

Minutes of the July Parish Council Meeting of **SHINCLIFFE PARISH COUNCIL** held in St. Marys Church Hall, Shincliffe Village, Durham on **TUESDAY 24th JULY 2012** at **7.00pm**.

PRESENT: Councillor Cook (in the Chair) and Councillors Hudson, Milburn, Morgan, Shearer and Storer.

40. NOTICE OF MEETING

Public notice of the meeting was taken as read.

41. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

42. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Lightley.

43. MINUTES

It was **resolved:** that the Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Tuesday 19th June 2012 (copies previously circulated and publicised) be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

44. POLICE MATTERS

PC Cockburn was unable to attend the meeting and the following day submitted a police report:

1. 5.7.12 – theft of four bikes from a garden in Langton Lea
2. 13.7.12 – burglary of dwelling in Langton Lea

45. MATTERS ARISING

(a) Noticeboard

Councillor Milburn went to see Mr Cook, who has agreed the noticeboard can be installed on his land. Marc to assemble and install in August. If any councillors are around to help, it would be appreciated. Councillor Cook says once installed we will decide who will have keys.

(b) Arriva No. 57 Bus

Clerk sent an online email via the website, no response as yet.

(c) Apperley Avenue Street Sign

The sign has been replaced.

(d) Wildflower Haven

Councillor Milburn spoke to the neighbours regarding the wild flower haven, they are now happy with the haven as long as it doesn't get any bigger.

Northumbria in Bloom judges were impressed by it and are coming back to see the haven in flower.

(e) Jubilee Cake

As well as the Parish Council's contribution of £60, the WI has contributed £20 towards the cake.

(f) Village green use

Councillor Cook confirmed that the parish council does not have a view on the use of the green, but are responding to resident's complaints about the use of it. Councillor Shearer highlighted that the issue is not the use of the green; it is the damaging of the green and the daffodils. A resident mentioned that only need to keep people off the green for 6 weeks after flowers die back.

It was **resolved:** to ask the nursery to keep the children off the green in the spring for 6 weeks after the flowers die back and to put a note in spring newsletter regarding this

(g) Free school for Durham

The free school was approved.

(h) The Bracken - Planning Application

No planning committee meeting until mid-September, the application will not come up until then

(i) Plaques - Memorial John Hudson and Jubilee Tree

Councillor Milburn had got quotes for the two plaques. It was **resolved:** to purchase the stainless steel plaques at £80.40 for memorial plaque and £97.20 for the tree.

(j) Stile at bottom of bank

Councillor Morgan attended a site meeting with the farmer, Elaine Crowe and Marc Platts. Main issue is that dog walkers don't appreciate that the farmer's main aim is to keep stock in and not make access easier for dog walkers. At the meeting it was agreed to have a slightly altered fence line, install another tread plate and a high hand-post to make it easier for people to climb over the stile. Marc Platts is to dig out some of the soil and install a gravel base. Elaine Crowe will provide most of the funding for this; however the parish council may have to fund the labour. It was **resolved:** to go ahead with this and to firstly ask DCC to pay for the labour, if they will not, the parish council will fund the labour charges of £60.

(k) Grass Cutting

Councillor Milburn received numerous complaints regarding grass cutting in the parish during the last month. Residents attended the meeting to express their concerns about the grass cutting and the appalling standard of workmanship.

Councillor Cook had contacted HAL and asked who was in charge as wanted to discuss plans on grass cutting. No response, rang again yesterday and asked to know what is being done so residents know what is happening and why. We await a response from the service request. It was **resolved:** to wait to see what the outcome of the request is and to ask County Councillor Williams to attend the September meeting to discuss this further and maybe bring a representative of DCC.

(l) Tree in middle of green

Councillor Shearer has cut the grass around the bottom of the trees. Beal Walk needs to be checked, Councillor Milburn to deal.

(m) Hill Meadows – highways work

HAL have been contacted regarding this.

(n) Awards for all application

The application for funding from Awards for All was unsuccessful. Councillor Cook offered thanks to Councillor Milburn for his efforts.

(o) St Mary's close – cobbles

DCC are taking up cobbles in parts of St Marys Close and putting down tarmac. This is being done following a survey in the Close.

(p) overgrown trees

The overgrown trees have been cut back.

