

Hurworth Parish Council

Minutes of the Virtual Parish Council Meeting held at Hurworth Grange on Thursday, 7th May 2020.

Parish Councillors present:-

All the Councillors were made aware of, and had the opportunity, to contribute to this Virtual Council Meeting. The Council comprises the following Councillors:-

Cllr Tony Winnett (Chairman), Cllr David Crisp, Cllr Peter Foster, Cllr Janine Forster, Cllr Elaine Hedley, Cllr Amanda Oughton, Cllr Dorothy Oughton, Cllr Sam Ring-Viney, Cllr Bree Stamp, Cllr Joyce Wedge, Cllr Lynn Wylie, Cllr Graham Wylie.

Also

Cllr Christy Chou, Cllr Tostevin, Peter Allan (Parish Clerk)

254. Apologies for Absence:

None

255. Declarations of Interest

Cllr Crisp – Allotments

256. Chairman's Address

The Chair, Cllr Winnett, opened the meeting.

1a – Welcome to the New Council Year.

It is hoped that this coming year will not be as difficult as 2019-2020 which was fraught with the Court Case and the onset the Covid-19 pandemic.

It would be remiss of me if I did not thank all Councillors for their work over the last year and give my particular thanks to our Parish Clerk who has deftly handled a number of complicated events and who over the last few weeks has worked more intensely than ever, mainly from his home.

Also, we need to mention the helpful IT work carried out by Cllr Graham Wylie on the web site and the potential digital conferencing platforms.

In the current difficult circumstances I hope that you will all continue your good work for the Parish and keep yourselves safe and well.

1b – Planning for the Future.

Our inability to hold our normal face to face meetings has created the need for “virtual” meetings. Government and businesses and local associations are now using digital conferencing to good effect to enable efficient communications and are likely to continue with this method once regulations are lifted.

We need to closely examine and plan for our use of digital conferencing in the near future.

(I found out, for example, that the Neasham P C. and Croft Village Committee are already holding video conferences).

257. Minutes of the Meeting held on 2nd 2020 were accepted by the Chairman and endorsed by Cllr Dorothy Oughton.

258. Matters Arising

The Chairman reported on the following items:-

- a. **Broadband.** I have written follow-up reminders to our MP, DBC, BT & Tees Valley CA that we require their co-operation to give the village a comprehensive High Speed Broadband coverage.

I have stressed that when the pandemic regulations are eased many more people will continue to work from home rather than commute to work. This will enhance the need for broadband capacity.

To date have not had any response.

b. - Defibrillators.

At last the saga of the third defibrillator unit appears to be sorted! The Mustard Tree authority has agreed that the unit can be installed on their wall and arrangements are in hand for this work to be carried out. We thank the Methodist Church for their permission and assistance. Once the unit is operational we shall announce it via our website and media platforms.

259. Public Participation

Cllr Graham Wylie reported on the activities which have been taking place in Hurworth during April.

Hurworth Residents United in Pandemic

Hurworth residents have stepped up and brought this village closer together, with fantastic volunteers who are willing to help, and not just the vulnerable, but everybody.

Liv Baker set up a volunteering group. She volunteered her children to post leaflets to residents advertising this help and spoke to the Parish Council to ask for posters to be put up on the big village notice boards.

People started to phone for a friendly chat, which then quickly led to shopping for the vulnerable, who have had to self-isolate, and didn't have family to help. Liv asked for volunteers, and quickly received about 50 offers from local residents. This has been, and in fact continues to be a very successful initiative, as well as a huge relief for residents who would have otherwise struggled.

Tracie Jacobs, who was helping Liv, with a friend who worked for the NHS, looked at other ways to help too. She came across a group called North East Sewers, who were sewing items for NHS front line workers. Tracie made two uniform bags, but within seven days, and with around 20 volunteers, made 230 uniform bags. Families were making thankyou notes to be put in the bags before being delivered. This was a shock to Tracie, who was overwhelmed with the massive support that she has received.

Lyn Hatch decided to organise a raffle, to support the carers in buying them hand cream, as having to wash their hands constantly has taken its toll on their skin. We are already providing uniform bags, as mentioned above, but wanted to add the creams too. With a fantastic response from local businesses, we can offer great prizes, and all the profits will go towards our Key Workers. It's in times like these, that you realise how generous people are.

