



Delivering Quality Services to  
Coxhoe & Quarrington Hill

## Coxhoe Parish Council

<b>Meeting</b>	Monthly
<b>Date</b>	Wednesday 25 <sup>th</sup> November 2009
<b>Time</b>	6.45pm
<b>Venue</b>	Lansdowne House, Coxhoe

### **Minutes of the proceedings of the monthly Coxhoe Parish Council meeting held at 6.45pm in Lansdowne House, Lansdowne Road, Coxhoe, on Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> November 2009.**

**Present:** Councillor P. Dodsworth (in the Chair) and

**Councillors:** S. Dunn, Mrs. B. Hepplewhite, R. Mayo, K. Pounder, T. Rowe, G. Shotton, D. Smith, J. Taylor and Mrs. C. Wigham.

**Clerk:** Mrs. M. Forster

**Also Present:** County Councillor D. Morgan, J. Hepplewhite (Coxhoe Community Partnership), B. Watts, S. Naylor and D. Reid (Quarrington Hill Village Partnership) (all for part of meeting).

**09.193 Apologies:** Apologies for absence were received from Councillor C.Thirlaway and from M. Ogilvie.

**09.194 Members' Declarations of Interest:** Declarations of interest had been declared by Councillor P. Dodsworth in Matters of Information on the application for a donation by the Coxhoe Homing Society; Councillor K. Pounder in the planning application for Jirah at Quarrington Hill that had been determined under delegated authority; and Councillor D. Smith in Sanderson Street. (Councillor Smith withdrew from the meeting prior to consideration of that item).

**09.195 Questions from the Public:** There were no questions from the members of the public present.

**09.196 Police Report:** PCSOs Wilkinson and Airey were present and submitted details of the Police Report that had been circulated for the period 28<sup>th</sup> October to 19<sup>th</sup> November 2009, showing three incidents of theft, eight of criminal damage, and ten of anti-social behaviour. Members advised that there had been many more incidents of theft of and damage to door bells than had been reported. PCSO Wilkinson advised that he would check whether there had been a report of a car being stolen at Quarrington Hill as this was not included in the written report but a Member was aware of such. The PCSO advised that there had been some thefts of scrap metal and the Police would appreciate timely calls in connection with suspicious activity. Members requested a joint meeting to discuss anti-social behaviour and the fear of crime in Coxhoe following reports made at the last meeting of the Community Partnership from elderly residents who felt intimidated, particularly on a Friday evening in the Churchyard and Lansdowne Road areas. The Chair added that he would call Mark Ogilvie to convey that the Parish Council would like to see an increased police presence (in addition to the PCSOs) in the village, particularly on a night. County Councillor Morgan agreed to report street light number 1903 opposite Quarrington Hill Community Centre that was lying at an acute angle and to chase progress in connection with repairs to the railings at the traffic lights that a car had ran into when the handbrake had been left off. PCSOs Wilkinson and Airey left the meeting.

**Resolved** (i) That the Police Report from 28<sup>th</sup> October to 19<sup>th</sup> November 2009 be noted and displayed on the notice boards; (ii) That the Clerk arrange a meeting to discuss anti-social behaviour and the fear of crime in Coxhoe; the meeting to involve representatives of the Parish Council, Police, Anti-Social Behaviour Officer from the County Council, Coxhoe Community Partnership, the Sports Centre Management, and County Councillors covering the Coxhoe area.

**09.197 Minutes of Monthly Meeting** held 28<sup>th</sup> October 2009 had been circulated.

**Resolved** That the minutes of the last monthly meeting held on 28<sup>th</sup> October 2009 be approved and signed as a true record.

