



Delivering Quality Services to
Coxhoe & Quarrington Hill

Coxhoe Parish Council

Meeting	Monthly
Date	Wednesday 23 rd March 2011
Time	6.45 pm
Venue	Landsdowne House, Coxhoe

Minutes of the proceedings of the monthly Coxhoe Parish Council meeting held at 6.45 pm in Landsdowne House, Lansdowne Road, Coxhoe, on Wednesday 23rd March 2011.

Present: Councillor S. Dunn (in the Chair) and Councillors 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 Mr. J. Hepplewhite (Chair of Coxhoe Community Partnership).

- 11.45 Apologies:** Apologies for absence were received from Councillors P. Dodsworth (Council had accepted apologies as he was working away for a few months) and Mrs. C. Wigham.
- 11.46 Members' Declarations of Interest:** had been declared by Councillor K. Pounder in EDRC AAP items and Councillor D. Smith in Sanderson Street.
- 11.47 Sport and Leisure Facility Review Consultation:** Parish Councils within the EDRC AAP area and Shincliffe and Sherburn had been invited to send representatives to discuss the potential closure by Durham County Council of Coxhoe and District Sports Centre. Councillors J. And Mrs. P. Hudson of Shincliffe Parish Council, Councillor Mrs. C. Luke of Fishburn Parish Council, Mr. L. Oliver of Trimdon Parish Council, and a representative of Sherburn Parish Council, were in attendance. The Chair outlined the County Council's consultation and advised that a couple of meetings open to the public had been held in Coxhoe and an Action Group formed. The Group (Future Leisure in Coxhoe (FLiC)) had two sub-groups, one dealing with publicity and communication by identifying current uses and the difficulties closure would cause and further uses that could be undertaken; and the other looking at business planning of how the centre could be retained as a community facility and what needed to be done to ensure this. The group included representatives from Coxhoe Parish Council and Coxhoe Community Partnership and was supported by the local County Councillors and professionals involved in the leisure industry, health care providers, and people from clubs who used the facilities e.g. Coxhoe United.

Other councils had been invited to this meeting to see if there were any further ideas or anyone with any helpful skills that could assist from their communities. 525 people had completed a form devised by the Action Group which was being analysed to ascertain current use. The results showed the importance of the Centre on health and fitness. It was important that Parish Councils in surrounding areas communicated with the public and got them to complete the consultation responses on the County Council website. Fliers had been produced for school children to take home and consultation forms could be collected from and returned to schools. The Chair of Coxhoe Community Partnership provided the representatives present with a leaflet that could be used as a poster in facilities such as Post Offices or shops, in newsletters, and on noticeboards to spread the word. Details of the figures quoted in the County Council's report and the rationale used for the suggested six Centres for potential closure were given. The Chair advised that Durham County Council would be asked to provide some funding if a community group could be set up to take over the running of the sports centre. The representatives from other Parish Councils outlined action that had been taken in their communities and suggested further actions such as contacting CDALC, other Members of Parliament (Roberta Blackman-Woods was already involved), and Groundwork to see if they could provide any assistance. The representatives were asked to leave their contact details in order that the Action Group could keep

them informed and seek their further assistance. The Chair thanked the representatives of other Parish Councils for their attendance and then the representatives left the meeting.

The Parish Council had received, via the County Durham Association of Local Councils, the questionnaire provided as part of the consultation exercise to stakeholders. This should be passed to as many people as possible for completion and return to the County Council to let them know the strength of feeling in the community. Members agreed that a response on this should be deferred until the Action Group knew better what could be done and how they could progress things. The response deadline was 26th May. The County Councillors outlined that the County Council had to make hard decisions due to cuts in funding from Government. There was £60m less available for services and not all areas across the County would be affected by the closures of sports centres so it was extremely important that a viable option be put forward to save the Coxhoe and District Sports Centre. Keeping the centre open was of paramount importance to the local County Councillors. The Chair commended County Councillors Morgan and Mrs. Plews for serving their community well.

An invitation had been received to attend a Community Development Trust Workshop/Training Session at a cost of £27 per delegate. The importance of attendance was recognised in view of the potential for a Community Development Trust to be set up to assist with retaining the Sports Centre in Coxhoe. There was, however, only one person able to attend the date set. The Clerk added that details had been circulated of meetings on the future development of outdoor sports facilities and Members should attend if possible. She had sent the agreed response on that consultation and a response objecting to the closure of the crèche facilities at the Leisure Centre.

