



Delivering Quality Services to
Coxhoe & Quarrington Hill

Coxhoe Parish Council

Meeting	Monthly
Date	Wednesday 27 th January 2010
Time	6.45pm
Venue	Landsdowne House, Coxhoe

Minutes of the proceedings of the monthly Coxhoe Parish Council meeting held at 6.45pm in Landsdowne House, Lansdowne Road, Coxhoe, on Wednesday 27th January 2010.

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

Councillors: S. Dunn (part), Mrs. B. Hepplewhite, R. Mayo, K. Pounder, A. Rowe, G. Shotton, D. Smith, J. Taylor and C. Thirlaway.

Clerk: Mrs. M. Forster

Also Present: County Councillors D. Morgan and Mrs. M. Plews, and B. Watts (Quarrington Hill Village Partnership) (all for part of meeting).

10.1 Apologies: Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Mrs. C. Wigham.

10.2 Members' Declarations of Interest: Conflicts of interest had been declared by Councillor Dodsworth in planning application 019 and Councillor D. Smith in Sanderson Street. (Councillor Smith withdrew from the meeting prior to consideration of that item). Councillor Pounder declared interests in the Police Report and the Standards Board Bulletin.

10.3 Questions from the Public: Two members of the public were present and it was agreed that their questions be raised during the update report on the Hellens Development.

10.4 Hellens Development: Gavin Cordwell-Smith, Chief Executive of Hellens, was present and circulated details of the most recent plans for the site, including the approved site layout and housing mix, together with proposed open space landscape layout, sketches, and themes and ideas. It was proposed to start on site in February and that remediation works would take six months. The building of houses would be in three phases of 25-30 houses per phase to be completed per year. This was to be a joint venture with Barratts as a housing partner. (S. Dunn entered the meeting). The upgrade to the access road would take place at the end of 2010, alongside works to the roads and sewers of the main scheme. Mr. Cordwell-Smith gave details of the proposals to comply with the percentage for art condition. He advised that it was proposed that this would comprise of public open space by way of a quarry garden within the housing development. Schemes in relation to the history of Coxhoe had been picked up on, following research by David Paton, the appointed artist. As Elizabeth Barrett Browning had lived at Coxhoe Hall, it was proposed to carve extracts from her poems into sculptural stone blocks arranged in the garden and use related street names. The quarry garden would be family friendly and double as a play area. Meetings had been held with Durham County Council to discuss how the plans fit the condition criteria and the County Council's ability for future maintenance.

In response to a query from a Member, Mr. Cordwell-Smith advised that discussions had taken place with Coxhoe Paving and the Football Club and there would be access to the football ground during the road closure. Members expressed concern that there was no mention of the railway level crossing gates that had been requested and on which research and consultation had been undertaken. Mr. Cordwell-Smith stated that these had been looked at but there had been felt to be an issue over positioning and maintenance and the artist had not considered them to fit with the theme of the quarry garden. Members advised that the original pillar where the old gates had been still existed. Accommodation could be reached with the Highway Authority and the Parish Council could consider future maintenance if the gates were erected and the County Council would not maintain them. They expressed disappointment that the condition was being discharged by all work being congregated around probably the most expensive 28 houses and that the Coxhoe community of 1500 would not benefit. Mr. Cordwell-Smith advised that there would be landscaping works around Coxhoe Paving to

soften the area's appearance and the County Council were against landscaping to the side of schemes as youths congregated in such areas. The area chosen would be overlooked by houses and was open for anyone to use.

Members conveyed concern that the suggestions of the community appeared to have been ignored, including the suggested links to Clarence Railway and the street names provided by the history group. Ms. Browning had only lived at Coxhoe for a couple of years and did not mean anything to the community. Mr. Cordwell-Smith advised that he was not aware that names had been passed on to the artist and he would look at these if they were provided to him. He added that it was proposed to have railway engines that had been used on the line stencilled into brickwork in the area. As the percentage for art condition had not yet been discharged, Members asked that Hellens reconsider the position, particularly in respect of the mock level crossing gates. Mr. Cordwell-Smith advised that he would consult with the County Council about adoption as the land was not owned by Hellens.

