Resolved: The Clerk to send an email to thank KW & RB for their positive impact on the work carried out in the Parish. **b. From County Councillors** Cllr. Quinn provided an update on the recent GRT Forum meeting. The Gurney Valley site would be open as a temporary stop over two weeks before and after Appleby Fair. The provision of toilets had been discussed with Billy Welsh (GRT Community Leader) after the theft and damage during the 2023 opening. The toilets were stuffed with clothes, rather than them not being emptied, Mr Welsh said the damage had been caused by a small number of individuals, not recognised by the GRT community and they were likely responsible for other damage and fly tipping. Cllr. Quinn said that a reduced number of toilets would be provided and the Mr Welsh said that if more required that he had advised the GRT that they would be responsible for purchasing more units. Cllr. Henry raised the point this was likely to increase human defecation in the surrounding woodland and hedgerows. **Resolved:** Noted 2. The Clerk raised a matter with Cllr. Quinn & Townsend regarding the price increase of school meals, which had not been well received by parents throughout the LA. The Councillors advised that they had been inundated with queries and that whilst the increase was agreed by the LA, the meal provider Chartwells were in contract for a further 5 years and that the provision of a further contract was questionable. Cllr. Quinn advised that she was in support of all children receiving a free school meal, that was not means tested. **Resolved:** Noted	D027/24

	3. The Clerk raised the matter of the provision of Fun & Food Vouchers for the Easter Holiday period and that Parents were more in favour of supermarket vouchers. Cllr. Townsend said that they had been contacted by parents who had difficulty accessing the venues and that Parents were expecting monetary vouchers. The Clerk and the members of EPC advised that the QR Code method of booking onto activities was not clear enough to parents and that there would be a minority of the community that would be excluded due to inaccessibility of the internet and devices. On a whole the process was not inclusive and Cllr's Quinn & Townsend recognised this, but the decision on the funding was decided by the DFE not at local level. **Resolved:** Noted	
9.	**Eldon Community Partnership Updates** **a.** Cllr. Gibson & Pennington updated EPC on the Easter Disco, whilst numbers attending were down on last year, the event was well attended. Cllr. Pennington reported that there were future bookings for the Community Hall for the Orchestra, summer disco and summer fayre. The community centre was also being hired a Polling Station for the upcoming elections on 2nd May. **Resolved:** Noted **b.** The Village Fayre is being held on Saturday 20th July and the Clerk advised that the entertainer, face painter and fun fair provider were all booked, Cllr. Quinn advised to check that Mr Evans was booked, as he had failed to turn up at another event and that his price had increased significantly. **Resolved:** The Clerk to contact Mr Evans to confirm the booking. **c**. The Clerk advised that Tom Bolton had kindly offered to take over the Solar Panel Project. Cllr. Gibson advised that the BEEP inspection had been carried out, however he was unsure whether the report had been issued to Tom Bolton or how the project was moving progressing. **Resolved:** Cllr. Gibson to contact Tom Bolton for an update	D028/24
10.	**Bishop Auckland & Shildon Area Action Partnership Issues** **a.** KW applied for additional funding of £3900 for Target Hardening, a decision was expected by the end of the current financial year. **Resolved:** Noted	D029/24

	b. The Clerk asked the members to consider further projects that could be funded via the AAP. **Resolved:** Noted **c.** Cllr. Quinn advised that structure of the AAP was changing in 2024/25 and further details would be announced later in the financial year. **Resolved:** Noted	
11.	**Correspondence/Documents Received** **1**. Two complaints were received from residents concerning a fox hunting incident on Saturday 3rd February. The Clerk advised the police of the incident and made enquiries with residents in the area to establish which Hunt was involved and was directed to a FB page where drone footage of trespass, criminal damage and the presence of a fox was evidenced. The matter was also reported to the Police and DCC by D&VPC as they had received a number of complaints by Eldon Lane residents. **Resolved:** The Clerk to write to South Durham Hunt. **2.** The renewal quote for the Councils Insurance was received. **Resolved:** That the renewal be accepted as Y2 of a 3-year agreement. **3.** CDALC issued updated policy guidance for Procurements and Employment Contracts. The Clerk had reviewed EPC existing policies and no changes were required. **Resolved:** Noted **4.** SUEZ funding communicated funding for community projects, the Clerk asked the Councillors to consider any smaller projects that fell into the application criteria. **Resolved:** Noted **5.** Middridge Parish had provided EPC with a copy of their proposed Parish Plan. The Clerk asked if EPC had any concerns that they wish to be communicated, none were received. **Resolved:** Noted **6.** CDALC communicated the details of the Councillors that would be attending the Royal Garden Party. Cllr. Penington queried that the same PC had been represented at the event on a number of occasions, **Resolved:** Noted **7**. The Clerk asked the Community Partnership if arrangements had been made for the 80th Anniversary of D-Day. ECP said that	D030/24