Resolved (i) That the information be noted and appropriate representatives of the Action Group contact the representatives of other Parish Councils who had expressed an interest in assisting the process of retaining the Sports Centre at Coxhoe; (ii) That consideration of a response to the Sport and Leisure Facility Review Consultation questionnaire be deferred until the Parish Council meeting to be held 27th April; (iii) That Councillor Pounder attend the Community Development Trust Workshop/Training Session and report back to the Parish Council and Action Group and that the expenditure of £27 from the Parish Council Member Training Budget be agreed.

11.48 Questions from the Public: There were no questions from the public.

11.49 Police Report: The Police report had been circulated for 18th February to 17th March 2011. M. Ogilvie had been called away from the meeting.

Resolved That the Police Report be noted and displayed on the village notice boards.

11.50 Minutes of Monthly Meeting held 23rd February 2011 had been circulated.

Resolved That the minutes of the last monthly meeting held on 23rd February 2011 be approved and signed as a true record.

11.51 Matters of information: (1) There had still not been a response from the Clean and Green Manager on the query with regard to whether the County Council's routine litter pick schedule still included picking **litter in St. Mary's Churchyard**. **(2)** There had been no further information received regarding the land ownership of the **rough land adjacent to the allotments at Quarrington Hill** with a view to the Parish Council procuring this to provide additional allotment sites. County Councillors confirmed that there was nothing further to report with regard to the potential sale of allotment land by the County Council and whether this affected allotments at Coxhoe or Quarrington Hill. **(3)** Councillor Dunn, the Clerk and Assistant Clerk were meeting an Officer from Durham County Council 31st March regarding potential **Asset Transfers**. **(4)** The replacement **seat at The Grove** was yet to be ordered and monies set aside would be carried forward to the 2011/12 budget. **(5)** **East Durham Leader** had advised that clarification on their budgets was still awaited. Arrangements for Louise Johnson, the Manager, to submit a presentation had therefore been deferred to the April Parish Council meeting. **(6)** A further meeting in connection with **CCTV** had been held 10th March and it had been explained that a review of CCTV was being carried out across the County. The current position with regard to uncertainty of the future arrangements for the Leisure Centre would have an effect as it had been hoped to link the cameras to the computer there to enable monitoring to take

place. The money had been earmarked and the project deferred pending the reviews of CCTV and leisure centres. A further update was to be received from the County Council in July when things were clearer. **(7)** Letters of support had been sent on the two **planning applications** as requested at the last meeting. **(8)** Questions had been added to the household questionnaire for Parish Plan 2 on the importance of **salt bins** and the Chair of Coxhoe Community Partnership had been advised. **(9)** The Clerk had asked the **Limestone Landscapes** Programme Manager to submit a **presentation** to the Parish Council at its June meeting. **(10)** A cheque and accompanying letter for the financial **donation** agreed for **Coxhoe Youth Room** via Coxhoe Community Partnership had been prepared for signature.

Resolved That the information be noted, the outstanding resolutions be actioned and progress be requested on those issues raised with other parties.

11.52 Speed Visors: The Clerk advised that there had been no further information received since the site meeting held 10th February at Quarrington Hill. Councillor Pounder had requested that this matter be discussed. He stated that he queried the explanation from the County Council regarding the Steetley Terrace visor not being able to be turned to face southbound traffic. It had been stated that this would not allow the required distance of 120m to monitor as this could not be met due to the bend in the road. This had been accepted on site and the rota that had previously been circulated had been agreed, with visors being moved four times per year. Councillor Pounder was, however, querying the distances having carried out some research with the other visors installed at Quarrington Hill and Coxhoe. The Chair suggested that as Councillors needed to undertake work themselves to assist with the Clerk's excessive workload that Councillor Pounder raise this with the speed visor provider.

Resolved That Councillor Pounder contact Varitext with his query regarding the distances required for monitoring of speed visors and chase up the data requested from the first site of the visor at Quarrington Hill; and also contact Gerry Jones at the County Council to chase up the information he had requested on site regarding an estimate to have the footpath at Quarrington Heights widened at the two furthest speed humps to enable bollards or small barriers to be introduced to prevent vehicles mounting the footpaths whilst trying to avoid the humps; and report back.

