

Chair of the Council:
Cllr Stephen Ashfield
3 Geoffrey Avenue
Durham
DH1 4PF



High Shincliffe

Sherburn House

Shincliffe Village

Shincliffe

Parish Council

www.shincliffeparishcouncil.org.uk

Clerk:
Richard Ormerod
Helvellyn, 14 Geoffrey Avenue
Durham
DH1 4PF
clerk@shincliffeparish.gov.uk

Minutes of the Meeting of Shincliffe Parish Council held on Thursday 18 April 2024 at 6pm in St Mary's Church Hall, Shincliffe Village, DH1 2ND.

1	Record of attendance: <i>Councillors Stephen Ashfield (in the Chair), Ann Callaghan, John Charters, Bill Clatworthy, & Sunny Moon-Schott.</i> Also present: Richard Ormerod (Clerk) and County Councillor David Freeman.
2	Apologies for absence: <i>Apologies were received and accepted from Cllrs Brian Fairlamb & Janice Gorlach.</i>
3	Declarations of interest and dispensation requests: None.
4	Public Participation: A member of the public wished to speak on item 11.
5	Draft Minutes of the Meeting of the Council on 21 March 2024: <i>Resolved: The minutes were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.</i>
6	Planning and licensing applications: A discussion took place on the application for stables at Bank Foot. A discussion took place on the application at Shincliffe Mill. <i>Resolved: That the Chairman write a letter to Shincliffe Mill's owners requesting further details of their plans.</i>
7	Chairman's update: Cllr Ashfield thanked members for their efforts on the Neighbourhood Plan and traffic speed campaigns. Cllr Ashfield reported back to members on a recent meeting of the National Association of Local Councils, at which "bee corridors" were discussed. Cllr Ashfield reported on correspondence received from a local resident on highway issues including speed limits in the parish. It was thought that the council was already campaigning on the issues raised and that the resident's requests were very much in line with parish council policy. A discussion took place on the possibility of declaring the play park an Asset of Community Value under the Localism Act 2011. <i>Resolved: To receive the report.</i>
8	Meeting of the Finance Committee on 16 April 2024: The committee had recommended that the financial position be noted and the end of year figures be presented to the internal auditor. <i>Resolved: That the financial position be noted and the end of year figures be presented to the internal auditor (proposed by Cllr Callaghan, seconded by</i>

	Cllr Charters). The committee had recommended that members be permitted to claim reasonable travel expenses when using their own vehicle (45p per mile) or public transport (on production of tickets/receipts) for council business. Resolved: That members be permitted to claim reasonable travel expenses when using their own vehicle (45p per mile) or public transport (on production of tickets/receipts, not for first class rail travel unless cheaper than or the same price as standard class) for council business (proposed by Cllr Callaghan, seconded by Cllr Charters). The committee had recommended that that all funds in the current account earmarked as reserves, and all funds in excess of the council's budget for 2024-25, be moved to the reserve account, in order to give clarity to why funds were being held as reserves and to aid budgeting in the 2024-25 financial year. Resolved: That that all funds in the current account earmarked as reserves, and all funds in excess of the council's budget for 2024-25, be moved to the reserve account (proposed by Cllr Callaghan, seconded by Cllr Charters).
9	Financial matters: The Clerk had circulated a report on the council's end-of-year financial position. At the 31 March 2024 the council had £22,360.13 in the current account and £13,904.51 in the reserve account. A discussion took place on the possibility of including comments on Scribe where there are large discrepancies between planned and actual expenditure. A discussion took place on whether Scribe can record income against a cost code normally used for expenditure, so that grants received can be recorded against their purpose. A discussion took place on the discrepancy in the accounts between the budgeted precept and the actual precept received. It was thought that this was a simple typographical error. Resolved: That the council note the current financial position. Resolved: That the Clerk enquire as to whether the Scribe system can record income against a cost code, so that the play park maintenance code can show a more realistic representation of which funds came in and out. Resolved: That the Clerk correct the figures in Scribe relating to the council's precept for 2023-24. Resolved: That the council pay the outstanding invoices with the exception of the DCC invoice for summer bedding, the Clerk to clarify whether it is correct.
10	Grant applications: The Chair led a discussion on the Community Ownership Fund. Resolved: That the Clerk email the link to the Community Ownership Fund website to members.
11	Shincliffe Village Play Park: The latest safety inspection by Durham County

	Council had been circulated to members. It was noted that a group of students from East Durham College had been seen using the play equipment with a member of staff, and concern was expressed about the large number on a piece of play equipment at the same time. Members thought that the party from the college must have been there as part of a lesson. Resolved: That Cllr Gorlach write to the Principal of East Durham College to ascertain the purpose of the students' visit. A member of the public thought that better signage was needed at the entrance to the play park. It was noted that Cllr Clatworthy and the Clerk had met with staff from Savill's to discuss the play park and the extension of the least beyond 2035. It was noted that Hamish Smailes from Savill's would be meeting with the Dean & Chapter in the coming weeks and would raise this issue. Resolved: That the Clerk obtain the weight limits for the play equipment. Resolved: That Hamish Smailes from Savill's be sent the feasibility report. A discussion took place on whether the benches in the park should be moved to an area of the park which receives more sunlight.
12	Rights of Way in the parish: It was noted that County Councillor David Stoker was looking into the erosion of the riverside path. It was reported that the DCC Rights of Way Officers were unaware of any permission to close the footpath at Sherburn House, and had written to Sherburn Hospital about this. It was noted that the Dean & Chapter would be meeting with Savill's in the near future to discuss the riverside path. The Clerk and Cllr Clatworthy had reiterated to Savill's the offer of financial help from the parish council in restoring the path. A discussion took place on the need to top up te walks leaflet holders. Resolved: To organise a joint meeting with DCC and the PCC after a response is received from the Rights of Way Officer(s). Resolved: That the Clerk retrieve the walks leaflets from storage.
13	Communications: A discussion took place on the possibility of purchasing a router and 24GB SIM card in order to have broadband internet in the church hall. A discussion took place on the council's social media presence. The Chair reminded members to discuss policy via email and not WhatsApp. Resolved: That Cllr Callaghan update the document, including changing dates and names on committees.
14	Policy on pet ownership at Sherburn House: A discussion took place.

	Members thought that a more flexible policy might be helpful to residents. <i>Resolved: That the Chair request a joint meeting with the Parochial Church Council.</i>
15	Training Policy: It was noted that the council already had a policy but that CDALC had circulated a model policy which differed in several ways. <i>Resolved: That the issue be decided at the Annual Meeting of the Council.</i>
16	Motions on notice: None.
17	Date and time of next meeting: <i>The next meeting of Shincliffe Parish Council will be the Annual Meeting of the Council on Thursday 16 May 2024 at 7pm in St Mary's Church Hall, to follow the Annual Parish Meeting of Electors at 6pm.</i>

Signed as a true record:

Cllr S Ashfield (Chair)

Date:
