

## STANHOPE PARISH COUNCIL

At a meeting of the Council held in Eastgate Village Hall on 4<sup>th</sup> October 2023

### PRESENT:

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

Cllr Mrs A Hawkes, Cllr R Lawrie, Cllr Mrs S Thompson

Cllr Miss J Carrick – Chairman

Susan Anderson – Clerk

Also present – Neil Graves

### 10844

#### Apologies for Absence

Cllr M Brewin, Cllr J Shuttleworth, Cllr L Blackett

### 10845

#### To Receive any Declarations of Interest from Members

None received

### 10846

#### Minutes of the meeting held on 6<sup>th</sup> September 2023

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

### 10847

#### Weardale Adventure Centre – Neil Graves

Cllr Miss Carrick welcomed Mr Graves to the meeting. Greenfoot Quarry has been used for water sports for six weeks and the feedback has been very promising. The site is HSE inspected and water compliant. Looking to next year Mr Graves would like to start a kids club and maybe some climbing courses. His staff are fully accredited to teach the water sports. The water sports would be run in conjunction with the Weardale Adventure Centre at Ireshopeburn. Schools are booked two years in advance it is that popular. The signage will be looked at for next year at the quarry. Mr Graves commented that it is so nice to see children off their mobile phones and enjoying themselves.

### 10848

#### Matters Arising

1. **TREES ON EASTGATE BRIDGE** – The trees have been inspected and the job has been passed onto the contractor. The trees have now been cut back and the footpath has been inspected and added onto a works programme. The repairs to the footpath have been done.
2. **GARDEN AT IRESHOPEBURN** – The garden should be weeded the week commencing 18<sup>th</sup> September.

3. **REMOVAL OF THE NO DOG SIGN AT FROSTERLEY PLAY PARK** – DCC have passed this onto the Neighbourhood wardens department.
4. **GREENFOOT QUARRY** – The point about signage is acknowledged and it is something that will be investigated for next year.
5. **ASHCROFT MUGA** – A meeting took place on Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> September at the AAP Office then onto Ashcroft. The minutes were sent from John of Surfacing Standards and the planned start date is the week commencing 2<sup>nd</sup> October with the end date the week commencing 30<sup>th</sup> October. It was agreed that the Parish Clerk would notify local residents of the upcoming works. Believe Housing have been contacted to change the access from the South to the North (top of Ashcroft). Mr Lightburn has highlighted a small shortfall if the temporary painted markings are needed as the contractor would have to return next year, as the temperature must not be below 10 degrees. An email has been sent to see if the AAP have any available funding for the shortfall. Everything is now in place and the work should commence on 4<sup>th</sup> October 2023. The contract was sent to all of the councillors to read through before it was signed and sent back. The start date has been delayed until Monday next week due to delays on another site.
6. **ST MICHAEL & ALL ANGELS, FROSTERLEY** – The case officer would like to know the Parish Councils latest position on the draft church building disposal scheme and if we are formally against it. The PCC have agreed to voluntarily register the route from Front Street through the churchyard and onto the existing public footpath as a public right of way. Cllr Brewin was dealing with this and one of the concerns was the footpath. **Resolved:** Clerk to write that the Parish Council is now not against the disposal scheme.
7. **RABBITS AT WESTGATE PLAY PARK** – Cllr Craig mentioned that this is in hand
8. **NORTHERN LITHIUM** – Cllr Craig had spoken to Mr Stringer who was pleased that the Parish Council was happy with his visit last month. At the moment he is dealing with issues from the planning department.

## 10849

### Correspondence Received

1. A resident from Stanhope would like the Parish Council to ask DCC what services are we actually getting from the Council tax. The weeds are only sprayed and not pulled out so they are still over a foot high, the flower beds are not to the standard of other parts of the area, there is no Police cover all of the time. This just leaves street lighting and the bins being emptied. The councillors agreed that we are not receiving value for money and the budget constraints are not helping but this should be addressed to DCC. Apparently, there are 138 police vacancies at the moment. **Resolved:** Clerk to write
2. A consultation will be commencing on 18<sup>th</sup> September on a proposal to close Rookhope Primary School on 31<sup>st</sup> August 2024. We have been sent information of the consultation document which sets out the reason for the proposal together with details of how to respond. Cllr Shuttleworth sent a comment that the parents of the five pupils remaining at the school were offered a meeting earlier in the year when they were asked about education going forward, and agreed given such small numbers, that it was beneficial to be educated in larger groups. It was agreed then, that the children be transported to St Johns Chapel from September. By the year 2026/7, there would be no pupils on the roll as of today's statistics.
3. J Allen the Police and Crime Commissioner has informed us of the CrimeStoppers Off-Road Bike Campaign which was launched on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> September and ran for two weeks.
4. We have received an email regarding a new woodland planting proposal at Sunny Bank Farm, St Johns Chapel. There were no objections to this when the email was sent to the councillors. Cllr Criag mentioned his concerns on planting all these trees and the loss of agricultural land.

5. We have received an email regarding a draft Woodland Management Plan Consultation by DCC. The management plan will be assessed by the Forestry Commission against the United Kingdom Forest Standard. Consultation closures on 15<sup>th</sup> October.
6. We have received an email regarding the Proposed Diversion of Public Footpath No.24 Stanhope Parish, Rookhope Ward. The diversion is requested by the owner and developer of Stotfieldburn Farm, for security and privacy as the current route will be passing through the proposed garden of the property. We have 30 days to comment from 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2023. There are concerns raised as the developer intends to put a stile off the road side, on what is one of the narrowest parts of the main road and is not safe. **Resolved:** It was agreed to object to this
7. The 77<sup>th</sup> AGM of CDALC will be held on 7<sup>th</sup> October 2023 at 10am at County Hall, Durham.
8. An email has been received concerning the fair rides and food stalls over Stanhope Show weekend. The email was sent to the councillors and the resident would like the Parish Councils point of view on this. This is an annual event that has taken place for over 150 years which the Stanhope residents enjoy, and no one has ever complained about it. We must support the show and many residents plan their week around the days when the fair arrives. The chemist staff are more than helpful that week as well. The street is always kept tidy and the bins are emptied and the traffic management is good. **Resolved:** Clerk to write
9. We have been sent information on the Review of Polling Districts and Polling Places 2023. The consultation will commence on Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> Oct and end Monday 30<sup>th</sup> October 2023.

#### **10850**

##### **DCC Budget Proposals**

Most of the budget goes on Social Care to the elderly/children.

Possible savings could be made on all of the Bed and Breakfast holiday houses in County Durham if they were to pay council tax and business rates. We know this is a national problem but pressure could be put on the government. The councillors felt it would be interesting to know how many B&B's are in County Durham. Could the schools all use one facility to save on overheads. Should the senior salaries be looked at and is a Major actually necessary.

#### **10851**

##### **County Councillor Update**

Update given above

#### **10852**

##### **Planning Matters**

DM/23/02643/FPA

12 Solar panels to rear

8 School Close

St Johns Chapel

DM/23/02658/FPM

Conservatory

Ignis House

17A Cross Hill

Stanhope

DM/23/02394/FPA

Conversion of barn to form an extension to the existing cottage

Sunny Bank

St Johns Chapel

DM/23/02521/FPA

Erection of 2no agricultural buildings with photovoltaic panels and associated landscaping  
Sunny Bank  
St Johns Chapel  
It was mentioned why erect agricultural buildings when trees are being planted.

DM/23/02732/FPA

Single storey extension  
Quarrys Edge  
East Lane  
Stanhope

#### **PLANNING PERMISSION GRANTED**

DM/22/02790/FPA

Partial demolition of existing two storey byer to be rebuilt into 2 storey extension to dwelling.  
Conversion of existing single storey byer to incorporate into dwelling and accompanying  
Refurbishment works  
Fairhills  
Huntshieldford  
St Johns Chapel

DM/23/00938/FPA

Ground mounted solar PV system of 28 solar panels of 2 arrays of 14 panels adjacent to school  
Playing field.  
St Johns Chapel Primary School  
St Johns Chapel  
Low Carbon Team

DM/23/01890/FPA

Erection of car port  
Weardale Lodge  
Lanehead

DM/23/02269/VOC

Removal of condition 1 (access track) pursuant to  
DM/22/01958/PNT  
Land to the East of  
Fell House Cottage  
Rookhope

#### **10853**

##### **Finance**

1. St Thomas Church Hall and St Thomas PCC would like to apply for the £500 Village Hall grant money and the £300 churchyard maintenance grant. **Resolved:** Agreed
2. The judging of the pumpkins has taken place and the winners of each allotment site are Old Hall K Hepple, Willard Grove B Bowman, Bondisle E Craggs, Crosshill S Lumb, Westgate S&V Aldred ,Ireshopeburn S Andrews . Prize to be agreed at the next meeting.