In response to queries, Mr. Cordwell-Smith advised that the site was restricted to 80 houses, there had been few enquiries in relation to the employment area of the site, and Hellens had never expressed an interest in purchasing the football field. He stated that there should not be a problem with regard to dirt on roads as there was to be little material movements on or off site as land was to be reused on site, there would be a dedicated compound on site, and there was no requirement for a wheel wash as there was no soil or clay on site. Hellens had a duty of care to ensure that dirt on the road did not occur and attribute to the potential for accidents and they would make sure that the road was kept clean. He asked that the Parish Council contact him if any problems were experienced once construction commenced.

A member of the public advised that he would have liked to see Coxhoe's heritage, including the use of the rail theme, being combined through materials rather than imagery, and that in his view any open space could be seen to benefit some residents more than others simply due to geography and location of the space. This was true of, for example, the Sensory Garden and people would walk to it if they wanted to. He added that more could, however, be done to make the outskirts of the development more visually pleasing. Mr. Cordwell-Smith advised that he would raise the issue of the width of the access road to Basic Cottages with the County Council, following this being raised by another member of the public, and that he would convey the Council's request that site traffic use the bypass rather than the villages. The Clerk added that she had written to Durham County Council and Premier Waste to ask that Heavy Goods Vehicles be restricted to 20mph whilst the diversions through Coxhoe were in place whilst the haul road was closed to enable sewage works to take place for the development. The Director of Risk Management had advised that as a result he had been in touch with Hellens to discuss the works and that Premier vehicles would restrict their speed to 20mph when travelling through the village and that the traffic calming measures would also ensure that the speed of vehicles was reduced.

Resolved That the information on street names and the level crossing gates be sent to Gavin Cordwell-Smith for him to take these matters into consideration for the development.

Mr. Cordwell-Smith and the members of the public left the meeting.

- 10.5 Police Report (and report of meeting on anti-social behaviour):** Mark Ogilvie had been called away on Police business but had mentioned to a Member prior to leaving the meeting that whilst the Police Report for the period 16th December 2009 to 24th January 2010 showed a burglary from Commercial Road West this should have been East. The report showed two burglaries, five reported incidents of criminal damage, three of theft, and eighty eight reported incidents of anti-social behaviour. Three of the main offenders had been identified and had signed up to Acceptable Behaviour Agreements. The Police had been present in Coxhoe the previous weekend and had carried out an alcohol seizure and been given the go ahead to undertake similar operations with six other people in and around Coxhoe. Not included in the report were windows that had been broken at the Florists on the Front Street. A Member stated that the Police should be able to take action on this as they had provided them with the name of the person responsible and also of a witness to the incident.

Incidents relating to racial abuse of Alberto's staff had been reported but were not recorded. Members alluded to other incidents including an assault in Quarrington Hill (Councillor Pounder **declared an interest**); a scam of people pretending to be from the Water Board; and a van parking inappropriately at The Grove resulting in the Police serving notice due to two incidents of emergency vehicles not being able to gain access; which were also not on the report. Members referred to a safety hazard being caused by the pizza delivery vehicles double parking on the chevrons and obstructing the pedestrian crossing and asked that the Police ask them to park further down if unable to get outside the shop. It was suggested that photographs also be emailed to the County Councillor to take the matter up with the Highways Department.

The Clerk gave details of the meeting held 18th January 2010 to discuss anti-social behaviour and the fear of crime in Coxhoe. The meeting had been attended by representatives of the Parish Council, Coxhoe Community Partnership, the Police, affected residents, Leisure Centre Management and Durham County Council by way of the Neighbourhood Warden (apologies had been received from the County Councillors and the Anti-Social Behaviour Officer). The problems had been outlined as occurring in the areas of the Park, and in particular the Sensory Garden and skatepark, Willow Court, Lansdowne Road, St. Mary's Church and the Front Street. They included residents being intimidated by gangs of youths, underage drinking, verbal abuse, peering in windows of elderly residents, bottles being broken and youths climbing on vehicles and breaking windows in the Front Street and spreading rubbish and waste from the Butcher's shop around the Churchyard. It had been considered that most activity was centred on Friday evenings, with youths drinking from 4.30 p.m. and bad behaviour mainly between 8.30 p.m. and midnight, but sometimes going on until 3.00 a.m. on a Saturday.