As people are aware, dog waste bins are not being emptied by DBC due to limited numbers of staff being unable to get around the whole of the borough to empty these bins. Lindsey Probert decided the best course of action would be to empty the bins of existing dog waste, to save the residents from having to put up with the smell from rotting waste; especially as with the weather turning warmer.

Lyndsey, as an amazing act of kindness to others, has collected over 10 bags out of the dog waste bins. Following this, after seeing people still using the bins, she decided to block them off all together with black bags, to prevent people from using the dog waste bins.

Charlotte McCabe, aged 10, decided that she would like to raise money to help people at this difficult time. She chose to do this by running (something she's not particularly keen on!) around her garden 100 times. Having raised some money, she decided she would like to raise more and went on to run a total of 260 laps of our garden and completed two 12-mile bike rides. She inspired her brother to join in too and Harry, aged 7, went on to run 100 laps of the garden. Together they raised £100. Having heard about the wonderful efforts of the village community, the family decided that the money should go into the fundraising pot that had already been started by Hurworth members to support our local NHS and care workers and St Teresa's hospice.

Continuing with the theme of improving the village, Strait Lane residents have helped to clean up their area. Again, due to staff shortages, DBC haven't been able to cut the grass, so one Strait Lane resident, Kev Richards, decided to cut the grass himself, and will continue to do so until the Council have enough staff to restart. Tony Jones, also a resident of Strait Lane, along with Kev's wife Emma, helped to clear the gutters, and weeds along the kerb side in front of the green.

Staying on Strait Lane, Singer Lucrecia Jones, and husband Tony, decided to lighten up a Sunday afternoon by holding an outside concert from the comfort of their back garden. This was their second concert, with both being loved by residents, and certainly helped lift the spirits of the locals, who were even able to ask for 'requests'.

And it doesn't stop there.....

Colin from Urban Eden offered to cut the grass in certain areas of the village for free.

Martin Harrison, who works for the Grange, offered a load of jigsaws to local residents to help with the boredom of being stuck in 24/7.

Julie Clarke has set up a church group to help the vulnerable and older members of the parish.

Children of the village have been drawing rainbows, to be displayed in windows, and have been placing painted stones for people to find on their daily walk around the village.

Hurworth Fisheries have continued to open, offering deliveries, and maintaining safe distancing for people picking up their food.

The Spar have worked tirelessly in continuing to serve customers, creating a safe environment for their customers.

Mark Middlemiss set up Hurworth Live on Facebook some time ago, and this has been a great way for the village to communicate, as well as being instrumental in arranging all these fantastic acts of kindness.

There will no doubt be many more people who have helped to get us all through these unprecedented circumstances, and apologies to anyone who have been missed off. I am certain that everyone in Hurworth and Hurworth Place will thank you for everything you have done and for making Hurworth and Hurworth Place such a fantastic place to live.

260. Playground Planning Working Party Report

Cllr Lynn Wylie reported as follows:- Nothing to report

261. Planning Applications.

Cllr Ring-Viney submitted the following report:-

Planning applications 02/04/2020-06/05/2020				
1	Rec'd Date	Val Date	REF	Comments
	20/04/2020	20/04/2020	20/00286/TFC	No Comments
Address	3A Roundhill Road HURWORTH DARLINGTON DL2 2DY			
About	Notification to carry out works to trees in a designated conservation area - Felling of 2 No. Sycamore trees(T1)(T2)			
2	Rec'd Date	Val Date	REF	Comments
	01/05/2020	01/05/2020	PP-08688768	No Comments
Address	16 Roundhill Road HURWORTH DARLINGTON DL2 2DX			
About	Erection of single storey wraparound extension to front, side and rear elevations including creation of stepped access with handrail to front elevation			
3	Rec'd Date	Val Date	REF	Comments
	N/A	N/A	20/00083/FUL	Objection below
Address	Development on Roundhill Road			
About	<p>The objections revolve around the flooding risks to the above planning application. The following points constitute the objection.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Is the above site being completed to the specifications of the approved planning application. 2. The access road to one of the dwellings only directs the surface water away onto another property <p>There have been evidences supplied showing the ground levels being altered apart from the boundaries. There have been alternative solutions provided. The author of this objection is wanting to know who has accountability for this and remediation was discussed.</p> <p>An email attached has also detailed that a site visit has been carried out with further visits could be due once the current restrictions have been lifted. If the site has deviated from the plans a request to alter these back to the plans will be made.</p>			

262. Tree Report

Cllr Foster reported as follows:-

Tree Report April 2020

One lime tree has had to be felled in Hurworth Grange. This will be replaced with a similar tree.