3. Mazars have completed the audit for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023. The AGAR has been sent to all of the councillors.
4. Apparently the PCCs of St Thomas Heatherycleugh and St Johns Chapel are in the process of merging and they would like to know if the grant will still be payable to the two separate churchyards. **Resolved:** Grant is payable to the churchyards

#### 10854

##### AAP Report

Ideas were asked for to help make savings at DCC. A discussion took place on the proposals that are going through at the moment. The swimming pool was mentioned.

#### 10855

##### Accounts for Payment

MAZARS EXTERNAL AUDITOR	£378.00
SURFACING STANDARDS TENDER SUBMISSIONS AND REPORT	£420.00
E-ON NEXT ASHCROFT PLAYPARK	£37.02
S ANDERSON SALARY	£904.08
HM REV	£20.16
S ANDERSON EXPENSES	£12.00
S ANDERSON HOME AS OFFICE	£35.00
ST THOMAS CHURCH HALL	£500.00
ST THOMAS PCC	£300.00
OLIVERS TREE SERVICES LTD	£276.00
EASTGATE VILLAGE HALL	£30.00
TOTAL	£2912.26

#### 10856

##### New matters for discussion

1. Cllr Blackett would like to report a road side sign at Westfall, Wearhead that has rusted away. Also, by the school the sign on the bridge is the same but not quite as bad. **Resolved:** Clerk to report
2. Cllr Craig mentioned the footpath at Westgate that some work is needed on it as it is a well-used footpath. Footpath officer to contact Cllr Craig. **Resolved:** Clerk to contact DCC
3. Cllr Mrs Sutcliff would like the Market Place at St Johns Chapel swept and also the toilets. **Resolved:** Clerk to contact D Hunt
4. Cllr Mrs Burdis would like to report again a broken kerb opposite the Coop in Frosterley. **Resolved:** Clerk to report again

5. Cllr Turton mentioned that there are no road markings near the escape lane on Crawleyside Bank. The road has been patched which has highlighted the fact that it now needs re-surfacing. **Resolved:** Clerk to report to DCC
6. Cllr Turton commented that the Bonny Moor Hen is up for sale again and it is difficult to recommend anywhere in Stanhope for people to get something to eat.
7. Cllr Lawrie mentioned that the AAP staff may have to move to Crook and travel up here which would be a false saving. People drop in all of the time.
8. Cllr Mrs Thompson would like the War Memorials tidied up before November. **Resolved:** Clerk to contact D Hunt
9. The road markings still have not been painted at St Johns Chapel school. **Resolved:** Clerk to report again
10. It's a nice idea restarting the Weardale Gazette but you can't by a printing press and it's a big task to take on. It was suggested about expanding the What's On in Weardale.
11. Cllr Miss Carrick has had a report that the trees that were cut back on Eastgate Bridge were not done properly and it was untidy. **Resolved:** Clerk to report to DCC
12. At the Stone Bridge one of the coping stones has gone into the river and it is felt that if it is not repaired soon more of the coping stones are going to end up in the river. **Resolved:** clerk to contact DCC
13. There is a loose kerb opposite the Coop in Stanhope and also the Keep Clear sign needs repainting. **Resolved:** Clerk to report to DCC
14. Simon has strimmed up the riverside at Westgate 'no wet legs' very much appreciated.

**10857**

**Clerks Business**

Nothing to report

**MEETING CLOSED AT 8.30PM**

**DATE OF NEXT MEETING IS WEDNESDAY 1<sup>ST</sup> NOVEMBER AT EASTGATE VILLAGE HALL COMMENCING AT 7PM**

-----SIGNED-----DATE