The Leisure Centre Manager had advised that youths who had misbehaved were excluded from the Centre and one offender had been taken to court which had shocked a few of the other youths. The Centre worked closely with youths, had daily activities and consulted them on youth sessions to keep them involved. They also employed CCTV to monitor activity in the area and report incidents as they were happening to the Police. All staff had been instructed to obtain crime numbers and report these to the Anti-Social Behaviour Officer and Neighbourhood Warden at the County Council. This had resulted in a decrease in incidents. The Neighbourhood Warden had offered to visit the butcher the day after the meeting to advise that the meat bins should be locked and chained or on his own land to prevent waste being spread in the Churchyard. He had added that the Wardens had been accredited to remove alcohol from youngsters and under the new structure at the County Council they should be more focussed on anti-social, rather than environmental, improvements.

The Police had advised that during the recent snowy weather there had been an upsurge in rowdy nuisance incidents but policing had been made more difficult due to health and safety issues of travelling to incidents and access for vehicles. It had been agreed that this was a quality of life issue that needed to be addressed and that residents needed to report all incidents in order that the true extent of the problem could be highlighted so that appropriate Police resources could be deployed. The Police were aware of one group (and particularly 3 individuals) who were causing the majority of the problems. They were taking this matter to a LMAP (Local Multi Agency Partnership) meeting to look at obtaining acceptable behaviour agreements. If the youths failed to sign the agreements or to adhere to them this would be used as evidence for anti-social behaviour orders or injunctions. The Police had also advised that they would remind the local shopkeepers of the over 21 scheme to help combat the problem of licensed premises selling alcohol for consumption by underage people and would put forward Coxhoe as a suggestion for test purchases to be carried out where premises could be given fixed penalties or lose their licences if they sold to underage customers. Shops could also be identified by the bar codes on the alcohol containers and the shop's CCTV checked to see who had purchased the items. It had also been suggested that the Police could submit an article to be published in the two village newsletters to publicise what the Police were doing about the problems being encountered, as well as advising responsibilities to parents. The Police added that they would ask the Crime Prevention Officer to carry out a survey through the County Council to look at improvements to the lighting at the Sensory Garden and would ask at the LMAP meeting whether there was any scope for detached youth work in Coxhoe. The issue of CCTV could potentially be looked at for funding by the AAP in future. The Police had reiterated that they would be at the problem areas at the critical times indicated whenever possible and would keep the Parish Council informed of action taken as much as they were able to. They would raise the problem with their superiors at the Police and ask for additional resources in the areas and at the times highlighted.

Councillor Mrs. Plews entered the Parish Council meeting. Councillor Mrs. Hepplewhite had asked that an incident sheet be circulated in order that feedback could be obtained regarding incidents and this had been sent to all Parish Councillors. She reported that youth workers had tried to hold discussions with youths on a Friday evening in Coxhoe and the youths had been so drunk that she had been unable to glean anything with regard to their aspirations for activities. County Councillors added that they had funded the additional staffing required to manage the numbers interested in attending the popular youth club session at the Leisure Centre to the end of the year to prevent youths being turned away.

Resolved (i) That the Police Report be noted and displayed on the notice boards and the Chair take up the unrecorded issues with M. Ogilvie and ask that all reported incidents be included in the report; (ii) That the information regarding the meeting of 18th January 2010 be noted and actions be taken as suggested by the various parties at the meeting.

10.6 Minutes of Monthly Meeting held 16th December 2009 had been circulated.

Resolved That the minutes of the last monthly meeting held on 16th December 2009 be approved and signed as a true record.

10.7 Matters of information: The Clerk updated that she would contact the alternative provider with regard to **Clocks Remedial Work** as workload allowed. The fourth session of the **CILCA Mentoring Course** was scheduled for 17th February. With regard to the **rough land adjacent to the allotments at Quarrington Hill**, the Vice-Chair was looking into land ownership to ascertain the possibility of the Council procuring this to provide additional allotment sites. A Member indicated the location on the map provided at the meeting. He had been informed that one of the ploholders was also looking at acquiring this site and Members would be kept updated in this regard. Premier Waste had been asked to provide **ideas for reclamation projects** for the Joint Stocks Waste Disposal Site. Information from Premier had been circulated, including photographs of other reclaimed sites and a drawing of recreational aspects of the Birtley site which had been developed from discussions at the community liaison meetings. Premier had advised that they would discuss restoration with local residents at the liaison meetings to ensure a satisfactory scheme could be implemented. The Clerk had reiterated that there were two Parish Council representatives on that group and asked that Premier and the Members continue to keep the Parish Council informed and that if Premier were aware of any other projects that had been carried out to let the Council know so that ideas could be put forward via the Council's two representatives. On the **Medical Practice**, she had spoken to the GP Practice Manager to see if things were progressing and had been advised that they were chasing the PCT as things were moving slowly but everything was moving along. County Councillor Mrs. Plews added that she had met with the GP and the business case was being strengthened and everything was looking positive. The Clerk advised that no further response had yet been received from the County Council with regard to the policy on the replacement of **Wheelie Bins** and progress on this would be requested. It was hoped to get everyone together for the joint meeting to include discussion on the **Lighting to the Rear of St. Mary's Church** in February. On the **asset transfer** of Quarrington Hill allotment site, a response from the County Council had asked for plans for each of the three areas the Parish Council was interested in. These would be sent and further information submitted to Members on each. There had been no response from the County Council with regard to when **Traffic Calming at Quarrington Hill** would commence. County Councillor Morgan stated that this had been scheduled for December but delayed due to adverse weather. A site inspection had taken place in January and the works should commence in February. The County Council had not yet responded to the query regarding the **responsibility for the footpath at Quarry Road** and progress on this would be sought. The Clerk had contacted Joe Brain from the County Council again with regard to the **fencing repairs outside the tip** and he had advised on 19th January that he had put through another order for the works to be carried out within 7 days. A Member added that traffic lights were in situ so the works must be about to be undertaken. The Clerk stated that the connection boxes for the **Christmas lights** had now been completed and lights would be looked at in the new financial year. She had not yet enquired about the possibility of the **Memorial lights** being operational for one hour in the morning. A Member asked that a meeting be scheduled shortly to consider the review of planters etc. with the starting point being a cost for current services from the

current providers. The Clerk went on to advise that the **precept** letter and request form had been sent to the County Council within the deadline set. A further date had been arranged for the **County Training Partnership allotments course** due to numbers interested but this again coincided with the Parish Council meeting in March so she would request the written material. The response to the County Council on the **anti-social behaviour** issues to be raised with the Scrutiny Committee had been sent and the dog fouling areas had been raised with the Neighbourhood Warden. On the Non-compliance with the **No Entry Restriction at Cornforth Lane Roundabout** she had not yet contacted the Police about the possibility of the use of mobile residents' cameras to record motoring offences. She had written to the County Council in connection with the **planning application at Foxtons** but had not yet raised the other items mentioned with the Planning Enforcement Officer. A **letter and card of thanks** from the County of Durham School Benevolent Fund and Browns Close Residents' Association respectively for the donations made by the Parish Council had been circulated. **Resolved** That the information be noted, the outstanding resolutions be actioned and progress be requested on those issues raised with other parties.

10.8 Minutes of Annual Meeting held 12th May 2009 had been circulated. Whilst these had been noted at the June meeting, they had not yet been approved and signed.

Resolved That the minutes of the Annual Meeting held 12th May 2009 be approved and signed as a true record.

10.9 Health and Safety Issue at Coxhoe Front Street: The Clerk advised Members that the situation of the paving stones outside the shops at the Front Street of Coxhoe lifting up due to the frost over the Christmas and New Year period had been reported as an urgent health and safety issue to the County Council as there had been quite a few reports of people tripping on the lifted pavements. The County Council had highlighted the worst areas by using traffic cones and advised that due to the amount of snow fall it had not been possible to completely remedy the situation immediately. They had advised 6th January that they would place signage to advise the public of the footpath hazard and that they would carry out appropriate works as soon as weather permitted. Some paving stones had been removed and replaced with tarmac, presumably as an interim measure. Thanks were conveyed to the County Council who had had a team out the very next day to inspect the area after the Clerk's contact. Members advised that this had been a country wide issue and that much of the paving had settled back without remedial work. Members asked that a section of tarmac between the traffic lights and the Red Lion Public House be looked at by the County Council as this had not settled. Members referred to works being carried out further down the village where traffic lights were in place prior to work commencing on a morning. County Councillor Morgan advised that a bollard was being replaced with a lockable one to allow access for the Church but prevent parking on the footway by delivery companies and that the traffic lights should be operational from 9.30 a.m. to 3.00 p.m. only. Members queried the works to commence at the bottom of Coxhoe and were advised that this was the Limestone Links project.