46. MATTERS ARISING FROM LAST MONTH'S CORRESPONDENCE

1. Councillor Lightley – we should wait for boundary change to happen at Bowburn and then try to restore the number of councillors at the parish council. Will be discussed further under agenda item no. 10.
2. Councillor Lightley - Neighbourhood Wardens, have we got a new warden, should we invite them to a meeting – our warden has not changed therefore no need to invite to meeting.
3. Councillor Morgan –LCR query about value of quality status – saying that parish councils have not benefited from gaining quality status. Having an option of renewing in 3 years, we can decide in 3 years whether to renew
4. Councillor Cook - Providing support to your communities in severe weather conditions, a parish council in West Sussex has a volunteer scheme to support residents during severe weather. There is no system in place in the parish at present. Should we consider having a scheme in place for older residents? Clerk to forward to councillors to review.

47. CORRESPONDENCE TO CIRCULATE

Non urgent items of correspondence to be circulated to Councillors for discussion and decision as necessary at the September meeting.

48. CURRENT CORRESPONDENCE

1. Cape Site application for less affordable housing – refused.
2. Parish boundary – DCC hoped to undertake a small community governance review. Residents affected will be consulted on this, and a notice will be placed in a local newspaper asking for views of residents who live in both parishes. However, they are checking to see whether this process will be sufficient since the areas are already parishes. If the Boundary Commission confirms that this is ok, then consultation will commence. However if the Boundary Commission decide there needs to be a complete community governance review, DCC will not be undertaking this until the 2 ongoing reviews are complete.
3. Durham Wildlife Trust – conducting survey on local wildlife site, seeking permission to survey Old Mine Site. Clerk to respond and say yes.
4. BT community awards scheme, free broadband for a year for community groups.
5. DCC County Durham Plan preferred options document, councillors to read.
6. DCC Markets and Street Traders consultation
7. Paying by cheque – consultation.
8. CDALC newsletter – articles on Code of Conduct overview and a note saying Shincliffe is now a quality parish council

49. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

No planning applications have been received.

50. HORTICULTURAL MATTERS

1. Marc Platts has struggled with all the rain we have had, issues with waterlogged flower beds, standing water. Have put organic matter in hoping to help drain it.
2. Previously given a grant by County Councillors for planter tubs, have purchased these and put on

Langton Lea near the Jubilee tree.

3. Summer Front Garden Competition – can councillors please check their allocated streets, the last 2 weeks in August, and have results by 4 September to allow time for judging.
4. Marc has cleared path, trees and undergrowth at entrance to High Shincliffe on the A177 (from Bowburn), was blocking views of traffic.
5. Councillor Hudson enquired if people are dumping trees at the Old Mine Site? Marc Platts to check.
6. Nomination for Bob Woolley Award for Marc Platts. Attach as appendix to minutes.

51. DURHAM AREA ACTION PARTNERSHIP

Update will be provided in September.

52. CODE OF CONDUCT

The Clerk had previously distributed copies of the new Code of Conduct to Councillors for review. It was **resolved**: to adopt the new Code with immediate effect.

53. BOUNDARY COMMISSION CHANGES

Papers to be included in correspondence for review.

54. ACCOUNTS

H Simpson (July and August)	£565.72
Shincliffe PCC Hire of Hall	£22.00
HMRC Income Tax Payment (July and August)	£141.40
H Simpson – Petty Cash	£100.00
M Platts – Old Mine Site	£95.00
M Platts – Horticultural	£722.16
M Platts – Maintenance	£45.00
Ian Lawlan – internal auditor	£65.00
Nia Cook – stationery	£7.89
Jim Milburn – garden tubs and peat	£59.98

It was **resolved**: that the above accounts be paid.

55. SUMMER HOLIDAYS

Discussion took place on holidays of the Clerk, Chair and Councillors to ensure cover was available during the summer period.

56. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The September Parish Council Meeting will be held on Tuesday 18th September 2012 in Shincliffe Primary School, High Shincliffe, Durham at 7.00 pm

57. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Councillor Hudson

1. Any reason why the parish council meeting in July was moved to the 4th week in July. It was **resolved**: to return to the 3rd week in July in future years.

Councillor Milburn

2. Resident in Lindisfarne complaining about state of tarmac path, overgrown with weeds, is there anything that can be done, does DCC spray with weed? Councillor Shearer says the path is in disrepair. Councillor Shearer to speak to resident.