11.53 Poor State of Footpath behind The Grove: A resident had contacted a Parish Councillor to ask whether anything could be done to improve this footpath which was collecting water due to a hollow in the path. The Chair asked that Councillors where possible direct queries straight to the appropriate authorities.

Resolved That County Councillor Morgan take this matter up with the County Council.

11.54 Coxhoe Community Partnership: County Councillor Mrs. Plews left the meeting. Responses on the possibility of hearing aid induction loop and assistance with broadband were awaited. The alarm providers of Landsdowne House had not yet been contacted nor assurance sought that the Parish Council could continue to use the offices to progress the installation of broadband but these matters could be taken up following the meeting in connection with potential asset transfers. The Clerk updated that the Insurance Company had advised that the Parish Council had no responsibility or insurable interest in the History Group's equipment so the Group would have to make their own insurance arrangements. The cheque and accompanying letter for the Village Hall doors had been prepared for signature at this meeting. The agenda for 2nd March and minutes of 2nd February had been circulated. The Partnership updated that Limestone Linx should be completed shortly and gave details of plans for expansion. A Member suggested that the Parish Council should assist the Partnership in their work towards saving the Leisure Centre at Coxhoe; by way of allowing use of the photocopying facilities free of charge and a financial contribution. Members agreed that this matter be added to the agenda for the next Parish Council meeting to meet the necessary notice requirements for potential expenditure. The Chair of the Partnership advised that money would be available from the Partnership.

Resolved (i) That the information be noted; (ii) That resolutions re further information from the County Council in connection with the possibility of the provision of broadband and a hearing aid induction loop at Landsdowne House being awaited; and that the alarm providers at Landsdowne House be contacted to ascertain whether the alarm line could be used and if it couldn't that the Clerk look at having a phone line and broadband installed if assurance was provided from the County Council that the Parish Council could continue to use the offices at Landsdowne House; be followed up at the appropriate time following the meeting in connection with potential asset transfers; (iii) That the suggestion of a financial contribution to Coxhoe Community Partnership to assist them with their endeavours to save Coxhoe Leisure Centre be discussed at the next Parish Council meeting.

11.55 Quarrington Hill Village Partnership: No agendas or minutes had been received.

Resolved That the information be noted.

11.56 Crowtrees Heritage Group: Agenda for 24th March and minutes of 24th February had been circulated.

Resolved That the information be noted.

11.57 Planning Applications: Details had been circulated of planning applications that had been determined under delegated authority and those consulted on by Durham County Council from 22nd February to 21st March.

Resolved (i) That the information on delegated authority decisions be noted; (ii) That the Proposed Revised Route for Public Rights of Way for Old Quarrington and Cold Knuckle Quarries – Review and Extension – be noted; (iii) That application Ref. 168/FPA – Erection of Detached Dormer Bungalow at Land at Cosa Nostra, Vicarage Terrace, Coxhoe be noted.

11.58 Correspondence for Information: Items circulated for information during the month included EDRC Area Action Partnership Board agenda for 2nd March and minutes of 5th January; Northumbria in Bloom Community Event 9th April; Update re Number of and Areas Covered by Neighbourhood Wardens; Neighbourhood Warden Monthly Report February; Seminar on Climate Change and Carbon Reduction (The Chair advised that he would be grateful if a member of the Future Leisure in Coxhoe group could attend as he was unable to as he would be working away); Overview and Scrutiny Review of Area Action Partnerships; County Durham Partnership Newsletter Quarter 1 2011; NALC E-Bulletins of 18th February and 4th March; Royal Garden Party – Results of Draw from Nominations; DRCC Managing your Community Building Training Events (Councillor Pounder was attending and would report back as appropriate); Durham Constabulary – Out of the Blue Newsletter; EDRC AAP Local Councils Committee – agenda for 15th March, minutes of 18th January and request via CDALC for better attendance at meetings.

Resolved That the information be noted.

11.59 Finance:

11.59.1 **Budget Update:** A financial account summary had been circulated that showed the balance at the end of the last meeting and income and expenditure during the month and the balance at the end of the month. A budget summary had also been circulated. This showed spend against budgets to date. There were no significant changes to variances which had been explained previously. Outstanding commitments for invoices not yet received for work carried out during the year would be carried forward to the appropriate budget headings for the next financial year.

Resolved That the information be noted and the appropriate adjustments be made to add outstanding commitment amounts to the relevant budget heads for the financial year 2011/12.