The tree which was felled in Sanderson Road will be replaced in May.

The two oak trees which died on the Manorfield will be replaced in May at no cost to the Council.

The three trees removed near the entrance to Hurworth Grange will be replaced with reasonably mature trees. These are scheduled to be planted in May. The area around these new trees has been covered in tree bark to dry out the dampness and to raise the level of the ground.

Johnston Tree Surgeons have carried out full tree surveys on all three sectors of the village including Hurworth Grange. The previous surveys were completed in November 2018.

A copy of the Tree surveys will be sent to Zurich Insurance Company for their records.

263. Open Spaces & EPICH Report

Cllr Lynn Wylie reported as follows:-

Open Spaces Report – May 2020

I received an email, from a member of EPICH, to advise that there is a broken stile along the path from the Ringfield to Blind Lane (just as you enter/ leave the wooded area). This has been reported to Steve Petch at DBC, and due to the Covid-19 restrictions, he is unable to make any arrangements to have it repaired other than to write to the landowner in the hope that they will fix it.

EPICH Report – May 2020

Of course, the planned 22nd April meeting couldn't go ahead. In the absence of face to face meetings, the EPICH members are continuing to stay in touch with each other via email.

Orchard at the Grange

The pruning is all up to date, and the trees are looking beautiful in full blossom.

Tidy Up – Lychgate

This has been cancelled for the time being.

Bug Hotels

Nigel Goddard is happy to make more bug hotels, but needs a source of pallets; can anyone help?

Bees

The winter covers are all off and all three hives seem to be in good condition.

Tony Needham and Judith have completed a full hive inspection, with Tony carrying out a considerable amount of hive maintenance to get the hives back into shape after the winter months.

DEFRA have issued guidance to beekeepers that visits to apiaries are to be considered as essential travel, so are able to continue.

Unfortunately, we received bad news of 10 hives being stolen from a Darlington beekeeper, so vigilance is very important in these strange times.

264. Allotment Report

Cllr Crisp reported that due to the good weather and the lockdown, the allotments have been very busy.

The crops are already coming through and the allotment holders can expect a good harvest. There has been one new applicant for an allotment this month, and this is being followed up.

An Emergency Meeting of the Allotment Committee, in Virtual Mode, was convened to consider an application from an individual who wished to become a Registered Helper. The application was considered by both the Allotment Committee and the Council, and was finally rejected.

The tenant of the allotment has not made an application for assistance.

265. Pathways and Rights of Way

Cllr Wedge has been following up on outstanding issues, but with DBC operating with reduced resources, it is difficult to get work done.

One stile has been reported as broken on the Ringfield pathway.

DBC are planning to make changes to three of the Right of Way pathways in Hurworth Parish. The Council has been sent plans and asked to comment. Cllr Forster and Cllr Ring-Viney will be reporting on their visit to the pathways.

266. Playground and Youth Affairs

Cllr Stamp reported:-

Nothing to Report.

a. Darlington Youth Work Group

Mr Martin Stand contacted the Council to tell us that the Youth Group is currently on lockdown, but that we are hoping to start recruiting new Youth Leaders as soon as the situation eases.

The Council reconfirmed that we would provide the financial assistance of £2620, when he is back up and running. This being support for one year of the Youth Work Group operations.

267. Highways and Traffic Report

1. Cllr Dorothy Oughton reported that a number of tasks are still outstanding and will be addressed as soon as resources are available.