Resolved That the information be noted and the further area of raised paving highlighted be drawn to the attention of the County Council.

10.10 Insurance Review: The Clerk had met with the Council's insurers, Zurich Municipal, to carry out a review against current needs and assets. As a result, changes had been made to the All Risks Section of the policy with effect from 11th December 2009 to increase the photocopier sum insured; add the two speed visors; increase the entrance signs sum insured; and change the description of the laptop to include the printer. The additional premium was £48.80. Members discussed whether to add Libel and Slander Cover to the policy with a limit of indemnity of £25,000 at a cost of £52.50. They considered that they were community representatives and should be respectful and that the amount quoted could be better spent on improving amenities in the village. The additional cover should not, therefore, be required.

Resolved (i) That the amendments and expenditure be authorised; (ii) That Libel and Slander cover not be added to the policy.

10.11 Speed Visors: The Clerk had written to the County Council to advise that the rotation frequency for the visors had been agreed at three times per year to fit in with their schedule of works to minimise costs. She had asked them to confirm charges for that and had again asked for their assistance in the provision of costs for the pole that the Parish Council was to pay for at Coxhoe. She had reminded the County Council that it had been stated that it had previously been agreed to have the ability to have four positions for Coxhoe and four for Quarrington Hill and for the County Council to pay for their pole at Coxhoe to have power. The County Councillors advised that the North bound pole would be provided with power at no cost to the Parish Council and the works were ordered. The Parish Council had embraced a highway issue as a local council and this should be held up as good practice to other neighbouring authorities. Members discussed how best to move forward with regard to the problems being experienced in finding out the location, size and costs of the area to be reinstated to allow the South bound pole at Coxhoe to be powered, as both the Clerk and Gerry Jones at the County Council had drawn a blank with their enquiries with NEDL. The County Councillor advised that Gerry Jones was the best contact and to continue to chase progress with him.

Resolved (i) That the information relating to the North bound pole at Coxhoe be noted; (ii) That the Clerk continue with efforts to ascertain the costs for having power provided to the South bound pole at Coxhoe.

10.12 Correspondence:

10.12.1 Durham County Council:

a) EDRC AAP Local Councils Committee – The agenda for 19th January and minutes of 17th November had been circulated. Councillor Mrs. Hepplewhite and the Clerk had submitted apologies. Councillor Pounder had attended and updated Members that concern had been expressed at the lack of attendance and lack of reports by the AAP Board representative and AAP Co-ordinator (and lack of response to requests for information in the latter case) at these meetings. Gillian Fortune from CAVOS had attended and advised that their function was to point voluntary groups in the direction of funding. It was suggested that Julie Taylor of CVS should be asked to contact voluntary organisations operating in the Coxhoe area to advise them that CVS could help them to raise money. Members expressed concern that at a meeting in connection with funding applications to the AAP, it had been agreed to approve some and allow some to be determined by members of the public. The public had turned up en masse and had their applications approved. Coxhoe had been successful with Limestone Links and a couple of other projects but not for funding Saturday night activities for youths. A Member considered that the system for circulating information could be improved and the AAPs should be encouraged to send information to Parish and Town Councils who could forward it to local groups. The County Councillors advised that Coxhoe had been very successful in obtaining funding and that it was anticipated that money would be found for the Saturday activities and the skate park. A training day was to be held to look at how things could be done better with regard to AAPs, including looking at improvements to appraisals, funding, minutes etc. and Forum and Board meetings were open to the public so they were able to get the information.

Resolved That the information be noted

b) EDRC AAP Board – the agenda for 20th January and minutes of 24th November had been circulated. Councillor Pounder had attended and updated Members that the possibility of having smart cars or bicycles for the Police funded by the AAP had been discussed but some had considered that this and street lighting were matters for the Police and County Council to fund respectively. Concern had been expressed with regard to the voting system and assessment of applications for funding, and a lack of information on the applications. Some attendees had considered that a presentation by applicants would assist this. A Member at the Parish Council meeting suggested that it would be helpful for the County Councillors to provide local feedback in the village newsletters on things happening in the County, for example AAP and other County matters that had an effect on Coxhoe Parish, including any funding that may be available.