**09.198 Matters of information:** The Clerk updated that on **Clocks Remedial Work**, details had been received of an alternative provider and the matter would be progressed as time allowed. The Clerk was to attend the second session of the **CILCA Mentoring Course** on 26<sup>th</sup> November and was booked to attend free HMRC **PAYE training** on 19<sup>th</sup> February 2010 at Sunderland on Employer CD Rom and an Annual Return Course at Belmont on 9<sup>th</sup> March, as well as the Local Council's Workshop on **VAT Training** in Gosforth on 4<sup>th</sup> March 2010. Letters had been sent to all allotment holders at Quarrington Hill reminding them not to light **fires at the allotments**. As part of this letter, enquiries had been made regarding a plot that had not yet had rent paid on it for the year and this had resulted in payment of the outstanding invoice. There was a waiting list of eight people for ten plots and Members considered that it may be beneficial to ascertain the ownership of the rough land that was adjacent to the allotment plots to investigate the possibility of the Council taking ownership to enable two more plots to be let and the waiting list to be reduced. The Clerk had written to **Premier Waste asking for ideas for reclamation projects** but had not received a response to date and had advised the names of the Councillors appointed to the Premier Waste Liaison Group. Councillor Smith and the Clerk had attended the **Planning Training Session** at Chester-le-Street on 4<sup>th</sup> November, and responses had now been sent to the Secretary of the Willow Cottages Allotment Association in connection with the **request to keep bees** and to the holder of the plot at Quarrington Hill allotments on the **request for assistance with fencing**. The Vice-Chair had updated the Member of Parliament in connection with the meeting held 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2009 to discuss the Medical Practice but the Clerk had not yet updated the resident who had requested an update on progress. The response on the **Consultation on Proposed County Durham Local Development Framework Core Strategy Issues** had been sent to the County Council within the deadline date and the Chair and Clerk had attended the **Standards Training** on 11<sup>th</sup> November. The Clerk had responded to the holder of the allotment at Quarrington Hill in connection with their **request to erect a shed and fence** and had completed the **VAT Return** for the first quarter of the year, but had not yet had time to raise the matters in connection with the policy on **Wheelie Bins** or the effectiveness of the **Highways Action Line** with the County Council, although the Councillor who had raised the former issue had produced a draft to process. Due to the large current workload, the Clerk had not yet responded to the **Coxhoe Homing Society** in connection with their request for a donation (in which **Councillor Dodsworth had declared an interest**).

**Resolved** (i) That the information be noted and the outstanding resolutions be actioned; (ii) That the Vice-Chair be provided with a sketch of the rough land adjacent to the allotment land at Quarrington Hill in order that land ownership investigations may be carried out with a view to the Council looking at the possibility of acquiring this land to create further allotment plots.

**09.199 Memorial Garden Lights and Christmas Lights** – Scottish Power had been appointed as the cheapest provider to install a meter and provide electricity to enable the Memorial Lights and proposed Christmas Lights to become operational. Arrangements had been made for the works to be carried out 24<sup>th</sup> November but the meter supplier had advised that there was insufficient room for the equipment in the meter box. This had resulted in the County Council's electrical contractor having to move some previously installed equipment. The installation of the meter had been rebooked for 1<sup>st</sup> December 2009. Electricity costs had been estimated at £250 per annum and two companies were currently pricing up supply and installation of appropriate Christmas lights. Coxhoe Community Partnership were paying for the installation of external sockets to enable connection but had no surplus monies to contribute to additional Christmas lights, which would be ordered to a maximum of the remaining Parish Council budget. The Parish Council was pushing for the works to be completed in time for the Christmas Carol Concert on 7<sup>th</sup> December.

**Resolved** That the information be noted and the Clerk be authorised, following consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman, to proceed with the ordering of Christmas lights upon completion of the necessary electricity supply and connection works.

**09.200 Speed Visors** – At the last meeting, it had been decided to proceed with the installation of the cheapest of the 3M and the originally ordered signs. It had been found that the company who had already been paid for the signs, Varitext, did not supply the 3M signs and they had, therefore, been

instructed to proceed at Quarrington Hill with the installation of the signs previously ordered and paid for. The Clerk had chased information regarding the details for the appropriate contact at NEDL in order that costs and exact location and size of garden area to be reinstated could be ascertained and an alternative costing be provided from the Council's contractor. The County Council Officer involved had provided details that day. The Chair confirmed that he had spoken to the gentleman whose land would be disturbed and he was happy for the Council to carry out the works. Members expressed concern at the time that Varitext had taken from payment of invoice to carrying out works and that they had lost the order on at least two occasions.

**Resolved** That the Clerk be instructed to advise Varitext to complete the installation works at an early stage or return the Council's money in order that an alternative supplier could be pursued.

