

SADBERGE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting held at 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday 10th January 2012 in Sadberge Village Hall

Present: Councillor Tate [Chair]
Councillors Heath, Heywood, Schott and Vickers

In attendance: Councillor Brian Jones Alastair Mackenzie – Clerk

1. Apologies

Apologies were accepted from Councillors Best and Glew, and the reasons for their absence were approved.

2. Declarations of interest in items on the agenda

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Discussion with representatives of Banks Renewables

3.1 The representatives of Banks Renewables were unable to attend this meeting. It was agreed to invite them to attend the next meeting. **ACTION:** A Mackenzie

3.2 The Sadberge Village Hall Association is applying to the Banks Community Fund for a grant

4. Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the meeting on 6-Dec-2011 were agreed to be a true record of the meeting.

5. Matters arising

5.1 Phil Haynes (Darlington Borough Council's Senior Arboricultural Officer) has said that the trees on the south side of Darlington Road opposite Berry Court do not appear to be dead or diseased. Darlington Borough Council believes that the trees are on land belonging to 13 and 14 Beacon Grange Park. The trees are in the Sadberge conservation area, so permission would be needed to prune or fell them.

The Clerk will write to the residents of properties near the trees – including 13 and 14 Beacon Grange Park – to let them know what Darlington Borough Council has said about the trees.

ACTION: A Mackenzie

5.2 The Clerk has will be away over the Queen's Diamond Jubilee weekend, so one of the Sadberge Parish Councillors will lead the beacon lighting party.

The Clerk will check the date when the beacon should be lit. **ACTION:** A Mackenzie

5.3 The Clerk has still to fix the supports for two of the trees on the bank at the north edge of the main part of the village green. **ACTION:** A Mackenzie

5.4 The Clerk has still to contact the resident of 11 The Orchard to discuss the idea of installing a light for the car park in the corner of The Orchard. **ACTION:** A Mackenzie

5.5 There was no news about Northumbria in Bloom.

5.6 There was no news about the Sadberge Summer Festival (which will take place on Saturday 7-Jul-2012).

5.7 There will be a Christmas tree recycling point just inside the entrance to Town Farm Field between Monday 9-Jan-2012 and Friday 13-Jan-2012.

5.8 The Clerk will contact Durham Constabulary to discuss the future of the Speed Watch activity. **ACTION:** A Mackenzie

5.9 There was no news about the North Villages PACT.

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- 5.10 There will be a meeting of the Darlington Association of Parish Councils (DAPC) in the Darlington Fire Station at 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday 24-Jan-2012. Councillors Tate and Vickers and the Clerk will attend this meeting.
- 5.11 The community composting facility needs to be tidied up. **ACTION:** A Mackenzie

6. Darlington Borough Council's budget

- 6.1 Darlington Borough Council is proposing to withdraw its support from all non-commercial bus services, including the #17 and #18 services through Sadberge.

The following points were made during the discussion:-

- Although the majority of Sadberge residents have access to cars, there is a significant minority who rely on the bus service. Loss of the bus services would force some of these people to move out of Sadberge.
- Public transport is important for keeping Sadberge as a proper, mixed community with an excellent community spirit.
- Loss of the bus services would lead to Sadberge becoming a bland 'commuter dormitory' village.
- Darlington Borough Council officers are doing an assessment of the impact of withdrawing the support for non-commercial bus services. The Clerk has, with the relevant residents' permission, provided Darlington Borough Council with the contact phone numbers of Sadberge residents who use the bus service.

It was agreed to encourage as many Sadberge residents as possible to attend the Talking Together event in the Dolphin Centre at 6 p.m. on Tuesday 17-Jan-2012. People needing lifts and people willing to offer lifts will be asked to meet at Sadberge Village Hall at 5:30 p.m. on 17-Jan-2012. The Clerk will send out a flyer to all Sadberge households within the next couple of days. **ACTION:** A Mackenzie

- 6.2 Darlington Borough Council is also proposing to stop giving grants to parish councils. Councillor Brian Jones pointed out that

- Darlington Borough Council receives £7M per year in Council Tax from rural wards. The current grants to parish councils amount to £35k per year.
- Parish councils deliver fantastic value for money.
- Each parish council needs to make its own case for continuing to receive a grant.

