

**THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE SEATON WITH SLINGLEY PARISH COUNCIL  
HELD ON WEDNESDAY 16 JUNE 2021**

**Present:** Councillor D Temple (Chair)  
Councillors A Blacklock, S McAuliffe, H Middlemiss,  
A Taylor, J Theobald, A Vila, S Williams

**Also Present:** County Councillor D McKenna

**1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors G Fuller and A Slater.

**2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

**3 PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

The Chair welcomed Mrs S Faulkner to the meeting.

Members were advised that Mrs Faulkner had expressed an interest in joining the Parish Council. The Chair had invited Mrs Faulkner to attend the meeting as an observer with a view to co-opting Mrs Faulkner onto the Parish Council at the July meeting.

**RESOLVED** that the information given, be noted.

**4 POLICE**

There was no Police report.

Councillor Williams reported that a bicycle had been stolen from a residential property in Hall Close. The Clerk agreed to contact the Police to query this.

**RESOLVED** that the information given, be noted.

**5 The MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING held on 19 May 2021 together with those of the ANNUAL ASSEMBLY held on 19 May 2021 copies of which had been circulated to each Member, were approved and signed by the Chair.**

**6 CORRESPONDENCE**

**(1) Village Green**

The Clerk reported the receipt of correspondence from a resident expressing concern that access to a section of village green was being restricted by a wall erected by the owners of an adjacent property.

It was suggested that an Extraordinary Meeting of the Parish Council be convened. As part of the meeting it was suggested that a site visit be made to the area in question.

Members were advised that the resident who had raised the concerns had asked to attend the meeting to allow him the opportunity to put forward information he had in relation to this issue. It was pointed out that if the Parish Council invited the resident who had raised the concerns it would have to extend an invitation to the owner of the property adjacent the village green.

**RESOLVED** that an Extraordinary Meeting of the Parish Council be convened.

**(2) New Code of Conduct**

The Clerk reported the receipt of correspondence from the County Durham Association of Local Councils (CDALC) recommending the adoption of the new Durham County Council Code of Conduct.

Members were advised that Durham County Council had been working on the amended code since 2019 and had taken the view that it embraced and was even more robust than the Local Government Association Model. CDALC had been involved in its creation through representation on Durham County Council's Standards Committee. It also made sense for Durham County Council's Monitoring Officer to work with a consistent Code of Conduct for both tiers of local government.

**RESOLVED** that the revised Code of Conduct be adopted.

**7 PLANNING**

There were no planning matters.

**8 CLERKS REPORT**

**(1) Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2020/2021**

The Clerk reported that following the last meeting the Parish Council had completed and returned Part 2 of the 2020/21 Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) to the external auditor.

Members were advised that the Parish Council had certified themselves exempt from a limited assurance review.

The auditor had confirmed receipt of the AGAR and the Parish Council would not hear anything further. All the relevant information had been published on the Parish Council's website.

**RESOLVED** that the information given, be noted.

**(2) Hillrise Crescent**

The Clerk reported that following the last meeting Durham County Council were asked to provide a quotation to repair the track that crossed the village green to the rear of Hillrise Crescent to a serviceable standard.

Durham County Council had advised that there would be a delay in providing the quotation due to staff shortages.

**RESOLVED** that the information given, be noted and further developments be awaited.

**(3) Vehicle Activated Speed Sign – B1404**

The Clerk reported that following the last meeting Durham County Council were asked to consider the installation of a vehicle activated speed sign on the B1404. It was felt that the installation of such a sign would prompt drivers to correct and lower their speed.

County Councillor McKenna advised that he supported the Parish Council's request for a vehicle activated speed sign on this stretch of road and would follow this up with Durham County Council.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted and further developments be awaited.

(4) Wheeled Bin “30 MPH Slow Down” Speed Stickers

The Clerk reported that following the last meeting the Parish Council was investigating the cost of purchasing “30 MPH Slow Down” stickers that could be supplied to properties on Seaton Lane with a request that they be stuck to their domestic rubbish bins.

It was hoped that when residents put their bins out for collection motorists would see the speed signs on the bins and be reminded to slow down whilst driving through the village.

It was suggested that the County Council be asked to routinely supply this type of sticker with their bins when they were issued. The County Council supplied a sticker for the green waste bins and could consider something similar related to speeding.

County Councillor McKenna agreed to refer the suggestion for the speed stickers to the County Council for their consideration.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

(5) Overgrown Trees – Seaton Lane

The Clerk reported that at the last meeting reference was made to the overgrown trees on Seaton Lane which were originally reported to Durham County Council in November 2020. The trees were encroaching onto the overhead electricity cables and needed to be pruned back.

Members were advised that in November 2020 Durham County Council inspected the trees and advised that they were healthy and not causing an obstruction to vehicles or pedestrians. They also confirmed that they would not prune the trees for reasons of shade. They did however refer the trees to Northern Powergrid as the County Council were unable to carry out pruning close to the cables for safety reasons. If any work was needed it had to be carried out by contractors working for Northern Powergrid.