**09.201 Lighting to Rear of St. Mary's Church** – At the last meeting it had been agreed that the Chairman provide details of the light fittings planned for St. Mary's Church to Councillor Thirlaway so that he could investigate alternative costings to the Clerk to proceed with the lighting at the least cost, following agreement with the Chair and Vice-Chair. Councillor Thirlaway was not able to attend the meeting but had advised that the contractor approached considered the works too small to be worth his while. Members discussed whether to proceed with the County Council fitting the lights. Concern was expressed at the costs involved and Members were uncertain whether the lights costed for met with the Church's wishes. The lights had been chosen to fit in with the Heritage Scheme and if required could be paid for from the anticipated sale of assets in the new financial year. There was a need to provide an interim solution of security sensor lights.

**Resolved** (i) That subject to the agreement of St. Mary's Church, the Clerk make arrangements for a contractor to install security sensor lights as an interim measure; (ii) That the longer term Heritage type lights be discussed with the Church and be provided in the 2010/2011 financial year following the anticipated sale of assets capital receipts should the Church wish to proceed.

#### **09.202 Correspondence:**

##### **09.202.1 Durham County Council (DCC):**

**(A) 28m of Fencing Outside Tip** – Joe Brain from Durham County Council had confirmed that the works should be completed by the contractor within the next two weeks.

**Resolved** That the information be noted.

**(B) EDRC AAP Local Councils Committee** – The minutes for the meeting of 15<sup>th</sup> September and agenda for 17<sup>th</sup> November 2009 had been circulated. Councillors Mrs. Hepplewhite and Pounder and the Clerk had attended. The AAP Co-ordinator had provided an update on funding, advising that the Task Groups had looked at projects within the priority areas of Young People, Sustainable Transport and Traffic, and Community Support. These would be decided in principle at the AAP Board 18<sup>th</sup> November, be submitted to a Project Appraisal Panel and then to a Special Board 24<sup>th</sup> November. Some attendees at the Committee meeting had expressed concern that it appeared that Parish and Town Councils were not being kept sufficiently informed, resulting in a potential loss of opportunity to apply for funding. To assist in this, standard application forms were being introduced. J. Hepplewhite of Coxhoe Community Partnership added that he was a member of the AAP Board and the projects had been assessed on their merits and against criteria including the constitution of groups, matched funding, whether CRB checks were undertaken, etc. There was Councillor representation at the Task Groups and applications were being put forward from both Coxhoe and Quarrington Hill Community Partnerships for limestone links and a play area respectively, with support from the local County Councillors for both, with recommendations for approval.

**Resolved** That the information be noted.

**(C) EDRC AAP Board** – The agenda for 18<sup>th</sup> November and minutes from 16<sup>th</sup> September 2009 had been circulated.

**Resolved** That the information be noted.

**(D) Total Place – Stakeholder Event for Regeneration in County Durham** – Details had been circulated of an event held 20<sup>th</sup> November 2009.

**Resolved** That the information be noted.

**(E) Consultation on the Development of Travel Schemes and Alternatives to Bus Services Across County Durham** – Durham County Council was consulting on the introduction of taxi bus type services where there was limited public transport or people had mobility issues. Parish Councillors could respond individually as they had been furnished with a copy of the response questionnaire. A Member expressed concern at a rumour they had heard that the one stop shop at Coxhoe may be closing as Spennymoor would then be the nearest provision of such services and it was not possible to reach this via public transport. County Councillor Morgan advised that he would check this out.

**Resolved** That the information be noted and County Councillor Morgan report back on the issue of the possible closure of the one stop shop at Coxhoe.

