

Greencroft Parish Council

Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 30 July 2024 at 6.00pm at Lynwood House,
Lanchester

Present: Sandra McDonagh (Chair), Vivien Self, Jane Cain, Ann Bell, County Councillor
Mike McGaun, County Councillor Doug Oliver, Paul McAdam (Clerk),

Apologies : Dorothy Parry, Gavin Jarvis

108/24 Declarations of Interest

None.

109/24 Public Participation

None.

110/24 Minutes of the last Meeting

Resolved that the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on 25 June 2024 be **AGREED** as a correct record

111/24 Planning

DCC reports had been circulated.

112/24 County Councillor Update

Countywide

- Durham City Run had taken place, started by Daley Thompson, and accompanied by other celebrity events
- The Leader of the Council had met with Senior Finance staff and also the new North East Combined Authority and it was likely that there would be more joint ventures in the future
- Adult Services have a new Director
- Childrens Services dealing with financial issues – one of the biggest being the impact of transport costs
- Housing Strategy had been deferred to a future meeting
- General concern regarding Food Security and the increasing reliance on foodbanks
- Neighbourhood Services undertaking an initiative with supermarkets regarding the problem of dumped trolleys

Parish

- Recent, well attended meeting held in Burnhope regarding ongoing concerns regarding Solar Farm developments – which are potentially 3 separate developments but all in the same, adjoining areas

- The initial application which had been dismissed at Judicial Review was likely to be re-submitted in the autumn
 - o Doug and Mike have been trying to meet DCC Planning Team but have not been able to do so and have just had email correspondence
 - o It appears that applicant do not accept the judges decision but are making amendments and DCC are open to a new application
- The 2nd development is still at the pre-application stage but is considered a separate development, despite the fact it would adjoin the first application – which would effectively create the largest solar farm in Europe
- There is also a third application which is currently on hold

General discussion about concerns including

- An acceptance that there was a cost to pay for changing energy practices – loss of Greenland, financial, effect on wildlife but the main concern was that these combined developments would come at too big a cost, created by the accumulation of applications
- There is a historic list of landowners who had indicated they would be open to solar farms on their land but some of this may have changed due to the realisation with the Ukraine War that there is also a need in UK to grow more crops to be more sustainable

113/24 Clerk Update

Noticeboard – now installed but there is a problem with condensation and Sandra has been in discussion with the manufacturers who are replacing the noticeboard on August 7th. It was **AGREED** that Paul should draft an advert regarding the 2 councillor vacancies to display on the board and also try and display the map of the Parish Council boundary.

Work Required in park

Damaged Seat - Still waiting for response to letter from gardener. Sandra asked for contact details for Andy Purves so she could get in touch with him.

Repair work from inspections – there was some maintenance work required and it was **AGREED** that Ann would ask Nathan, on behalf of the council, if he was prepared to undertake handyman duties which would be determined by a schedule of works.

It was **AGREED** that Jane, Vivien and Ann would meet to check all items and prepare a plan of repairs, maintenance or replacement required

AGAR

The Exercise of Public Rights had concluded and there was no contact made by anybody regarding this.

Standing Orders

Template Standing Orders had been provided by CDALC and Paul will review these before September meeting and personalise for Greencroft Parish Council.

Hours Worked – Anticipated 11 hours worked in July and it was **AGREED** for these to be paid.

114/24 Budget

2024/25 budget position circulated prior to meeting – not a lot of activity to date and no questions.

Paul highlighted that the budget was quite underspent on Facilities – which included repairs, seats, flower beds and additionally there was a £600 grant for work in the park that was sitting in reserves but should be spent by December 2024.

It was **AGREED** that the group meeting regarding maintenance would also consider improvements to the flowers and plant areas.

115/24 Accounts for Payment

None

116/24 Asset Register

Updated Asset Register had been circulated to include new noticeboard and this was **AGREED**.

117/24 Publication of Councillors Addresses

It was **AGREED** that addresses would not be published (they currently are not anyway) but that Paul would check and confirm the publicised telephone numbers to ensure accuracy.

118/24 Traffic Issues

Continuing frustration over the lack of progress with the speed visors and a fear that visors would just be installed without any further consultation with Parish Council.

DCC staff had been measuring for signs but there was still concern that Parish Council views on locations may not be considered and also that there had been no discussion about what the signs would actually display.

County Councillors will discuss this as soon as possible with Durham County Council and it was **AGREED** that Paul would circulate relevant correspondence to Doug and Mike.

119/24 Solar Farm Planning Application

Discussed in County Councillor update (Ref 112/24)

120/24 Neighbourhood Plan

Paul had enquired with Lanchester Parish Council on how they developed the plan and the problems they encountered in the process and was awaiting further information.

It was **AGREED** that he should also ask CDALC for any advice regarding developing such a plan

121/24 Seat and Fence Inspections

Jane Cain had carried out the monthly check and identified no further changes in conditions since last month.

The group to discuss all these as mentioned earlier (Ref 113/24)

122/24 Questions from Members

None received.

123/24 Chair Announcements

None.

124/24 Any Other Business

None

125/24 Next Meeting

Tuesday 24th September at 6.00pm at Lynwood House.