11.59.2 **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 during the month. The Clerk advised that cheque 460 for £80.00 agreed by Council at its meeting held 26th January 2011 would not be issued as the second hand computers could no longer be acquired. The accounts would be adjusted accordingly to cancel the £80.00.

Resolved That all payments presented be signed and paid:

Creditor	Reason	£
CIT Vendor Finance (UK) Limited	Rental Landsdowne House Copier 1/4/11 to 30/6/11	133.20
Total Business Group	Landsdowne House Copier copies Feb-Mar (£151.22) + Village Hall Copier contract 28/2/11 to 27/5/11 (£46.80) + Staples for LH Copier (£68.76)	266.78
Total Business Group	Stationery and Paper Trimmer	99.73
T P Gardens	Grass cutting at walkways (March)	255.00

Creditor	Reason	£
Quarrington Hill Community Centre	Refreshments for Parish Plan 2 public launch at Quarrington Hill	31.50
Coxhoe Village Hall Association	Rent of Hall for Parish Plan 2 public launch at Coxhoe	80.00
Coxhoe Village Hall Association	Financial Assistance for Village Hall Doors (DCC £500 + CPC £232.75)	732.75
Coxhoe Community Partnership	Section 137 Contribution for Coxhoe Youth Room (litter pick)	200.00
3 Mobile	Broadband & Mobile February	20.27
M. Forster	Clerk Salary March and reimbursement postage and six months expenses (Oct to Mar)	
Post Office Limited	HMRC PAYE / NI contributions Jan to Mar 2011	

11.59.3 **Applications for Grants and Donations:** had been circulated.

(a) Diabetes UK was asking for assistance to help people with diabetes. As the Council had already donated £50 in the current financial year it was

Resolved That no donation be made.

(b) Haswell and District Mencap Society was asking for assistance to help the charity to inspire and support children and adults with a learning disability. Members considered that this was a worthy cause and helped people across the whole County, including residents from Coxhoe.

Resolved That a donation of £50 be made to Haswell and District Mencap Society under Section 137 expenditure.

11.59.4 **Letters of thanks:** had been received from Great North Air Ambulance, Butterwick House Children's Hospice and Coxhoe Village Hall Association for the Council's donations of £50, £50, and £1,000 respectively.

Resolved That the information be noted.

11.60 Appointment for Annual Contracts for 2011/12: Consideration was given to the detailed report of the Clerk, copies of which had been circulated, providing recommendations and reasons for entering into various contracts for the year 2011/12 (and subsequent four years in the case of the Council's insurance requirements). The correspondence had included a report on The Effectiveness of the Internal Audit Service; the Internal Audit Plan 2011/12; and the Insurance Policy for the year and details of the costs and advantages of entering into a five year fixed contract with Zurich.

Resolved (i) That the Clerk be authorised to make the appropriate arrangements and appointments for the following for the year 2011/12 at the costs set out in the report:

- Durham Citizens Advice Bureau – continuation of funding for outreach service at Coxhoe and Quarrington Hill
 - T.P. Gardens – grass cutting, maintenance, hanging baskets and planters
 - Smith of Derby – maintenance of Millennium Clocks
 - Gordon Fletcher as Internal Auditor
 - BDO LLP as External Auditors for the financial year ended 31st March 2011
 - Zurich for Insurance Services (and that the five year fixed contract at £831.30 per year be agreed);
- (ii) That the Council agree the Effectiveness of the Internal Audit Service and the Internal Audit Plan 2011/12;
- (iii) That the Council agree the Insurance policy circulated, including the Fidelity Guarantee requirements;
- (iv) That the Clerk be authorised to arrange prior payment with T. P. Gardens for hanging baskets and to liaise with the contractor to ensure that the baskets procured could be safely secured for example with shorter chains or different types of baskets arranged to sit on the stands in view of the height of the brackets on the street lamps installed by the County Council;

(v) That the Clerk be granted delegated authority to liaise with and employ T. P. Gardens to provide any additional flora in the Parish should there be any monies remaining in the hanging basket and planter budget after the usual requirements were allowed for.