There is an outstanding list of ‘jobs’ to be done, as soon as it is possible to work outside, viz:-

- The potholes on the Green
- The bollard to be replaced near Coach Lane
- The plaque to be re-located from LychGate
- Path maintenance at Hurworth Grange
- Installation of one bench near Lime Cottage – location to be decided.
- The speed monitor to be installed by DBC near The Birches

In addition, the Council is still awaiting the comments and recommendation from DBC regarding the Hurworth Parking Report submitted to them in October 2019.

a. Dog Bins

The bins have been closed all month, and most residents have reacted well and taken their dog bags home.

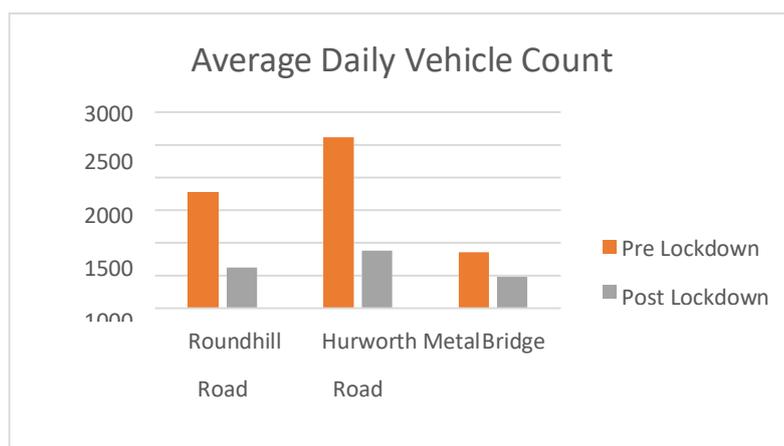
Thanks go the Lindsey Probert who has been patrolling the bins and disposing of the used dog bags. Thank you Lindsey.

b. Speed Watch Due to the lock down, no sessions were held.

c. Traffic Statistics in Hurworth

Pre & Post Lockdown Traffic Statistics

The Pre Lockdown figures at the Roundhill Road and Hurworth Road locations are for the period 02/01/2020 to 23/03/2020, (Total 81Days) Post lockdown figures are from 24/03/2020 to 30/04/2020 (Total 38 Days). The pre lockdown figures for Metal Bridge are from 04/03/2020 to 23/03/2020 (Total 20 Days) and post lockdown from 24/03/2020 to 07/05/2020 (45 Days).



The figures show that traffic volume has fallen by:

65% on Roundhill Road, 66% on Hurworth Road and 44% at Metal Bridge. Looking at the Average Speed figures:

Roundhill Road is up by 1.1 M.P.H., Hurworth Road is up by 3.1 M.P.H., while Metal Bridge is down by 2.1 M.P.H.

The worst statistics are the 85th percentile figures for Hurworth Road. The 85th percentile

is the speed at which or below 85% of traffic is moving. DBC regard an 85th percentile of 35 M.P.H. as a major cause for concern. The 85th percentile post lockdown for Hurworth Road is 35.9 M.P.H. this is the worst yet recorded and is an increase of 2.3 M.P.H. from the pre lockdown level.

The highest speed recorded was 90 M.P.H. on 23rd April at 19:25:00 on Hurworth Road.

268. Matters of Interest

.The Chairman reported:-

a – Claim for Legal Costs status.

As has been published previously the Parish Council successfully defended the Court Case and was awarded damages. These were due for payment on 15th April 2020 but were not forthcoming. This substantial amount (£16,897) is public money due to the Parish Council. The Parish Council have engaged a local solicitor to assist us to enforce payment and recover the debt.

b – HACSA.

The football club applied to the Council for financial assistance to support a grant application to improve their pitch facilities. Their initial request for £3,000 was reviewed by all Councillors and was refused. A contribution of £500 was agreed and has been gratefully received by the club.

c. Procedure Review.

All Parish Council Procedures have been reviewed, and where necessary corrected and brought up to date. This was quite a task and I thank our Parish Clerk for his massive contribution.

d. Community Support

A motion was tabled by Cllr Graham Wyllie, Seconded by Cllr Winnett –
The Council should support the voluntary community support group, which is being organised by Liv Baker, should receive financial support from the Council.

The proposal is that

‘The Council should award the Group a further £300 in May, if the Group asks for some support’.

