

Minutes from Meeting held on Monday, 26th February 2024
Headland Parish Council

Members Present: Samantha Lee, Shane Moore, Michael Jorgeson, Howard White, Patricia Andrews, Andrew Hay, Julian Wenman, Amanda Smith, Ann Turner, Michelle Ellett.

Clerk: Michelle Ellett

1. **Apologies:** Martyn Wright and Anne Marie Waters.
2. **Declaration of interest:** 5.5 – SL regarding events around Elephant Rock due to having coffee wagon.
3. **Appointment of Vice Chair:** SL proposed Shane Moore and this was seconded by PA.
4. **Minutes:** The minutes from Monday, 29th January 2024 were accepted as a true record.
5. **Matters Arising:**
 - 5.1 **Update on Bob the Gardener recognition (AS)** – A letter of recognition was sent to Bob in December from the Parish Council. AS asked if anyone had contacted HBC as they have a recognition service. A copy of our letter to be forwarded to HBC.
 - 5.2 **Sponsoring of new bins (MW)** – At the last meeting, it was agreed to purchase 2 new bins and MW offered to contact organisations to sponsor them. Due to apologies being received from MW, item to be forwarded to next meeting.
 - 5.3 **Update on Big Town Tidy Up (SL)** – MJ gave an update on where bins were being placed. They will be monitored and, if abused, will get withdrawn.
A member of the public wished to thank Andrew Hay for all the work he puts in litter picking each month. It was agreed to look at dates for a Big Tidy Up for the next meeting.
 - 5.4 **Update on Heritage Status (SM)** – SM said a member of the public had asked about the public consultations that were held by Sarah Scarr about a refresh of the Headland Conservation Heritage Plan. The findings were to be discussed at the next Planning Meeting and, following that meeting, the document would go out for public consultation. Discussion ensued about members of the public having access to the document. It would be published on HBC website and SM to ask if it could be sent to Headland Parish Council where we can put it on our website.
 - 5.5 **Update from SL meeting with Ian Gardiner HBC events around use of Elephant Rock space (SL)** – SL had a meeting Ian Gardiner from HBC around her coffee wagon and this led to a discussion around Elephant Rock, what it can be used for and any future plans for it.
Ian Gardiner said his department were responsible for events on Elephant Rock (Band Stand) and said not a lot had happened there for quite a while but now wanted to make the most of the opportunity. A Press Release was going out inviting community organisations to utilise the space. It was hoped to run a

programme of activities from Easter to the end of Summer (weather permitting). There was no budget but a tender had been put out for catering concessions and the money from that would be reinvested into events at Elephant Rock. A new member of staff had also been appointed. If any organisations were interested in using the space, they could contact Ian (ian.gardiner@hartlepool.gov.uk) and it would be managed in an effective way.

Ian had had a conversation with Joe Franks who attended a previous meeting. Joe was happy to help but no plans had been agreed as yet.

Ian gave an update on the timeline for maintenance work on the Borough Hall. It was not planned to fully close the Borough Hall but to work around the maintenance work planned. AS asked if there would be a charge for community arts projects/organisations using the Borough Hall/Elephant Rock. Ian confirmed that this would be looked at on a case-by-case basis. Ian said discussions were in the early stage regarding events on Navigation Point and, if successful, these could be expand further afield but Ian confirmed that the space on the Headland was open to members of the public, businesses, community organisations and he would make it as smooth and as financially viable as possible as it was important for the space to be used. SL thanked Ian for attending the meeting to give an update.

5.6 Update on work on sea wall from Parish Chairs Liaison Meeting at HBC (SL) – SL had hoped that MD was in attendance. SM said work will start in March for 12 weeks depending on weather and tides. The coping stones were not being re-designed but it was how they were fixed. The coping stones that had been replaced, the fixing of them had been altered and they have stayed so they would be changed as and when they were damaged. Savings had been made on making the alterations so discussions had taken place around putting rock armour there to reduce noise and vibrations to solve those problems.

6. Finance Report

Report was circulated to members.

7. Clerk's Report

7.1 Update on Reclaiming VAT – VAT had not been reclaimed for a number of years. VAT can only be claimed for the last 3 years but Clerk to claim back as much as possible.

7.2 Minutes from Meetings within HBC – Clerk received lots of emails with Agendas/Minutes from the different Committees within HBC and wondered whether members wanted to receive these. It was felt that Councillors had enough work to do but Ward Councillors may be able to inform Headland Parish Council of anything of interest from them.

7.3 Update on Councillor Vacancies – Formal notification had been received that no requests for an election had been received, therefore arrangements to be made to co-opt to the 2 vacancies. 4 applications had been received. Arrangements for co-opting to be discussed.

7.4 BT Upgrade – Following enquiries, we were currently out of contract. The monthly fee was currently £44.95 but this could be reduced to £36.95 (saving £8 per month). Due to everything moving to digital, a new handset would need to be

purchased (reduced from £100 to £65) but this would then belong to the Parish Council. This would be a 2-year contract. Members agreed to the new contract. Chair thanked Clerk for the work she was putting in on reclaiming VAT and they would work together on preparing a Budget Spend for the new budget.

8. Planning Applications:

8.1 111 Durham Street – erection of a single storey extension. Any objections to be emailed to Clerk by Wednesday, 6th March.

