

## Minutes of the Special Meeting of Great Lumley Parish Council

Held Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> November 2021 at 6.30 pm

Great Lumley Community Centre

### Present:

Cllr Alan Bell (Chairman)

Cllr Phil Heaviside

Cllr Carol McAllister

Cllr Hayley McAllister

Cllr Neil Bains

Cllr Hyleen Wood

Cllr Jeremy Whiting

Parish Clerk Christine Colledge

### In Attendance:

4 members of the public

#### 1. Apologies

Apologies for absence were submitted from Cllr Gary Brown, Cllr Peter Brown and Cllr Anne Lambton

#### 2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest

#### 3. Public Comments

A member of the public asked when the public consultation regarding the community centre would take place. The Chair said this would be discussed on item 4 of the agenda.

A member of the public asked about the water supply to cemetery, the Chair said that this would be discussed on item 7 of the agenda.

A member of the public raised concerns that the stile on the footpath to Lumley Thicks is too high and as a dog walker he has issues with access. Cllr Alan Bell will raise this and said that a kissing gate may be a better option, however there would be financial costs to consider.

#### 4. Community Centre

##### 4.1 To discuss and agree to move forward with asset transfer – Cllr Alan Bell

Cllr Alan Bell stated that since the newly elected Council and meeting in May 2021, contact was made with Durham County Council regarding joint administration and ownership, this was not favourable by DCC and the only option is for asset transfer.

Carbon Neutral Funding may not be available for a year but could still be an option.

Councillor Neil Banes will discuss the survey.

DCC have advised that if a public works loan was going to be used then the interest rates are currently very low, Cllr Phil Heaviside will explain further in the next item.

There was a vote to go ahead with the asset transfer, it was proposed by Cllr Alan Bell, seconded by Cllr Phil Heaviside and agreed by All.

##### 4.2 To discuss and agree to move forward with the public works loan (receive up to date figures on interest rates and repayments from DCC) – Cllr Phil Heaviside

It was explained that previously when a public works loan was looked at the interest rates were 2.7% and a £700K over 25yrs would cost the Parish £42k per year.

The current interest rates now mean that the same loan would cost £36k per year the chart below shows the current rates.

	Period	Interest Rate	Annual Payment (1 instalment)
£700,000	25 years	2.05%	£36,065.11
£700,000	30 years	2.11%	£31,729.66
£900,000	25 years	2.05%	£46,369.43
£900,000	30 years	2.11%	£40,795.28

It was explained that previous costs to refurbish the building were estimated at £1.2m and post covid it is now £1.4m because of the increase of supplies etc. Therefore, if a public loan is to be used it is now the right time to go ahead.

It was explained that quantity surveyors estimated the overall costs to demolish and rebuild with half the footfall would be £1.4m and to demolish and rebuild with the current footfall would be £2.5m. As the centre is already overstretched size wise a smaller building would not be an option and because of the financial costs a refurbishment would be the best option. The options will be in the survey.

Cllr Neil Bains explained that DCC have assisted in putting a survey together which will include questions regarding funding. There will also be questions regarding the usage of the centre. Once any amendments have been made and approval from DCC has been confirmed the survey will be up and running. The survey will be online, paper copies to households will be distributed and also public consultation meetings.

Cllr Phil Heaviside said that including £400k from DCC 106 funding, an additional loan of £900k would be needed for a refurbishment. A meeting with the architect took place to try and reduce the costs where possible. A Carbon Neutral Grant would assist massively towards the costs, however this is not guaranteed.

Cllr Alan Bell stated that there are surplus of funds currently in the Parish that stand at £128k but there are bills outstanding which would take up £5k or £6k and year on year costs. Potentially there could be a surplus of £100k which could be added into the funds for the refurbishment.

Cllr Jeremy Whiting asked if the interest rates for a loan would go up during its term, but it was confirmed that it would be a fixed rate loan. Cllr Phil Heaviside stipulated that now is the right time to borrow as interest rates are so low and there could be a possibility of them rising in the future would could jeopardise the possibility of taking out the loan.

Cllr Alan Bell asked if there were any further comments or questions and a member of the public asked if the building was to be refurbished would the building need to be fully closed. Cllr Alan Bell explained that because of the asbestos there would need to be a closure for this to be removed.

Cllr Phil Heaviside proposed to go ahead with the asset transfer and to borrow £900k over 30yrs to complete the refurbishment. The removal of the asbestos removal will take up £260k so a public works loan is the only option to go forward.

A member of the public asked if there was an option to pay off the loan in a shorter period, Cllr Phil Heaviside that this was not possible. Cllr Alan Bell explained that this part of percept would not rise as loan repayments are currently already built in.

Cllr Phil Heaviside proposed to go ahead with the loan and to refurbish the building subject to the outcome of the public consultation, this was seconded by Cllr Carol McAllister and agreed by All.

Cllr Carol McAllister and Cllr Hayleen Wood updated the committee with the current usage of the building, Gymnastics, Little Treasures, Guides, Yoga, and Toddlers are using the building and Brownies are to return soon. There are also plans in place for Durham Area Youth to run some activities on a Friday evening. Cllr Neil Bains said that the gym is running well.

## **5. Police Christmas Roadshow**

Cllr Phil Heaviside that he had received an email from Mark Lumsden of Durham Police requesting to visit with a mobile Christmas Roadshow, this would take place on the carpark on Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> December at 5pm – 7pm. They have asked for a donation of £150 and to provide hot drinks.

This was proposed by Cllr Alan Bell, seconded by Cllr Hayley McAllister and agreed by All

## **6. Bank Account**

Cllr Phil Heaviside explained that since the last Parish Clerk resigned that he has been the main account holder on the bank account and Cllrs Alan Bell and Cllr Jeremy Whiting are signatories. The intention now is to give Christine Colledge (the new Parish Clerk) full access of the bank account but Cllr Phil Heaviside will remain on the account, there will also be 2 additional new signatories which will be Cllr Carol McAllister and Cllr Hayleen Wood. This was proposed by Cllr Phil Heaviside, seconded by Cllr Alan Bell and agreed by All.

## **7. Water Supply to Church Cemetery – Cllr Alan Bell**

Cllr Alan Bell said that there have been numerous requests for a water supply in the cemetery. Because of previous vandalism it is suggested that a push top system would be better. It has come to light recently that people tending graves that a water supply is needed. Northumbrian Water and Durham County Council were both engaged with and no other option, a suggestion was made by the church warden to run a water supply from the community centre to the cemetery, a price for this from ALN Construction is £2k. Cllr Phil Heaviside said a water butt was not agreeable by the church. He also pointed out that the ownership of the cemetery is in 2 parts and the water supply will be in the Parish Councils ownership.

Cllr Alan Bell proposed to go ahead with the ALN Construction quote, this was seconded by Cllr Phil Heaviside and agreed by All.

## **8. Date and Time of Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be held on 7<sup>th</sup> December 2021, 6.30 pm in the Community Centre.

N.B Cllr Phil Heaviside said that a price for one key fits all bollard is £450 plus VAT and

also the playground gate has also been priced at £450 plus VAT, this will be discussed at next meeting.

The meeting closed at 7.20pm

Signed:

Date: