

# COTHERSTONE PARISH COUNCIL

## Minutes of the meeting held in Cotherstone Village Hall on Wednesday 11 April 2018 at 7.00pm

In attendance:	Cllr John Birkett (Chair), Cllr Richard Hunter, Cllr Jenny Watson
Absent:	Cllr Alan Thorn
Public:	None
Clerk:	Judith Mashiter
<b>1. Approval of apologies for absence</b>	<i>As Cllr Thorn had submitted apologies due to illness, it was resolved that his absence be approved.</i>
<b>2. Declarations of interest</b>	None
<b>3. Requests for dispensations</b>	No requests had been received.
<b>4. Minutes of the meeting held 14 March 2018</b>	Draft minutes had been circulated. Clerk clarified that the Clerk's salary budget figure was based on 2018-20 pay agreement which has not yet been confirmed. Contract of employment, stating hours per week and pay scale point is still pending. <i>It was resolved that the minutes of the meeting held 14 March 2018 are an accurate record.</i>
<b>5. Public participation</b>	None
<b>6. Update on progress of actions and resolutions</b>	An action log updated 2 April 2018 had been circulated. Following discussion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Potholes between West Briscoe and Clove Lodge have received no attention. Agreed that Cllr Birkett will take photographs to submit to Durham County Council</li><li>• Agreed that Clerk will chase lack of response from Durham County Council to letter sent to Terry Collins concerning poor information and feedback on highways issues.</li><li>• Agreed that Clerk contact Sue Porter, Listed Buildings officer, at Durham County Council to express concern over the lack of repair/removal of stones to relieve water pressure at Hury Bridge.</li></ul>
<b>7. Planning matters</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. Noted that there were no changes to the planning applications summary since the March meeting, and that no new applications have been received.</li><li>b. A copy of an email sent on 4 April by a local resident to Durham County Council's Head of Planning expressing concerns about the development of the Field Barn off Hawcroft Lane, DM/15/02914/FPA was circulated. Agreed to note and await copy of response from Durham County Council.</li></ol>
<b>8. Correspondence</b>	A list of correspondence received had been circulated. No further discussion or requests for details.
<b>9. Neighbourhood Plan</b>	Cllr Hunter reported that publication of the revised Village Design Statement is imminent; that a Neighbourhood Plan newsletter will be distributed w/c 16 April; and that the group's planning consultant is awaiting an appointment with Durham County Council's planning officers to review the draft policies. Cllr Hunter to provide update on news and events for the Parish Council website.
<b>10. Governance</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. Draft revised Standing Orders had been circulated. <i>Following discussion and one minor amendment that the length of a meeting should not exceed 2.5 hours, it was resolved to adopt the draft Standing Orders as presented, taking into account any revisions introduced in the NALC Model Standing Orders 2018 (England).</i></li><li>b. Draft Financial Regulations had been circulated. <i>Following discussion and a minor revision to include appropriate reference to the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 and the Transparency Code, it was resolved to adopt the draft Financial Regulations as presented.</i></li></ol>

- c. Clerk gave a verbal update on preparations for the introduction of General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR), explaining that work is ongoing to prepare all the necessary forms, data audit, etc and a pack will be presented for approval at the May meeting.

#### 11. Finance

A paper had been circulated.

- a. *It was resolved to receive a report of receipts and payments from 17 February to 31 March, to authorise due payments and to note the VAT reclaimed on 2017-18 expenditure.*
- b. *It was resolved to approve the draft annual accounts for 2017-18 and to submit these for internal audit.*
- c. *It was resolved to apply for exemption from a limited assurance review by the external auditor for the 2017-18 Annual Governance and Accountability Return.*

#### 12. Parish Councillor vacancies

As Clerk had been advised that Durham County Council did not receive the requisite number of signatories to call an election for the recently advertised vacancies, the Parish Council can co-opt via its own procedures. *It was resolved that a 'We're Hiring' poster be put up, with no closing date, and that anyone expressing an interest contacts the Clerk who will provide a small information pack, with a 'Things to Consider' framework and cover letter inviting prospective co-optees to submit a short written statement outlining their interest and suitability; as and when applications for co-option are received they will be considered at the next available meeting.*

#### 13. To receive reports from representatives to external meetings

There were no reports to receive.

Meeting closed: 20.04pm

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