The vote was carried out by E Mail and the result was 9 in favour, 1 against, 1 abstention, and 1 no vote received. The motion was carried.

269. Police Report

Cllr Amanda Oughton submitted the following Police Report:-

HURWORTH CRIME FIGURES APRIL 2020.

ASB:

03/04 – Group of teens reported at Rockcliffe Hall. Officers attended and took names and details. Education was given to them regarding current COVID-19 regulations. Youths were given a warning about being out and sent home.

05/04 – Males sited walking along Blind Lane carrying a crate of beer. Caller worried that this could be a COVID-19 breach of regulations. No officers were sent to this incident as it was unknown where the males went. Logged as intel.

09/04 – Reports of an increase of people walking along the river Tees at Hurworth Place. Caller worried that this is breaching COVID-19 regulations. Area tagged for patrols.

11/04 – caller reporting gang of youths at Hurworth Grange. Officers attended and youths were educated on COVID-19 regulations and sent home.

24/04 – caller reporting a gathering at a property on Calder Avenue. Caller concerned about breach of COVID-19 regulations. Officers attended, and persons who did not reside at the address were sent home.

26/04 – Caller reported an off road bike in the area of Grange Road. Officers attended but no bike seen.

BURGLARY:

14/04 – Report of burglary at a property on Hurworth Moor. Access gained and a bike was taken. Officers and CSI attended and confirmed crime of burglary. Investigation ongoing.

270. Parish Walks

Cllr Forster reported -

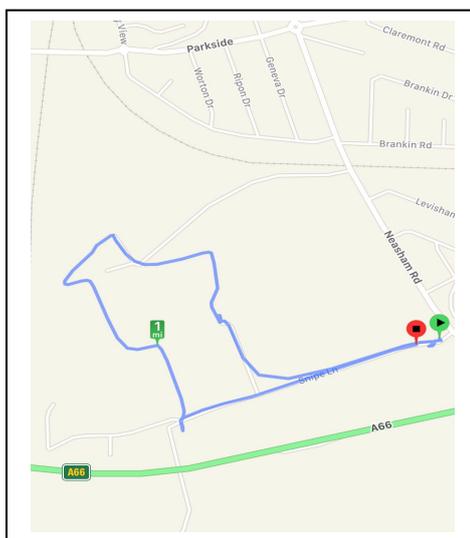
Walk report – For Wednesday 6th May 2020 (Geneva Woods)

Attended by 1 Parish Councillor - Janine Forster

Paths walked 14 and 17

Route description The Walk started at Neasham Road -

Using path 17 along track until turning Right onto path 14, but half way along this is now blocked, as the old shed that you used to pass behind has been vandalised and set alight, leaving this part of the path impassable. This needs urgent attention. (After chatting to a young chap, he allowed me to walk this part on his side of the fence). The path then turns left and passes along beside Railway collages and into Geneva Woods. After the kissing gate, turning left again along the edge of the woods until meeting up with path 17. Then taking snipe lane track towards Ivy cottage and turning left and back along to Neasham Road making a circular walk. The route walked, was passable if a bit overgrown.



Walk Length – 1.45 miles

Walk Time - 47 minuets

The root was recorded by
Hurworth Parish Councillor Janine Forster

using her Stava App

Actions required :-

- 1 - Stile in need or repair
- c. Path 14 cleared because of burnt down shed - Pictures are available to show the damage.
- d. General weed clearance to keep path passable

Darlington Borough Council have notified us that they intend to make some changes to the Rights of Way along the pathways at Snipe Lane.

Cllr Forster has walked through the designated areas, and has reported that the alterations will not be detrimental to Hurworth Parish. In fact some of the new pathways through Goblins Wood, when laid, will enhance the walk.

The Council has reported back to Steve Petch at DBC that we have no objection to the proposed changes.

271. Accounts for Payment

The Schedule of Accounts for Payment for April 2020, having been distributed to all Councillors has been accepted as no Councillors has raised a query.

Hurworth Parish Council - Accounts Payable April 2020

<u>Name</u>	<u>Cheque No.</u>	<u>Details</u>	<u>Amount</u>
M Harrison - replaces 170	103172	Replacement cheque	0.00
Gordon Fletcher	103173	Audit Fee	250.00
Information Data Protect	103174	Data Protection licence	40.00
L Baker community assistance	103175	Section 137 Community Award	300.00
HACSA	103176	Section 137 Award Youth sport	500.00
A Iles	103177	Salary	588.60
P D Allan expenses	103178	Flag, files, cartridges	199.05
P D Allan	103179	Salary	721.80
Inland Revenue	103180	PAYE	228.00
Barclays Bank	DD	Bank charges	2.30
CDALC	103181	Annual subscription	491.20
Total Expenses for April 2020			£3,320.95

272. Financial report

The Financial report to 30th April 2020 has been circulated to all Councillors. This was the first Financial Report of the new financial year, are incorporated the Budget for the 12 months to 31st March 2021. It also include receipt of the annual Precept of £59,000. The full Report can be seen on the Council web site.

The following formal motions were tabled, by distribution to all Councillors prior to the meeting. All have been recorded here as passed unanimously, as no questions or objections were raised in their connection.

1. The Internal Audit having been completed and the Audit Report circulated to all Councillors, I propose acceptance by the Council of this report. Proposed by Cllr Graham Wylie, Seconded by Cllr Winnett.
2. The final Financial Accounts for the year to 31st March 2020, as presented to the Council be accepted by this Council. Proposed by Cllr Graham Wylie, Seconded by Cllr Crisp.
3. In accordance with the Governance of the Council, I propose that the Notice of Public Rights, inviting the public to inspect the Council's financial records, is displayed on the Council notice boards and recorded in the Council's web site. Proposed by Cllr Winnett, seconded by Cllr Lyn Wylie

The Chairman is hereby authorised to sign the official documents, along with the Responsible Financial Officer. These documents will be send to the External Auditors Mazars in accordance with their timeframe.

273. Hurworth Parish Website and Guestbook

Cllr Graham Wylie reported:-

The website has attracted more than 1500 visitors this month; this is a significant increase from the start of the year, when the site was only attracting about 200 visitors.

The website is working really well in conjunction with Hurworth Live, set up by Mark Middlemiss, as well as providing detail to people who have questions about the parish which can't be answered on Facebook, as they can be steered to the right page on the website to hopefully answer their questions.

If we continue to be in Lockdown, and can't gather for the meetings, our aim is to provide video meeting facility, with the public allowed to join in at the point of public participation.

I asked via Facebook, and the website, if people could inform me of the walks that they have been doing, as part of their once a day exercise. This detail is then used to inform the Council which paths have been walked, and allow the PC to notify DBC of any issues reported e.g. broken stiles/ blocked pathways etc. The response, to this request, has been amazing, and I am pleased to report that not too many issues have been reported, and for those that have, will be reported to the relevant DBC contact.

When lockdown starts to ease, hopefully more events will be advertised, and photos of these events will be displayed,

As the old PC logo was looking a bit outdated, and the council decided on a new look, we recently held a logo competition, which was open to everyone in the parish. Twenty-two designs were

received, and both parishioners and councillors were able to vote for the preferred 3 designs, with the ultimate decision going to the Chairman. We thank everyone for their time in designing the logos, and for everyone who submitted a vote (apologies to the residents who haven't got internet access, and who subsequently may not have been aware of the competition. Unfortunately, due to lockdown, getting information to every household was not possible.

The winning logo was designed and submitted by Jaime Westwood:



To look at the winning design, and the top 3, check out the website, <https://www.hurworthonline.com>

The website also shows some of the community spirit and support which has been demonstrated by residents, in support of the elderly and vulnerable people who can't leave their homes due to self-isolation.

274. Association Reports

Due to the Government instructions all Association and Group meetings have been cancelled.

1. HCA

- Hurworth Grange is now locked down, but all the tenants still have access and can carry on their businesses.
- The annual Hurworth Country Fair in its 10th year has been cancelled due to the lock down. It is hoped that, if circumstances change for the better, that the Produce and Crafts section will be staged, along with some music and refreshments.

2. The Grange Bar continues to be in lockdown. Financial support is being sought.

The next meeting will be held on Thursday, 4th June 2020. It is expected that this meeting will be held using Zoom and will be in interactive mode.