3. About 3 months ago, reported to BT the glass broken in the telephone box at bottom of Low Road, passed today and it looked remarkably clean, the glass has not been replaced. Councillor Milburn to report again.

Councillor Morgan

4. Now have revised version of Shincliffe Walks leaflet, 500 copies. Where can we put them? Can we advertise the fact that we have new ones? Clerk requested an online version for the website.
5. Church meeting – issue with path from A177 through the village, steps from A177 up to church yard need attention and a rail. Need to speak to Elaine Crowe.
6. Access to St Marys Church from St Marys Close, steps are an issue, cars parking in front of houses are also causing an issue. Can steps be replaced with a ramp? Church Council has obtained one quotation for £750. Would parish council be prepared to help fund this? Councillor Morgan to speak to resident who raised this. It was **resolved**: to wait until Councillor Morgan has more information on this matter.
7. Should we consider offering Councillors the option to claim expenses such as printing? Agenda item for September meeting.

Councillor Storer

8. Gate A177 to Telford Close – deteriorating, has been fixed, metal connections are broken and hinges are failing. Should we consider making the gate secure to keep children and dogs off the A177. Councillor Cook to contact HAL.

Councillor Cook

9. Speed Visor – phoned to chase, being ordered next week.
10. Suggestions for induction pack, if you could consider over the summer what should be included. If anyone finds they have contact details and any information that would be useful pass to Clerk.
11. EON – consultation on wind turbines going at Morden and Bradbury. Councillors Cook, Lightley and Hudson went to consultation event and reviewed maps, number of proposed turbines has been reduced from 45 to 24 and the public seem happier with new proposals. We were given the chance to object, however, as the parish will not be affected by these, no objection made.
12. Councillor Lightley mentioned hedge clippings on road up the bank. It's from a hedge at The Bracken; the clippings are left on the grass. Not sure who has trimmed the hedge and left the clippings. Councillor Cook to contact HAL.
13. Heathways drain blocked for long time, Councillor Cook to contact HAL.
14. Block paving around drain on the green damaged, Councillor Cook to contact HAL.

Members of the public

15. Two residents attended the meeting to discuss rejuvenating the recreation ground in High Shincliffe. They have sought letters of support and would like to ask for parish council support, which should help when applying for funding? May be possible to access a scheme at DCC if the scheme is approved by Cabinet. Intention is to start in High Shincliffe to see how the project goes, and if successful will then look towards doing a project in the village. As well as upgrading the equipment, would also like to do drainage works on the football field, this was an issue that has been previously been looked at. Meeting with DCC in September to see best way forward and if they can use the scheme.
16. Reminder from last September's meeting, regarding summer holidays – agreed to keep some cheques back when Clerk is on holiday. Clerk to ensure the cheque book is available during her holidays
17. Rejuvenating the recreation ground in High Shincliffe, will the parish council send them a letter of thanks for their efforts to date.

The meeting terminated at 9.05 pm.

Marc Platts, Nomination for Bob Wooley Award

Shincliffe Parish Council would like to nominate Marc Platts, our gardener, for the Bob Woolley Trophy.

Marc has been employed by us for at least 10 years and in that time he has made numerous improvements which have become evident in the many Awards we have received both from Durham in Bloom and Northumbria in Bloom.

Marc started his career in forestry and was trained at Houghall College. Within High Shincliffe he has worked with us to design new flower beds and various horticultural features always ensuring that the chosen plants are very visible, for example he has undertaken to recently re-profile all of the planted areas within our entry.

He is not afraid to try different plant types, and designs always making sure the soil in that particular area is suitable and planting is sustainable.

When he request plants he is precise calculating numbers needed for each bed to an accuracy of single figures.

The Parish has two places of special consideration, the Old Mine Site and an area of land called Love Lane which is a public right of way, Marc manages the budget and tends both of these areas with especial care always conscious not only of the special needs of the site but also the wishes of the wider community and manages to satisfy both. Within the mine site he has successfully faced the challenges of managing the spread of Japanese Knotweed and Himalayan Balsam.

We feel his all-round knowledge of all aspects of plant management, his horticultural skills coupled with his gentle approach and calm manner in dealing with the many challenges we set him qualifies him for this Award.

Councillor Jim Milburn

Chairman Horticulture Committee

2nd July 2012