Resolved That the information be noted and the County Councillors be afforded the opportunity of feeding local information to the residents of Coxhoe and Quarrington Hill by way of a regular article in the village newsletters.

- c) Temporary Road Closure Unclassified Commercial Road East** – details had been circulated of the closure for 9 weeks from 1st February 2010 to enable the sewer diversion works for Hellens Development to take place.

Resolved That the information be noted.

- d) Temporary Public Footpath Closures Sedgefield to Metal Bridge** - had been notified, five of which were in the Coxhoe Parish. This was to enable electricity supply upgrade works to be carried out between 1st February and 31st July.

Resolved That the information be noted.

- e) Health Improvement Plan Consultation Events** - were to be held in January and February throughout the County to consult on a vision to address health inequalities and improve health in the County, details of which had been circulated.

Resolved That the information be noted.

10.12.2 County Durham Association of Local Councils (CDALC):

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

Resolved That the information be noted.

- g) Standards for England Bulletin** – for December 2009 had been circulated. Councillor Pounder **declared an interest**, advising that he wished to speak generally in this connection. He gave details of the procedure set out for assessment of complaints against Parish and Town Councillors. He expressed concern that this did not allow a response by the Councillor to the complaint until a full hearing was agreed (if considered necessary) and Councillors were not provided with details of the complaint until that point. A further concern was that a suggestion was included in the Bulletin that local councils pay towards investigation of such complaints. Should vexatious or repeated complaints be received this may be very expensive to investigate, regardless that there may be no substance to the complaints. It was stated that this was a suggestion that had been put forward by a delegate for discussion at a break out session at the Standards Board Annual Assembly. The Bulletin advised that delegates had suggested a number of changes to the local standards framework and whilst the suggestions were valued, many clearly needed further evaluation before a decision could be taken whether to make any changes. Should this suggestion be moved forward at all, it was likely that there would be major opposition from local councils and it may also require a change in legislation before local councils could be forced to contribute monetarily.

Resolved That the information be noted and the Clerk be instructed to refer the concerns highlighted to the Standards Board.

- h) Durham Association News** – December 2009 had been circulated. This included details of the Signing Ceremony which had taken place at County Hall on 16th January to mark the launch of the County Durham Local Councils Charter. The Parish Council had received an invitation for Chairman or Clerk. The Chairman had been unable to attend the ceremony but the Clerk had attended and would submit an article to the next village newsletters. Copies of the Charter had been circulated.

Resolved That the information be noted.

- i) Buckingham Palace Garden Party** - The Association had asked Parish and Town Councils to submit nominations to be entered into a draw for four places at the Party in July.

Resolved That Councillor P. Dodsworth (accompanied by his wife) be nominated for entry to the County draw for places at the Garden Party.

j) County Training Partnership had advised of a **Clerks Foundation Course** to be held in Great Aycliffe on 25th February.

Resolved That the Clerk be authorised to attend the course at a cost of £27.

k) Update on 2010/2011 Pay Offer - An additional item received from CDALC after the agenda had been sent out had been circulated to update members on the current position that Council employers had announced that an **annual pay rise** could not be awarded.

Resolved That the information be noted.

10.12.3 Other Correspondence

l) National Association of Local Councils Local Council Awards – Nominations were required by 31st March.

Resolved That the information be noted.

m) St. Andrew's Methodist Church - An additional item had been circulated after the agenda had been sent that needed consideration prior to the next meeting due to the timescale for the works. The Church had applied for funding for landscaping works to the rear and side of the Church but as the area to the rear was landlocked they would like permission from the Parish Council to access the area via Parish Council owned grazing land currently leased to Mr. Robinson. The Church had checked that Mr. Robinson could make other arrangements for his horse for the period required which was likely to be the first 3 weeks in March. Members suggested that a high fence may deter youths from climbing onto the area once cleared.

Resolved That St. Andrew's Church be granted permission to access the area stated via Parish Council owned land for the purpose of the works set out.