**(F) Lease for Quarrington Hill Allotment Site** – The Clerk advised that Durham County Council had sent a letter after despatch of the agenda that needed to be considered prior to the next meeting. This referred to a Landlord’s Notice to Terminate a Business Tenancy for the land at Quarrington Hill currently used for allotments and advised that the County Council was prepared to grant a further lease at £75 per year. The current lease ended 23<sup>rd</sup> July and the County Council wished to send a new lease for signature. The Parish Council had written to the Head of Asset Management at the former City Council requesting that consideration be given to the asset being transferred to the Parish Council. This had been received too late for consideration prior to Vesting Day but the Team Leader of Valuation and Estate Management had advised that the proposals would be put forward to appropriate officers when in post at the County Council. The Clerk suggested that the Parish Council advise the County Council that they were prepared to enter a further lease of 10 years at £75 per year but wished to pursue the transfer of the allotment land to the ownership of the Parish Council and request the County Council’s terms for such a proposal. She stated that this would ensure that the option of leasing the land was not lost but would allow the Parish Council to pursue the transfer to enable an Allotment Association to be set up in accordance with their intention for this site. Members discussed the suggestion but stated that they did not wish to incur any legal costs or further rental costs. An asset transfer at a peppercorn rate had been requested previously and the County Council simply needed to agree and draw up the appropriate legal document. The Parish Council wanted to devolve day to day control of the allotments to a Quarrington Hill Allotment Association as had happened at Willow Cottages and the Association that had set up as a result were able to apply for funding and carry out improvements to the site themselves. If the County Council were not prepared to agree to the transfer then they would need to take over the administration of the allotments which would probably be designated as statutory allotments as the site would be theirs. The costs and administration involved were not commensurate with the charges and allotment holders could have improved amenities if the asset transfer and Association route were followed.

**Resolved** That the Clerk advise the County Council that the Parish Council does not wish to enter into a further lease and wishes to pursue the asset transfer of the allotment land at Quarrington Hill to the Parish Council at a peppercorn consideration to enable an autonomous Allotment Association to be set up to take day to day control of them and facilitate improvements to them.

09.202.2 **County Durham Association of Local Councils (CDALC):**

**(G) AAP Forum** - Details had been circulated of the East Durham Rural Corridor AAP Forum to be held on 10<sup>th</sup> December 2009.

**Resolved** That the information be noted.

**(H) Standards for England – Occasional Advice Papers on Interests and Lobbying** – had been circulated.

**Resolved** That the information be noted.

**(I) Section 137 Appropriate Sum Level for 2010/2011** – had been notified by the Department for Communities and Local Government as unchanged at £6.15 per elector.

**Resolved** That the information be noted.

**(J) NALC E-Bulletin** – the latest briefing had been circulated.

**Resolved** That the information be noted.

09.202.3 **Other Correspondence:**

**(K) Department for Communities and Local Government** – The Government's response to the consultation on the making and enforcement of **byelaws** had been circulated.

**Resolved** That the information be noted.

**(L) Fair Play for Children – Freedom of Information Request on issue of Leisure Trusts and Grant Aid** – had been circulated, together with the Council's response that it did not provide the areas of service on which information was requested and directing the organisation to Durham County Council.

**Resolved** That the information be noted.

**09.203 Coxhoe Community Partnership:** The minutes of 7<sup>th</sup> October 2009 had been circulated, together with the agenda for 4<sup>th</sup> November and request for assistance with bulb planting on 5<sup>th</sup> November. Projects updates had been circulated for 4<sup>th</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> November 2009. The Parish Council had submitted its article for the Coxhoe Chronicle. The letters in connection with the state of the kitchen at Landsdowne House had been signed and were passed to a member of the Partnership for onward transmission. In view of the current large workload, the Special Joint Meeting between the Parish Council and Coxhoe Community Partnership in connection with street furniture and the requests to the County Council in connection with litter in the churchyard and computer classes were still outstanding. Councillor Mrs. Hepplewhite updated that the opening event for the Living Churchyard had been rearranged to 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2010; the Village Hall entrance doors were completed; an application would be submitted to the Coalfield Regeneration Trust for assistance with the internal doors; and some girls had raised £5,000 for the Youth Room by doing the Coast to Coast bicycle ride. The planters in the front street were discussed and the Chairman stated that he would ask advice from a landscape architect he was currently working with as to what longer lasting plants could be planted to save money and look attractive throughout the year. A Member added that the Partnership had been advised that whilst project management fees had been 8% with Durham City Council, this was to rise to 15% with Durham County Council. As CDENT would only pay up to 10%, the Partnerships would have to find another 5% if they were to utilise the services of the County Council. Using other organisations would have to be looked at but there may be difficulties in that some, such as Groundwork, required the funding to be in place prior to the works being commenced.