	arrangements would be made to book a singer and an afternoon tea on Saturday 8th June. **Resolved:** Noted **8.** Shincliffe PC Best Practice Presentation. **Resolved:** Due to the length of the meeting the Clerk advised that the information is reviewed at the next Parish Council Meeting on 21st May 2024. **9**. The Clerk advised ECP that the final consultation for Martyn's Law was relevant to the Community Centre in the event of a Terrorism attack (in public and community buildings), and asked them to review the documents online. **Resolved:** Noted **10.** The Clerk asked ECP to organise a community litter pick early in May and contact the Civic Pride Team to obtain the necessary equipment. **Resolved:** EPC to arrange a date and Clerk to publicise event **11.** CDALC had promoted the Free Portrait of King Charles III which was available to all Community Centres. **Resolved:** The Clerk applied on behalf of EPC and delivery was expected in April.	
12.	**Planning Matters** **a.** DM/23/03014/FPA Land West of the Garth, Old Eldon, DL 2QT **Resolved:** Refer to minute point (D007/24) **b.** Demolition work at Eldon Brickworks The Clerk reported that planning had approved the demolition of the fire damaged building. **Resolved:** Noted **c.** DM/23/03491/FPA Demolition of garage and outbuilding and erection of single storey annex at the Garth (Old Eldon), residents had been notified. The Clerk advised that Highways had not objected to the access arrangements and parking for 5 vehicles. **Resolved:** Noted **d.** Ongoing Complaints for Land opposite Pastures Row. The matter was still under review with Planning. The matter was escalated to the Principal Planning Officer and Dehenna Davison MP.	D031/24

	Resolved: Noted	
13.	**Update On Town & Villages Project** Cllr. Gibson & Pennington and the Clerk attended a meeting on 22nd February at the Rest House with KW (KW) and Peter Henderson (T&V) and Jayne Nicholson from D&VPC. The stress testing of the lamppost was not successful and an alternative solution needed to be found. KW would continue to work to deliver the project and find a suitable location for the CCTV. KW advised that the signage application was quite a long process as numerous documents were required for each sign Cllr. Gibson raised concerns that the CCTV would not have the range to cover the play area and green space, KW advised that the camera was 360. **Resolved:** It was agreed that EPC would allow KW to continue to finalise the project and for her to report back in the near future.	D032/24
14.	**Land and Environmental Issues** a. The high level of rain had led to flooding in the gardens neighbouring the proposed new build to the rear of 24 Eldon Bank. The Clerk advised that an online complaint remained open at DCC. **Resolved:** Noted **b.** Cllr. Whitlaw had attended a webinar on Local Nature Recovery Strategy. He reported on the meeting and collectively EPC ahead of this evening's meeting. A number of road closures were proposed in Office & Pastures Row for a few days in April. Residents were concerned that they would not be able to gain vehicular access. The only other access available was the rear of Office Row via the unadopted road, however the road was in a poor condition. road plannings were to be delivered in April when local road patching was taking place. **Resolved:** Noted and that Virgin Media communicate directly with the residents. **d.** Road plannings were to be delivered in April when local road patching was taking place, this may coincide with the Virgin Media works. **e.** Cllr. Gibson & Whitlaw attended a walkabout with KW & DCC to review the ASB routes being used by quads & bikes, a proposal was made to install various target hardening measures in the upcoming months, subject to additional funding. **Resolved:** Noted	D033/24

	f. Hedge cutting had taken place at the top of Pastures Row where residents vehicles were regularly parked. Cllr. Mark Wilkes of DCC Neighbourhoods advised that no grant was given for remedial works to provide hardstanding for the vehicles,	
15.	**Application for Grants & Donations** ECP indicated that the would be requesting a donation to fund future events, however these had not been formalised and applications would be made later in the year. **Resolved:** Noted	D034/24
16.	**Parish Website and gov.uk email addresses** The Clerk advised that the new website was up and running and that the Councillors had been issued with their new gov.uk email account details, which provide a secure email address and complied with data protection systems. **Resolved:** Noted	D035/24
17.	**Annual Inspection of Assets** The annual inspection of Parish Council Assets is a requirement of both the Insurance and Financial regulations. **Resolved:** Cllr. Gibson to arrange a suitable date after the Easter Holidays (weather dependant)	D036/24
18.	**Update on Training** **a.** Cllr. Whitlaw had completed his new councillor training. **Resolved:** Noted **b.** The Clerk ha attended a social media webinar, however indicated that EPC should not have a FB Account, but to promote the use of the new Website as a means of communicating with residents and the Parish Noticeboard. **Resolved:** Noted	D037/24
18.	**Any questions from members for the Clerk or Chairman** **No questions were raised**	D038/24
18.	**Date of next meeting** **Tuesday 21st May 2024 at 7pm**	D039/24
19.	**Vouchers/Invoices & Income/Expenditure** The financial statements were inspected by the Councillors **Resolved:** Cllr. Gibson signed the documents as a true record of the financial affairs up to the end of Feb 2024.	D040/24

	Cllr. Gibson & Cllr. Henry signed the vouchers and cheques in accordance with the list of expenditure. **Resolved:** Cheques signed by two authorised signatories	

The meeting closed at 9.05pm