10.13 Coxhoe Community Partnership: A joint meeting would be arranged in February to discuss street furniture in the Front Street and lighting and improvements to St. Mary's Church yard as previously agreed. County Councillor Morgan advised that the County Council would be providing heavy duty columns in the Front Street that had hanging basket brackets and fixtures for Christmas decorations. Confirmation had been provided that the Parish Council would be responsible for the baskets and decorations once installed and the Councillor thanked the Clerk for her expediency in this matter. Two of the columns would be capable of having portable Closed Circuit Television cameras attached and consultation was ongoing with the Police as to the best places to site these for maximum surveillance and minimum disruption to traffic during installation. The Chair stated that this was great progress and thanked the County Councillors for their work in this regard.

The Clerk advised that the Parish Council had not received any further communications from the County Council regarding the requests for the litter bin and litter picking in the Living Churchyard, the provision of computer classes in Coxhoe, and the development of a website for the Parish Council and would chase progress on these as time allowed. Councillor Mrs. Hepplewhite had advised that there were six people interested in the computer classes to date. The Leisure Centre Manager had confirmed at the joint meeting to discuss anti-social behaviour on 18th January that a system was adhered to regarding the reporting of incidents. The agenda for the Partnership meeting of 6th January had been circulated but the meeting had been cancelled due to the heating break down at Landsdowne House. The Youth Room Partnership agenda for 21st January and minutes of 3rd December had been circulated, as well as a projects update at 25th January 2010.

Councillor Mrs. Hepplewhite updated that the designs were in place for the Living Churchyard; Memorial Garden lights were to be adjusted for a better effect; agreement was being sought for £7k remaining in the budget to be used for improvements to the Memorial; there was a shortfall of £2364.50 for the Village Hall internal doors, and an overall deficit of £999.17 once side doors were

added and if an application for Coalfield Regeneration Trust funding was successful; and articles for the Coxhoe Chronicle were required by mid February. She updated Members on the details set out relating to Cycle Routes – Stage 2, 3 and the final stage; and on the Youth Room Partnership and current activities, advising that it was hoped to provide junior sessions in future to provide continuity. She asked that the County Councillors investigate whether the County Council had an “empty houses officer” and invite them to the joint walkabout meeting if there was one. County Councillor Mrs. Plews advised, however, that the issue of empty houses had been discussed at the County Council that day and was being dealt with.

Resolved (i) That the information be noted and responses be awaited from the County Council with regard to litter picking and provision of a litter bin in the Living Churchyard, computer classes in Coxhoe, and assistance with development of a new Parish Council website; (ii) that the meeting to discuss street furniture with the Community Partnership be linked to the meeting in connection with lighting to the rear of St. Mary’s Church and be arranged for February 2010.

10.14 Quarrington Hill Village Partnership: The agenda for 25th January and minutes of 30th November had been circulated. Bob Watts, the Chairman of the Partnership, was present and updated that Neil Sleeman of Platinum Physiotherapy Personal Training had submitted a presentation at the Partnership meeting and the Partnership would help in any way possible. He was targeting over 40s suffering lower back pain and carrying out sessions at the Leisure Centre for £15 for an eight week course which was mainly NHS funded and included a free exercise ball. The newsletter would include an article to advertise this. The youth group had completed their rock climbing course and this had been a great success. Youth leaders were applying for funding for further equipment including screens. The play park lease was almost ready to sign and had been sent to the insurance company by the solicitors to make sure that there was no additional indemnity that the Partnership was not aware of.

Resolved That the information be noted.

10.15 Crowtrees Heritage Group: The agenda for 14th January and minutes of 26th November had been circulated.

Resolved That the information be noted.

10.16 Tarmac Liaison Group: A meeting in December had been attended by Councillor Pounder who provided an operational update and advised that the Cold Knuckles Quarry application had reached fruition and there was to be a biodiversity day on 19th February.

Resolved That the information be noted.

10.17 Web Statistics: had been circulated for the period 21st December 2009 to 25th January 2010.

Resolved That the information be noted.