**Resolved** That the information be noted and the outstanding resolutions be actioned as follows: (i) that the meeting between the Parish Council and Community Partnership to discuss the street furniture be arranged; (ii) that a joint request be made from the Partnership and the Parish Council (with the County Councillors copied in) that the County Council take on responsibility for picking of litter and provide a litter bin in the Living Churchyard; (iii) that the County Council be approached regarding the possibility of them providing computer classes in Coxhoe; (iv) That the Chairman draft a letter to remind the leisure centre staff to report incidents to the Police and forward it to the Clerk for onward transmission.

**09.204 Quarrington Hill Village Partnership:** The Partnership had kindly agreed to the Parish Council's request that meeting dates be amended to allow various parties to attend meetings of both

organisations. Meetings would be the last Monday of the month. An agenda had been circulated for 30<sup>th</sup> November 2009. Articles for the Village Newsletter had been sent, including those incorporated in the last edition of the Coxhoe Chronicle, an update of work undertaken since then, Walking in Durham, and a suggestion for Quarrington Hill's success in Durham in Bloom. Further information had been provided to the Chair of the Partnership with regard to the request for the Parish Council to see the final proof of the Newsletter prior to printing. The Chair of the Partnership was one of three representatives present at the meeting and advised that the Partnership agreed to the request. He updated that the Youth Club was doing well, with Level 1 and Level 3 Youth Workers in place, members participating in a rock climbing course which counted towards accreditation, and membership numbers increasing. A very successful Halloween Party had been attended by 49 children, almost all in fancy dress, and as many adults. He added that there had been problems with the flower beds over the summer. He had personally had to weed these on three occasions and it would be helpful if the Parish Council could explore the possibility of this being done by the supplier who attended these regularly for watering purposes.

Mr. Watts outlined problems the Partnership were encountering relating to a minority of the community who they considered wished to take over the Partnership. The Partnership representatives advised that this was creating delays with the Newsletter and the work they were endeavouring to undertake in pursuit of the Parish Plan. Having someone from the Parish Council co-opted to assist in this would help. The Chair stated that it was great to hear the good news but disappointing to hear of the problems being encountered. These needed to be matters between the Charity Commission and the Partnership. The Partnership had been set up in response to the Parish Plan and the Parish Council supported the Partnership in their initiatives to deliver and would help where possible. The Chair and Vice-Chair were both out of the area on business and would miss the next meeting but advised that their intent was to assist and support the Partnership as much as possible. J. Hepplewhite added that at the AAP Board meeting the previous evening, a resident of Coxhoe had praised Coxhoe for its methods of handling the community's views and carrying out their wishes, stating that in Coxhoe consultation was carried out, priorities were assessed and funding was accessed to make things happen. He then left the meeting.

**Resolved** That the information be noted and the Parish Council ascertain the possibility of Thinford Nurseries carrying out weeding of flower beds when watering took place for future visits to Quarrington Hill.

**09.205 Crowtrees Heritage Group:** The minutes of 22<sup>nd</sup> October and agenda for 26<sup>th</sup> November 2009 had been circulated.

**Resolved** That the information be noted.

**09.206 Traffic Calming at Quarrington Hill** – A Member stated that residents had received letters in July 2009 advising that the County Council would be proceeding with a traffic calming scheme including four speed humps and associated signs at Church Street as there was a proven speeding issue. The letters had stated that the work would be carried out in the next 8-10 weeks. Markings had been made on the road but the works had still not commenced. The Police were to raise this with the County Council following the last PACT meeting but it was considered that the Parish Council should also chase progress on this. The County Councillor added that both County Councillors had asked about this scheme and been advised that it would be delivered within the programme of works.

**Resolved** That the Parish Council request a date for commencement of the traffic calming measures at Church Street from the County Council.

**09.207 Web Statistics:** had been circulated for the period 2<sup>nd</sup> to 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2009.

**Resolved** That the information be noted.

**09.208 Finance:**

09.208.1 **Budget Update:** An account summary had been circulated. The accounts for payment circulated for approval for cheques to be signed at this meeting amounted to £2,045.66.

Details were circulated of the budget for 2009/2010, with income and expenditure and the variance against each budget heading to the end of October. The Clerk went through the budgetary comparison information in detail, highlighting areas of expenditure e.g. recruitment of replacement Clerk, which were overspent against the seven month budget figure. Central Services was an area of concern due to unanticipated expenditure and some budget allocations being underestimated. Smaller areas that may be overspent at the end of the year were projects and valuation fees. She reiterated that the 2009/10 budget set by the Council would have resulted in a year end figure of only £3454.76 and that there was a need to exercise caution for the remainder of the financial year as there was still a fair amount of committed expenditure due on completion of ongoing projects and work.