11.61 Parish Plan: The Chair advised that the public launch consultation events at Quarrington Hill on 19th February and Coxhoe on 5th March had been well attended and lots of good issues had been raised. The organisation of the events by Officers of the Parish Council had been fantastic and there were some wonderful photographs on the website. He thanked Durham Rural Community Council for their scribes and stated that the events had been very effective. The questionnaires had been formulated and developed further at the Parish Plan 2 Steering Group. Due to the amount of work on the pressing issue of trying to ensure that the Leisure Centre at Coxhoe was retained, further work on PP2 had been deferred and the next meeting would not be arranged until after Easter. Members of Coxhoe Community Partnership stated, however, that as a lot of their projects were coming to a conclusion, meetings of the Partnership could be used for Parish Plan 2 progress; at least for the interim. This may also assist in involving more people in the Partnership and could contribute to the aim for more community involvement as funding would not be present for large works as part of Parish Plan 2. The Chair provided an update on a meeting that he and the Assistant Parish Clerk, whilst Chair of the PP2SG, had had with the traders on 14th March. The issues raised would be fed into the PP2 process and the meeting had ended positively with an agreement that communication would be two way. He summed up by stating that things were going well with very effective launch events having taken place; the website looking great; and the questionnaire having been improved by the Assistant Parish Clerk. It was important to keep the community involved and empower people to be active in the community.

Resolved That the information be noted and that Coxhoe Community Partnership invite representatives of PP2 Steering Group to their meetings as an interim measure until the issue of the Leisure Centre was resolved.

11.62 Update from Environment Committee: Details had been circulated of assistance that Groundwork could provide on the schemes they had been requested to look at, and costings for such. Comments had been requested as to how Members wished this to be taken forward. One response had been received, in the main stating that expenditure of over £9000 could not be justified at present as there was no budget for this. The response had suggested that the Council look to produce a condensed list of tasks that could be achieved in the lifetime of Parish Plan 2 once all the suggestions had been received and public consultations had been carried out. It was stated that the community should put forward their ideas for their priorities via the results from the questionnaires. Another Member stated that they considered that the noticeboards and signposting was probably the most important thing that should be progressed. Groundwork should be asked to look at the street scene and suggest positions, consult with Durham County Council and provide designs to choose from. Members discussed this further, with some Members considering that there should not be any financial commitment until PP2 results were analysed and the public's priorities ascertained; and other Members considering that the funding for the noticeboards and signposting on the Front Street should be committed and a contract entered into with Groundwork to carry out these works at this stage as this matter had been discussed a few years ago and had been part of the Parish Plan 1 process. The matter was put to the vote and it was agreed that the funding for the noticeboards and signposting be committed and that Groundwork be asked to proceed with those works, with the remainder of the schemes to be deferred for consideration along with all results from PP2 public consultations.

The Clerk advised that Julie Anson from Durham County Council Regeneration had asked the Parish Council for an update on the scheme put forward for regeneration benefit if the planning application for nine dwellings at Lowfield Bungalow, Foundry Row, were to be approved. She had advised the Assistant Parish Clerk that Durham County Council would design a landscaping scheme at The Green to the front of the proposed application site, carry out procurement by tender, and project manage the scheme. If the scheme was up to £15,000 then it should be able to be paid for by Section 106 monies but Durham County Council Planners needed to be convinced that it was proceeding. The Clerk suggested that the Parish Council work with Julie Anson on a scheme up to £15,000; with Durham County Council designing and carrying out the scheme in consultation with the Parish Council. Councillor Mrs. Hepplewhite advised that she would pass details of the scheme for this area that had previously been consulted on.

Resolved (i) That Groundwork be asked to carry out the appropriate works to provide the noticeboard and signposting scheme in the Front Street at Coxhoe at a cost of £1874.00; (ii) That consideration of all other schemes quoted for be deferred and these be consulted on as part of the consultation on the communities' priorities for Parish Plan 2; (iii) That DCC Regeneration be advised to proceed with a landscaping scheme at the Green at the front of Foundry Row up to £15,000 utilising Section 106 monies in consultation with the Parish Council and be provided with details of the scheme previously consulted on for that area.

11.63 Date of Next Meeting: Wednesday 27th April 2011 at 6.45 p.m. in Landsdowne House.

11.64 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.

11.65 Co-op and Village Hall Car Parks:

11.66 Sanderson Street: Councillor D. Smith declared an interest in this item and left the meeting.

The meeting closed at 8.50 p.m.

Signed on 27th April 2011 as a true record of the meeting:

Cllr. P. Dodsworth (Chairman)

Cllr. S. Dunn (Vice Chairman)