Following the last meeting Durham County Council were asked for an update on the situation. They had advised that Northern Powergrid inspected the trees between poles 20-22 on 9 December 2020 and reported that no work was required. They would only prune trees if their contractor deemed that work was necessary and in this instance it was not.

Durham County Council reiterated that in accordance with their corporate Tree Policy, they would not prune trees with telephone lines passing through their canopies. This was because for the most part it caused no problems. It was stated that pruning for this reason often ruined both the aesthetic look of a tree and caused rapid reactive growth, resulting in the need for further pruning. Furthermore, if a wire was accidentally severed as often happened, Durham County Council would have to cover the cost of any remedial work.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

(6) Public Footpath No 1 – Seaton Crescent

The Clerk reported that following the last meeting Durham County Council were asked to cut back the trees and branches that were overgrown on Public Footpath No 1.

Members were advised that Durham County Council had advised that only the footpath to the rear of Seaton Crescent was their responsibility and the lower section to the rear of St John’s Terrace was not an adopted footpath. The whole footpath however was a Public Right of Way (PROW) and was referred to the PROW section.

PROW had advised that the cutting back of overhanging trees and branches onto a PROW was the landowners responsibility. The PROW officer had visited the site on 25 May 2021 and noted that some conifers, which should be maintained by the landowner, could be cut back. It was felt that at this stage they were not completely out of hand. She did however agree to contact the landowner with a request that the trees be maintained.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

(7) Walkway

The Clerk reported that in November 2020 Councillors Vila and Williams met with representatives from Durham County Council to discuss ideas put forward by the Parish Council for the walkway at Seaton.

The Parish Council had requested an update from Durham County Council, and they had advised that they were looking into the possibility of installing stone embedded information signs.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted and further developments be awaited.

(8) Damaged Fencing

The Clerk reported that a section of the post and rail fence at the top of the village green had been hit by a car. Durham County Council were asked to repair the damage and had advised that the posts were snapped and would need to be replaced. Due to the age of the fence the exact same fencing was not available.

The County Council were asked to provide a quotation to replace with birdsmouth fencing, to match the recent fencing installed in the village. The quotation was £3,228.53 and following consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair, the County Council were instructed to replace the fencing with the best match possible.

RESOLVED that the action taken, be endorsed.

(9) Japanese Knotweed

The Clerk reported that in November 2020 the Japanese Knotweed growing on the walkway was reported to Durham County Council and poisoned.

At the time the County Council had advised that it was late in the year to be poisoning the Knotweed and they would have to do it again in early summer 2021 to make sure it was weakened.

The County Council had been advised that the knotweed was growing back, and they had confirmed that it would be re-poisoned.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

(10) Community Defibrillator

The Clerk reported that the Area Action Partnership (AAP) had confirmed that the funding for the community defibrillator had been approved.

Members were advised that once the funding was received the order would be placed with the Rotary Club. The Rotary Club had advised that all the necessary arrangements had been made with the Seaton Lane Inn and once installed they would assume all responsibility for the defibrillator.

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It was suggested that once the defibrillator was installed a letter of thanks be forwarded to the Seaton Lane Inn and a poster advising of its whereabouts and thanking everyone involved be placed in the Parish Councils noticeboard.

**RESOLVED** that the information given, be noted.

### 9 PAYMENTS

The following schedule of payments was circulated.

CHQ NO	PAYMENT TO	DETAIL	COST	VAT	TOTAL
100627	HMRC	PAYE - June 2021	119.80		119.80
100628	Payroll	Wages - June 2021	479.76		479.76
100629	JACS Accountancy Limited	Payroll Services - June 2021	8.80	1.76	10.56
100630	A Slater	Reimbursements - Weedkiller	13.74	2.75	16.49
100631	The Rotary Club of Durham Elvet	Defibrillator	1,398.00		1,398.00
100632	J Thompson	Reimbursements	66.61	5.15	71.76
		<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2,086.71</b>	<b>9.66</b>	<b>2,096.37</b>

**RESOLVED** that the information given, be noted and the payments be approved.

### 10 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

#### (1) Dropped Kerb

Members reported that a member of the public on a mobility scooter had recently encountered problems whilst on the pavement at Hillrise Crescent. The resident had travelled along the footpath at Hillrise Crescent and at the end of the path had found it impossible to get off the pavement. Several residents had to intervene to assist the resident to safely leave the pavement without toppling over.

It was suggested that a dropped kerb at the end of the footpath at Hillrise Crescent would be of great assistance to anyone on a mobility scooter or in a wheelchair.

County Councillor McKenna agreed to refer the matter to Durham County Council. He also advised that he would possibly be able to offer financial assistance from his Neighbourhood Budget Fund.

**RESOLVED** that County Councillor Mckenna refer the request for a dropped kerb to Durham County Council and further developments be awaited.

#### (2) Drainage – Hall Close/Hillrise Crescent

Members reported that water was pooling on the footpath and road outside residential properties at Hall Close and Hillrise Crescent.

**RESOLVED** that the matter be reported to Durham County Council.

### 11 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

**RESOLVED** that the next meeting be held 21 July 2021 at 6.45pm.

.....Signed

.....Dated