**Resolved** That the information be noted.

09.208.2 **Accounts for payment** – Details of financial payments required for the month had been circulated, together with the month end bank balances figure after the expenditure.

**Resolved** That all payments presented be signed and paid:

<b>Creditor</b>	<b>Reason</b>	<b>£</b>
Coxhoe Village Hall	Annual Fee and Rent for CAB Service	1156.00
Coxhoe Village Hall	Section 137 Donation for Poppy Wreath	20.00
Viking Direct	Printer Ink	149.49
G. Fletcher	Internal Audit six month Review	50.00
3 Mobile	Broadband & Mobile October	31.77
M. Forster	Clerk Salary & postage	

09.208.3 **Applications for Grant / Donation**

**(A) County of Durham School Benevolent Fund** – Members discussed the application from the Durham County Council Fund that requested assistance towards the purchase of shoes and winter coats for needy school children in the County. It was considered that the County Council, in asking Parish Councils to consider a donation, was widening the organisations that they normally applied to as there was an increasing demand for assistance from the Fund. Members concurred that this was a worthy cause which could benefit children in the Parish. The level of donation needed to be balanced against the large number of worthy causes and any future applications would need to be considered on their merits as they were received.

**Resolved** That a one off donation of £50 be made as Section 137 expenditure to the County of Durham School Benevolent Fund.

**(B) Browns Close Residents' Association** – A letter had been circulated asking for a donation to the Association's Christmas festivities. This advised that there was no change to the financial position from the previous year, details of which had been circulated. Members considered the financial information and agreed to defer consideration of this item until after the remainder of the financial reports had been considered.

09.208.4 **Photocopying and Printing of Coxhoe Chronicle and Quarrington Hill Newsletter** –

The Clerk advised that due to the huge amount of work undertaken on budgets and the Memorial Lights this month, the comparison exercise had not yet been completed and would be submitted to a future meeting.

**Resolved** That the comparison report be submitted to a future meeting of the Council as time allowed.

**Change of Order of Agenda** – Members **resolved** to defer consideration of the remainder of the financial items to later in the meeting as there would be lengthy discussion on these and members of the public could then decide whether to remain for that discussion or stay only for the planning application items. Mr. B. Watts, Ms. S. Naylor and Mr. D. Reid left the meeting.

**09.209 Planning Applications:** Details had been circulated of planning applications that had been determined under delegated authority from 26<sup>th</sup> October to 16<sup>th</sup> November 2009. These included Jirah at Quarrington Hill in which **Councillor Pounder had declared an interest** and application 592 Reserved Matters for 80 Residential Dwellings at Coxhoe Industrial Estate for Hellens Development Ltd. Details were provided of planning applications that had been notified by Durham County Council for consideration / comment since the last meeting. These included a Section 73 application to vary condition no.7 of the outline permission for the development by Hellens to restrict occupancy until a scheme for disposal of foul sewage had been completed in accordance with condition no.3 of the reserved matters approval. County Councillor Morgan clarified that the variation, as he understood it, was to use attenuation and pump out the sewage and send to a sewage farm until the full sewage scheme was completed and the network connected to the main sewage system. In preparation for this, the "Haul Road" would be closed for up to 9 weeks. Members expressed concern that landfill traffic would then have to go through the Front Street and The Avenue at Coxhoe but it was explained that this was a necessity to enable the works to be completed; a precedent existed at the development at Bowburn; there was no alternative as the full design and approval of the system was a lengthy matter; the present system was unable to cope with the additional sewage that would occur as a result of the development; and 9 weeks was a relatively short space of time for such works to be carried out and was likely to be the maximum as the company would have to pay penalties if the time extended beyond that. It was agreed that whilst this was unavoidable, there were measures that could be taken to mitigate the disruption caused and that the Parish Council could lobby to have compensatory works undertaken by way of the planning gain monies.