9. Co-option of new members – to agree a best practice for co-opting new members onto Headland Parish Council. SM to bring policy paper for discussion (SM)

As stated earlier, no requests for an election had been received, therefore a co-option policy was needed due to there being 4 applicants for 2 vacancies and Headland Parish Council not having a policy in place. SL had contacted the other Parish Councils in the region. Wynard is a new Parish Council who have gone through the co-opting process and have a policy whereby the 4 applicants would complete an application form and they would be invited to the Parish Council Meeting to explain why they want to be member of the Parish Council and Parish Councillors would vote on the applications which would be open and in public. Dalton Piercy and Greatham have a policy whereby they delegate to a sub-committee of 3 or 4 members who then choose which candidates go forward and the full Council would then decide. It was recommended to go with first co-option policy due to it being a more open, transparent and fairer way.

Candidates would be emailed an application form and a copy of the Headland Parish Council's Standing Orders and, once returned, there would then be a full discussion. Councillors would declare if they knew the candidate but would not be excluded from the vote.

Members voted and it was a unanimous decision that Headland Parish Council adopt the more transparent policy.

10. Repair of Flagpole (HW)

A quote had been obtained from Harrisons which was £1,230, however, we can reclaim the VAT and Rob Daley from HBC may collect it which would reduce the quote to £695. To stop the problem recurring, the flags need to be taken down over the winter. HW was nominated for this and this was seconded by JW.

It was also asked to repair the flag on the Parish Council office.

11. Flowers for baskets on Northgate (HW)

HW asked if flowers could be purchased for the baskets on Northgate which the businesses look after. There are also planters but it is where we put them. It was suggested up to £200 with flowers for the summer and bulbs in the winter.

12. Crumbling walls along the promenade (e.g. twin bank leading from the town moor to the promenade (AH)

AH asked who looked after the walls that were crumbling from the town moor to the promenade. SM agreed to have a look but the issue should be logged on the HBC portal.

13. Potholes (AH)

AH said there was lots of potholes and it was suggested they be logged on the HBC portal. The programme allocated February/March for resurfacing and it was a rolling programme for 3 years. The paving stones were also an ongoing issue. SM made notes but the public need to report as much as possible through HBC Customer Services.

14. Proposed community project – Natalie Sullivan

SM said there was great work that organisations such as Wharton Annex do and he introduced Natalie Sullivan who had ideas on whether this was something the Headland could benefit from.

Natalie said that other than activities at the Baptist Church, there was nothing community based. Wharton Annex offer things like the community kitchen where people learn to cook, a food sharing scheme, groups for the elderly, after school clubs, summer holiday clubs and subsidised trips and it was whether that could be replicated on the Headland. She said there was people willing to help but it was moving that forward.

Maxine Craig spoke about the coastal community project and the work with JRF in pulling a proposal together on what can be done on the Headland. She introduced a representative from the Joseph Rowntree Foundation who said the ideas suggested fit in with what JRF supports and could be included in the Headland proposal. Natalie to pass her details to JRF.

15. Police to be invited to future meetings (SL)

In relation to the anti-social behaviour problems on Marine Point, SL had been in contact with the Police and the PCSO Duffield had agreed to attend the next meeting to address frequent problems. Ward Councillor Brian Cowie said the Police were on top of the anti-social behaviour again, however, there was no members of the public from Marine Point to confirm this.

16. Correspondence

16.1 Emails from MP Jill Mortimer regarding Festoon Lighting (SL) – SL explained that an email had been received from MP Jill Mortimer's team regarding the festoon lighting. She noted that MJ and neighbours were opposed to the lights, however, the lights were very popular with members of the public. The lights had been fixed, thanks to Rob Daley and his team and SL explained that we were struggling to find a solution and whether finally, we can either draw a line on the matter or whether further action was needed.

Former Chair of the Parish Council, Jim Willson, said the lights were approved by the Parish Council in February 2022 and this was documented in the Minutes and they were installed in March 2023.

SL confirmed that moving forward lessons were to be learned but members should vote on whether the lights should remain in the current format which are switched on from 6-9pm. Members voted and it was a unanimous decision, with MJ abstaining from the vote, that the lights remain.

No decision had been made to extend the timings of the lights but appropriate lines of communication would be followed moving forward in the future.

17. Councillors Items for future agenda

- Police to be invited to future meetings.
- Dates for Spring Tidy
- Conservation Management
- Co-option process.

18. Ward Councillor Update:

Councillor Brian Cowie said the sea wall had been explained by SM.

In relation to St. Helen's new build, the green light had been given and although no date had been confirmed, it was expected to start late 2025 and completed in 2026.

Although it was not in the Parish Council area, Admiral Court had been on fire again but there were complexities in relation to the building. The roof collapsing may help the case but a report was being awaited from the Fire Brigade.

19. Public Questions:

- 19.1** Heugh Breakwater – survey to be undertaken on Thursday and, once analysed, work will be undertaken and completed to standard.
- 19.2** Clarification asked on bank signatories.
- 19.3** Carnegie Library up for lease
- 19.4** St. Mary's Church being mothballed but not closed. Bishop had been informed.

20. Date of next meeting: Confirmed as Monday, 25th March 2024 at 6.45pm in Croft Room, Borough Buildings.

The meeting adjourned at 8.15 pm.