10.18 Finance:

10.18.1 **Budget Update:** An account summary had been circulated that showed income and expenditure for the year and current balances reconciled against the latest bank statements. Details were circulated of the budget for 2009/2010, with income and expenditure and the variance against each budget heading to the end of December and the Clerk went through the budgetary comparison information in detail. Central Services was still 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. Looking at the variance at the third quarter and known committed expenditure, balances overall were about even when forecast to the end of the year. The position during the month had been assisted by winter seasonal spending reductions and receipt of the second quarter’s VAT reclaim. The third quarter would be done during January to assist the position further and bring these completely up to date. The Chair added that NEDL had sent a cheque for a wayleave agreement backdated for six years to a previous Clerk’s address and this had been passed to him for onward transmission to the present Clerk for banking. This would also mean a receipt of £82 per annum for future years. A

Member requested that the Parish Council purchase water jugs and glasses for use at meetings. B. Watts left the meeting.

Resolved That the information be noted and the Clerk be authorised to purchase water jugs and glasses for use at meetings.

10.18.2 **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:

Creditor	Reason	£
Viking Direct	Printer Cartridges	105.60
Northumbrian Water	Supply to Quarrington Hill Allotments	84.86
CDALC	CILCA Mentoring Course	170.00
Zurich Insurance Co.	Premium for Additional Items added to policy	48.80
3 Mobile	Broadband & Mobile December	32.25
M. Forster	Clerk Salary and postage	

10.19 Planning Applications: County Councillors advised that they would continue to lobby for the streets on the Hellens Development to be named in accordance with the lost street names that they had passed on from the Coxhoe History Group to the relevant Officer and to have the mock level crossing gates installed. County Councillors Morgan and Mrs. Plews then left the meeting. Parish Councillors commended the brilliant job undertaken by the County Councillors and agreed that the Chairman write to express the Parish Council's gratitude in this respect. Details had been circulated of planning applications that had been determined under delegated authority from 21st December 2009 to 26th January 2010 and of applications received since the last meeting. An extension of the deadline for consultation had been requested from the County Council for application 991 Erection of Detached Two Storey Dwelling with Attic Accommodation including provision of 2 vehicular parking spaces for existing dwellings at Land to Rear of 15 and 16 Front Street East in view of a number of comments received from Members. These included that if a back street application were to be approved it would create an inappropriate and unacceptable precedent and that previous applications had been rejected up The Avenue and Co-Operative Terrace; that whilst the application was next to a detached house built next to the Village Hall, the existing dwelling next to the Village Hall had been approved because it had a partial open aspect to the frontage and so did not create a precedent for back of terrace development; a previous application for building at the back of the first terrace opposite the bus stand had been refused for the size of the area and this may be refused and encourage objections from the residents in Petterson Dale for similar grounds; and other applications had been refused at application and appeal stages and the Parish Council should object to such developments. Members reiterated that backland development should not be supported and that the application should also be objected to on the grounds of highway safety as the access / egress was too tight. It was questioned whether there may be insufficient car parking spaces for such a development in the area and that this would exacerbate the highway safety further. It was considered that this would create an unacceptable backland precedent that would adversely affect the character and appearance of the area and should be objected to. **Councillor P. Dodsworth declared an interest** in application ref 019 for a Change of Use and Conversion of Office / Training Centre Building to a five Bedroom Dwelling at Station Road East and took no part in the discussion or decision on that item, Councillor Dunn taking the Chair during its consideration.

Resolved (i) That the Chairman of the Parish Council write on behalf of the Parish Council to express gratitude for the excellent work undertaken by the County Councillors for the area; (ii) That the information on delegated authority decisions be noted; (iii) That the information on planning applications 947 at Petterson Dale and 019 at Station Road East be noted; (iv) That with regard to application 991 for a detached two storey dwelling at land to rear of Front Street East, the Clerk advise the County Council of the Parish Council's objections and ask that they be taken into consideration in determining the application.

10.20 Date of Next Meeting: Wednesday 24th February 2010 at 6.45 p.m. in Landsdowne House.

10.21 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.

10.22 Photocopying and Printing Quotation Comparison

10.23 Co-op and Village Hall Car Parks

10.24 St. Mary's Churchyard

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

The meeting closed at 9.35 p.m.

Signed on 24th February 2010 as a true record of the meeting:

Cllr. P. Dodsworth (Chairman)

Cllr. S. Dunn (Vice Chairman)