**Resolved** (i) That the information on delegated authority decisions be noted; (ii) That the information on planning applications 778 at Mulberry, 848 at Browning Hill and 843 at The Avenue be noted; (iii) That with regard to section 73 application 858 by Hellens Development Ltd. a letter be sent to the County Council asking that for the period of 9 weeks when the "Haul Road" would be closed that they request a 20 mile per hour speed limit for heavy goods vehicles and carry out additional street cleaning within that period and advise affected residents well in advance of the works to be carried out and the reasons for their necessity; that the County Council be asked to seek assurances from the developer that part of the planning gain monies from the development will result in the "mock level crossing gates" previously requested and an interpretation panel by way of compensation for the disruption to be caused; that Premier Waste be requested to ask their drivers to not travel through the village at more than 20 miles per hour during the period they were unable to use the "Haul Road".

**09.210 Date of Next Meeting:** Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> December 2009 at 6.45 p.m. in Landsdowne House.

County Councillor Morgan left the meeting.

**09.211 Report and Recommendations of the Finance Committee held on 16<sup>th</sup> November 2009 –** were circulated and discussed in detail. A risk review had been carried out and the final document incorporating the additions had been circulated for approval. It had also been agreed that a further review be undertaken in March 2010 and six monthly thereafter. **M. Forster declared an interest** in items relating to her salary and additional hours worked, details of which had been circulated, and left the meeting during consideration of those items. Councillor Dodsworth recorded the decisions made in her absence. Members commented that a lot had been achieved in a short time and the additional hours worked should be recompensed. Recommendations in relation to the estimates for 2010/2011 were discussed in detail. **Councillor Mrs. Hepplewhite declared an interest** in recommendation (xv). In view of the cheaper paper costs resulting in savings of £400 that had been identified, another Member requested that this recommendation be withdrawn as the Partnerships contributed greatly to the production of the newsletters and the Parish Council would continue to pay the printing costs. Members commented that 2010/2011 would be a difficult year, going forward with no reserves. Internal Audit had recommended that a minimum of 10% of the precept should be included in the budget as a contingency. Members agreed that it was necessary to incorporate a

contingency for any unforeseen expenditure. There was a need to look for savings, reduce expenditure and increase income wherever possible. It would be helpful if this information was portrayed to the residents by way of an article in the village newsletters, including the activities of the Parish Council so that the residents could see what the money was being spent on and what any increase amounted to in real terms. There was a need to look carefully at costs and benefits with regard to the possibility of an asset transfer of Landsdowne House as there could be additional costs associated with utility services and maintenance but it was a good venue for an office open to the public. For the current year, the Council was still paying a licence fee of £1000 to the Village Hall and it was agreed to set aside the same amount in the budget for 2010/11 and review this in September 2010 following the analysis of accommodation at Landsdowne House. Members commended the Clerk and the Finance Committee for their hard work in difficult circumstances in putting forward proposals for the budget for 2010/2011.

**Resolved** (i) That the report and recommendations of the Finance Committee held 16<sup>th</sup> November 2009 be approved and adopted subject to the following:

- a) That recommendation (xv) relating to the possibility of the Partnerships contributing towards the payment of newsletters be withdrawn and the budget be amended to reflect that and the differences in paper costs;
  - b) That £1000 be added to the projects budget for the previous commitment made for a play park at Quarrington Hill;
  - c) That an additional £270 be added for the grass cutting service to meet the costs now provided by the contractor;
  - d) That an additional £400 be added to office equipment for the telephone and broadband costs that were additional to the previous year;
  - e) That the £2000 set aside to build up towards a contingency for a bye-election occurring be brought forward from 2009/10 and no further monies be set aside in 2010/11;
  - f) That the speed visors at Quarrington Hill and Coxhoe be moved three instead of four times per year each, resulting in a saving of £500;
  - g) That £2000 of the £2500 set aside for church lights in 2009/10 be brought forward to 2010/11 as additional reserves in view of the decision earlier this meeting to defer these, with £500 maintained for temporary security lights and electricity costs;
  - h) That the £1000 set aside for further Christmas lights be deleted (£300 to remain for electricity costs) and the position be reviewed later in 2010 depending on budgets at that time, with monies set aside in 2009/10 being carried forward if not expended due to the time factor involved this financial year;
  - i) That a cost benefit analysis be carried out in connection with the possibility of pursuing an asset transfer of Landsdowne House from the County Council;
  - j) That £1000 be maintained in the budget for the licence fee for the Village Hall and this be reviewed in September 2010 following the review of accommodation requirements;
- (ii) That the additional hours worked by the Clerk as circulated be paid at the December Council meeting;
- (iii) That with regard to the recommendation to review hanging baskets and planters, this take place in February and include seeking advice from the Landscape Architect that the Chairman was currently working with and others as to how things could be done differently to reduce costs and also looking at the possibility of having some baskets on buildings and Church railings rather than street lamps, with consideration of alternative watering arrangements to reduce expenditure;
- (iv) That an article be included in the village newsletters in March 2010 giving details of what the Council is spending money on so that the residents of the Parish could see how their money was being spent;
- (v) That the Council continue to look for savings and more cost effective methods of delivering services throughout the year.

