

STANHOPE PARISH COUNCIL

AT A MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD IN EASTGATE VILLAGE HALL ON 6TH DECEMBER 2023

PRESENT:

Cllr D Craig, Cllr I Buchanan, Cllr Mrs S Smart, Cllr Mrs D Sutcliff, Cllr P Turton, Cllr Mrs C Burdis,

Cllr M Brewin, Cllr R Lawrie

Cllr Miss J Carrick – Chairman

Susan Anderson – Clerk

Also Present

Weardale Lithium – Sam Thistlewaite, Peter Robinson, Stewart Dickson

Police and Crime Commissioner – Joy Allen and Nicola

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Apologies for Absence

Cllr Mrs Thompson, Cllr J Shuttleworth, Cllr L Blackett, Cllr Mrs A Hawkes

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To Receive Any Declarations of Interest from Members

Cllr D Craig

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Minutes of the meeting held on 1st November 2023

Minutes were moved as a true and correct record and were signed by the chairman.

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Weardale Lithium

The company was founded during covid and is a natural exploration and development company. They are seeking to provide a secure and sustainable supply of domestic lithium with associated geothermal energy from underground brines in Weardale. The company has entered into agreements to secure exclusive access to two geothermal wells in Eastgate. The two wells were drilled and developed in 2004 and 2010 by a consortium led by the University of Newcastle. These are production capable wells, not exploration drillholes, and high levels of lithium have been identified in the underground brines extracted from them. The company will demonstrate the UK's first continuous flow direct lithium extraction pilot plant in the first phase of regeneration at Eastgate. The pilot plant will be the first step towards commercialisation of County Durham's lithium brines and will provide new, skilled employment in Weardale. It will produce lithium quantities suitable for market testing in the north east's automotive sector. There is a planning application

going in shortly for the Abstraction of lithium enriched geothermal brine, the transportation of lithium enriched geothermal brine by pipeline, temporary field trials phase lasting up to twelve months and the treatment of wastewater to improve quality. After planning has been granted then in the second half of next year the construction of the transfer pipeline will commence. At some point there could be a real opportunity for traditional mining. It was mentioned that the solar panels on the plant would be better facing the sun, this point would be taken on board. A question was asked about how long would the supply last. It is estimated that it will be a one hundred years resource which will be a multi generation legacy. There will be high tech training apprenticeships and the company are looking to recruit from the schools. At the pilot stage there will 20 to 40 jobs and when its full scale it will be one hundred / hundred twenty-five jobs. If there is an opportunity to use the railway line then they would. The company are very pleased with the positive comments that they have received from previous meetings and Cllr Shuttleworth who wants jobs.

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Police & Crime Commissioner

Cllr Miss Carrick welcomed Joy Allen to the meeting. The PCC has five priorities which are Anti-Social Behaviour, Drug taking, Fly Tipping, Speeding and Vandalism. She has the power to inform and influence. With the cost-of-living crisis there has been a massive spike in shoplifting and this is a national problem. The police are working with businesses and a centric system uploads CCTV to the Police. Rural watch is reducing crime and the PCC would like to build on this success. People must ring crimes in and before long there will be numerous ways that members of the public can report crimes. Cllr Craig mentioned that he did not get a good response when he rang in and the PCC mentioned that recordings can be listened to and sometimes further training is needed as they do want to get it right. The police are actively going into schools and talking about knife crime. There are safe places in Darlington and Durham where you can go if you think you have been spiked where treatment is available straight away and is saving lives. The PCC mentioned speed awareness and she recommended dash cam or journey cam where it can record dangerous drivers and the footage is uploaded straight to the police, seventy per cent submitted were charged. Cllr Mrs Smart mentioned the speeding through Eastgate and that it should be a 30mph. She also would like clarifying the speed awareness courses as to what should be 30mph where there are street lights. Sometimes its how people interrupt the guidelines. The PCC will look into this. She also mentioned Speed Visors and that they do make a difference. Cllr Craig mentioned that there are no speed restrictions up this valley. The Durham Dales is one of the safest places to live and work.