The following points were made during the discussion:-

- The strongest arguments for a parish council to continue to receive a grant from Darlington Borough Council are (a) withdrawal of the grant would have a demonstrable negative impact on residents and/or (b) the parish council is delivering services that would otherwise have to be delivered by the Borough Council.
- Looking at Sadberge Parish Council's budget, it is difficult to make a case on either of the above grounds.
- The bus service is more important to Sadberge than the parish council's grant from the Borough Council.

It was decided to take no action on the issue of the grant from Darlington Borough Council at present.

7. Wind farms near Sadberge

- 7.1 The s137 agreement for the Moor House wind farm should be signed within the next few days.
- 7.2 There was no news about the proposed Newbiggin wind farm.
- 7.3 There was no news from the Seven Parishes Action Group (SPAG).

Councillor Brian Jones left the meeting.

8. Chainsaw carvings

- 8.1 Councillor Heywood presented his suggested wording for an interpretative plaque. The Clerk will collate the Parish Councillors' comments on the wording. **ACTION:** All councillors
- 8.2 Councillor Schott will investigate options for getting the plaque printed.
ACTION: Councillor Schott
- 8.3 Councillor Schott has still to arrange to clean the carvings and treat them with suitable oil and/or preservative.
ACTION: Councillor Schott

9. Sadberge Renewable Energy Project

- 9.1 The installation work went well, and all of the 'phase 2' solar photovoltaic systems were registered in time to get the higher rate of Feed-In Tariff.
- 9.2 Darlington Borough Council has advised that the 'permitted development rules' only apply to dwellings, so (retrospective) planning permission will be required for the solar panels on the West Newbiggin Farm poultry shed.
- 9.3 It might be possible to get a few more solar photovoltaic systems installed during the first quarter of 2012, but this depends on a number of factors including the outcome of the court cases about the timing of the reduction in the Feed-In Tariff.

10. Planning

The Council approved the following planning application without comment:-

- 11/00785/FUL Erection of a first floor bedroom extension over the existing kitchen at Granary Cottage, Salter Carr Farm, Norton Back Lane

11. Payments

The Council approved the following payments:-

- Sadberge Summer Festival – North Tyneside Steelband £400.00
- Sadberge Summer Festival – Room hire for craft workshops £21.00

12. Correspondence

The Council noted the following correspondence

- The Tees Valley Rural Community Council (TVRCC) 2010/11 Annual Review.

13. Date of the next meeting

The next meeting of Sadberge Parish Council will be held in Sadberge Village Hall at 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday 7th February 2012.

Alastair Mackenzie
Clerk

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 10th JANUARY 2012

I hereby certify that these minutes are a true record of the meeting.

Signed: Councillor L Tate _____

Date _____

THE SADBERGE GUARDIANS

In 2009 three sycamore trees that had reached the end of their days were felled. Using prize money from Sadberge winning the Calor North England Village of the Year award in 2008, Sadberge Parish Council engaged chainsaw artist Tommy Craggs to create the carvings of the lady and the warrior. The third carving, the Saxon princess, was funded by donations from Sadberge residents. Together, the three carvings represent the history of the village.

Notes from Alastair Mackenzie

It's not totally true that the trees had "reached the end of their days". The residents of Tithe House asked for the trees to be removed because they had become too big, and Phil Haynes agreed that the trees were unsuitable for the location and were in poor condition. (The fourth sycamore tree was retained because it was in good condition.)

As far as I can tell, the trees were felled towards the end of 2009. The minutes of the Parish Council meeting on 3-Nov-2009 include a note that Phil Haynes was hoping to get the trees felled within the next two weeks.