**09.212 Estimates 2010/2011** – Details had been provided of discussions that had taken place at the Finance Committee and a schedule was circulated that provided information on the current budget and variances, the minimum budget figures put forward by the Clerk, the budget figures agreed by

the Finance Committee for recommendation to the Council and the reasoning behind each of the figures being recommended. A document was also circulated that showed potential amounts of precept required to meet the estimates for 2010/2011 and what this meant in real terms of increase per household.

**Resolved** That the estimates for the year 2010/2011 be agreed taking account of the amendments made at the meeting as outlined in minute 09.211.

**09.213 Precept 2010/2011** – Members considered the information resulting from the comments and decisions made with regard to the report of the Finance Committee and the Estimates for 2010/2011. To meet the budget required and have a small contingency for unforeseen expenditure, a precept of £38,500 would be required. It was stated that this equated to an increase of £2.56 per year for a Band D property and £1.53 per year for a Band A property. After much deliberation, it was **Resolved** That a precept of £38,500 be set and approved for 2010/2011.

**09.214 Application for Grant / Donation - Browns Close Residents' Association – Councillor D. Smith declared an interest** in this item. Members discussed the application in detail, commenting that this was a worthy Association that were very good at raising money during the year to help themselves. This had to be balanced with the number of people who would benefit, the number of worthwhile causes within the area that may need donations, the limited resources available to the Council, and the organisation's significant bank balances. After much discussion, it was **Resolved** That a donation of £30 be made to the Browns Close Residents' Association under Section 137 expenditure to assist them with their Christmas festivities.

**09.215 Use of Photocopier – Councillor S. Dunn declared an interest** in this item and, having outlined the situation, did not take part in the discussion or decision thereon. There was the potential for large scale job losses at the Land Registry and a request was discussed for Councillor Dunn, on behalf of the PCS Trade Union, to be allowed to use the photocopier located in the Village Hall on a rechargeable basis, as copier facilities would be withdrawn at the Land Registry Offices for campaigning against these proposals. Members considered that this request should be supported as jobs were at risk, there would be no cost to the Parish Council, and the copier was available for members of the public to use.

**Resolved** That Councillor Dunn be allowed to use the photocopier at the Village Hall on a rechargeable basis.

**09.216 Responsibility for Footpath at Quarry Road** – A Member requested information as to responsibility for the path at Quarry Road. The Chair advised that it was probably the County Council but the Parish Council did have responsibility for a small area. It was also suggested that this could be owned by Sherburn Hospital.

**Resolved** That the Clerk investigate who was responsible for the path under discussion and advise the Councillor accordingly.

**09.217 Exempt Information – Resolution to Exclude the Press and Public:**

**Resolved** That in view of the confidential nature of the following items, the press and public be excluded for the remainder of the meeting, pursuant to the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act, 1960.

**09.218 Exempt Item - Co-op and Village Hall Car Parks**

**09.219 Exempt Item - St. Mary's Churchyard**

**09.220 Exempt Item - Sanderson Street: NOTE:** Councillor D. Smith **declared an interest** in this item and withdrew from the meeting prior to its consideration.

*Minutes of Coxhoe Parish Council held on Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> November 2009*

The meeting closed at 10.10 p.m.

***Signed as a true record of the meeting on 16<sup>th</sup> December 2009:***

**Cllr. P. Dodsworth (Chairman)**

**Mrs. M. Forster (Clerk)**

**Cllr. S. Dunn (Vice Chairman)**