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Matters Arising

- 1. FOUR LANE ENDS, ST JOHNS CHAPEL** - The road was reported to DCC and our request has been added to the current work programme. The works have been ordered and it is expected that the work will be completed within the current financial year.
- 2. ROAD BETWEEN WEARHEAD AND COWSHILL** - Simon has cleared the gutter out as best he can. More work is needed here so this has been reported to John Hodges.
- 3. ACCOMMODATION FIGURES IN THE COUNTY** – Visit County Durham have come back with the following figures which includes self-catering as well. Est 704, beds 17,354.
- 4. NON-METERED LIGHTS IN THE PARISH** – The inventory that we hold of the non-metered lights has been sent to the street lighting team.
- 5. ASHCROFT PLAYPARK** – A meeting took place for the handover of the finished playpark. All the permanent lines have been painted on and the project has been completed within the budget. Some photos are to be taken of the children playing on the new surface with the permission of the parents so that they can be sent to the WAAP.

6. **ALLOTMENT COMPOST** – I managed to get the 6X compost from Down to Earth in Hexham. It just needs delivering out now to the winning tenants.

10876

Correspondence Received

1. A telephone call from a resident of West Blackdene was taken regarding two small parcels of land that are coming up for sale. Currently the two small areas of land are large enough for the parking of three cars and the parking of four cars. Some of the houses have parking while others don't have any parking and the land owner allows parking on the small areas. The areas are close to the Weardale Way so occasionally walkers park their cars there. The resident would like to know if the Parish Council would be interested in purchasing these small areas of land. **Resolved:** It was agreed that the Parish Council would not purchase the land.
2. We have been sent an email regarding the proposed pastoral Church Buildings Scheme affecting the benefice of Upper Weardale. The union of the parish of Saint John-in-Weardale and the parish of Westgate. The church of St John-in-Weardale to be the parish church of the new parish and the parish church of St Andrew, Westgate to be declared closed for regular public worship. Close date 11th December 2023. The email was sent to the councillors.
3. Bill Lightburn is writing on behalf of DCC's Highway's Street Lighting Service to request approval from the Parish Council to carry out works on Frosterley Village Green as part of a project to install infrastructure to serve seasonal Christmas lighting. The Christmas lighting provision itself would be managed in line with current arrangements. The project is to be funded through the WAAP Towns & Villages programme. The email was sent to the councillors. **Resolved:** Permission was agreed for the electrical infrastructure for the Village Green.
4. The annual public precept survey has been launched to ask local residents how much they are prepared to pay towards local policing in County Durham and Darlington, through their council tax in the upcoming year. The email with the link is on the Parish Council website and in the Notice Board.
5. The Cash Machine in the Co-op has been empty for days and people are complaining that they cannot get any cash. The Post Office have also not been able to pay any money out. Wolsingham Cash Machine has been empty as well last week. The ATM's have been emptied due to attempted robberies in the area.
6. The raised path at Westgate allotments is starting to collapse. Some photographs have been sent of the problem which have been forwarded onto the councillors. **Resolved:** It was agreed to have this repaired
7. The owners of the Park Plantation are preparing a ten-year management plan to direct future work on site. Work in the next ten years will be to maintain the existing woodland canopy, and establish the young trees planted on the felled areas. This will involve thinning the mature woodland canopy to allow the trees to develop stronger roots and establish seedlings underneath, and ongoing weeding of the young trees. **Resolved:** No concerns were raised
8. We have received an email from CDALC regarding the Royal Garden Parties 2024. We can nominate a past councillor that has been chairman and the closing date is 31st Jan 2024. **Resolved:** Clerk to nominate Mrs A Humble

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County Councillor Update

No update this month

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Planning Matters

DM/23/03182/FPA

Single storey extension to southern elevation of former garage conversion
Stanhope Grange
Crawleyside
Stanhope

DM/23/03001/FPA

Construction of detached outbuilding
Bond Leazes
24 East Lane
Stanhope

DM/23/02663/LB

Installation of air source heat pump, secondary glazing and replacement of external door and internal alterations (as amended)
43 Front Street
Frosterley

DM/23/03431/FPA

Wooden structure in rear garden
Bbq cabin/summer house
Cherry Tree House
St Johns Chapel

DM/23/03537/FPA

Erection of a single detached, 2 bedroomed dormer bungalow plus detached double garage
Land and building South East of
Sycamore House
West of Bondisle Way
Stanhope

DM/23/03550/FPA

Conversion of a former care home into 8 apartments consisting of
3x1 bed, 2x2 bed and 3x3 bed, including 1 new window to the north elevation
Newton House
Stanhope

The councillors would like the gardens and greenhouse area tidied up so this comment to be sent in.

PLANNING PERMISSIONS GRANTED

DM/23/00371/FPA

Construct a small 6KW wind turbine on a 9m mast for domestic electrical supply
Low Rigg House
Hood Street
St Johns Chapel

DM/23/01968/FPA
Change of use from dwelling to artist studio
3 Burnfoot
St Johns Chapel

DM/23/02394/FPA
Conversion of barn to form an extension to the existing cottage and extended garden
Sunny Bank
St Johns Chapel

DM/23/02473/FPA
Demolish existing conservatory and replace with single storey rear extension with balcony flat roof
(amended location plan received on 12th Oct 2023)
8 Butts Crescent
Stanhope

10879

Finance

1. Every year we send a donation of £500 to the Great North Air Ambulance. We have received a letter from the them in the hope that we can send a donation to them to help support their work. **Resolved:** It was agreed to donate £500
2. Budget Figures for 2024/2025 to be approved with an increase of £1000 on the percept. We have tried to keep the precept at £48,000 but with the increase in electricity charges for the street lighting it will have to be raised. **Resolved:** the councillors agreed a £1000 increase in the precept to £49,000
3. One poppy wreath was agreed for next year in the chairman's village.

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AAP Report

The meeting was held via Teams due to the weather. The church camping at Muggleswick doesn't look like it will go through planning. The unused money will go to the playgrounds. The AAP's will lose £10,000 from their budget.

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Accounts for Payment

E-ON NEXT ASHCROFT PLAYPARK PAID	£45.82
WAVE WILLARD GROVE ALLOTMENTS	£25.87
THE ROYAL BRITISH LEGION POPPY APPEAL PAID CHEQUE HAD TO BE PAID IN BY 1 ST DEC 2023	£200.00
EB SPORTS ASHCROFT MUGA	£5774.89
MAKEPEACE MOTORS – DITCH AT THE BATTS, FROSTERLEY	£132.00
MAKEPEACE MOTORS – DADDRY SHIELD TOILETS	£1668.00

PAUL IRWIN ASHCROFT PLAY PARK	£180.00
S ANDERSON SALARY	£904.08
HM REV PAYE	£20.16
S ANDERSON EXPENSES	£105.89
S ANDERSON HOME AS OFFICE	£35.00
GREAT NORTH AIR AMBULANCE	£500.00
JRB ENTERPRISE DOG BAGS	£597.60
TOTAL	£10189.31

S ANDERSON SALARY FOR JAN
HM REV
S ANDERSON EXPENSES FOR JAN
S ANDERSON HOME AS OFFICE FOR JAN

Accounts approved

10882

New Matters for Discussion

1. The sign for the sewage works at Willow Green, Frosterley needs straightening and repairing.
Resolved: Clerk to report to DCC
2. Cllr Miss Carrick will have a look at Willard Grove Allotments regarding some lights.

10883

Clerks Business

Nothing to report

MEETING CLOSED AT 9.20PM

**DATE OF NEXT MEETING WEDNESDAY 7TH FEBRUARY 2024 AT EASTGATE VILLAGE HALL
COMMENCING AT 7PM.**

.....SIGNED.....DATE