

Minutes of meeting of Norham Parish Council held on 22nd November 2021

Those present were George Straughen (GS), Jim Greenwood (JG), Jim Blythe (JB) John Grahamslaw (JJG) and Dougie Watkin (DW). Cllr Glen Sanderson, Chair of Northumberland County Council, Colin Hardy (CH) local County Councillor, and one member of the public, Jim Gibson, were also in attendance.

AGENDA

11.21.1 To accept apologies for absence

Apologies were accepted from Sheelagh Hume and Alison Murphy.

11.21.2 To make any Declaration of Interest

None

11.21.3 To confirm Minutes of Previous Meetings

The minutes of the meetings of 27th September and 5th October 2021 were confirmed as accurate records and signed by the Chair.

11.21.4 Welcome to Cllr Sanderson

Cllr Glen Sanderson (CllrGS) was welcomed and thanked for attending. CllrGS outlined some of the initiatives that NCC was involved in, including those designed to help with communication, and those relating to climate change initiatives.

11.21.5 Matters Arising from Minutes

i Proposed Joint Neighbourhood Planning in Norham and Islandshire

No progress to report. After discussion CllrGS agreed to pursue the matter within NCC.

ii Lower Tweed Trail

The concept of the trail was explained to, and help sought from CllrGS to keep the trail in a fit state for walkers. CllrGS agreed to contact Neil Dawson NCC Senior Countryside and Green Spaces Officer)

iii Northumberland LED Street lighting/Undergrounding of cables

GS confirmed the roll out of LED had still not been completed in Norham. In addition, if undergrounding were to proceed new streetlights would be required in Castle Street. CllrGS agreed to contact Lynsey Sawyer and suggested best way to proceed at this stage would be a meeting with NCC and Scottish Power.

iv New Speed limits

GS explained that had been waiting very long time for speed limit on castle bank to be changed, speed limits within Norham village to be changed and a safe crossing point by the school. CH had chased NCC on this, but no further information had been forthcoming. Agreed CH would pursue again.

v Norham Development Trust

GS explained background and situation re RCEF feasibility study. Agreed that CllrGS would contact Nick Johnston at NCC. In addition, tourism issues were raised re promotion of inland villages as opposed to the already very busy coastal areas. CllrGS suggested we contact Nigel Walsh.

vi Electric vehicle Chargers

NCC are running a pilot scheme in 5/6 towns installing public EVCs. CllrGS will contact Nick Johnston.

At this point CllrGS left the meeting. He was thanked again for coming and suggested we invite him back next year to see what progress has been made on all fronts.

vii Play Areas

Installation has recommenced, though there will be some delays in completion of the Inclusive Orbit.

There was lengthy discussion with Jim Gibson who expressed unhappiness with the visual impact the new play equipment would have, that insufficient consideration had been given by NPC to the culture and heritage of the conservation area, and that insufficient consultation /communication with residents had been carried out. GS recognised that communication might have been better, but that Jim Gibson was the only person who had raised these points with NPC, the contract had been entered into and the equipment was in the process of being installed. Over £20000 had been raised by donation in a few short months and it was clear new equipment was wanted.

viii Public Conveniences

Agreed these should continue to be cleaned three times per week for the time being. Agreed chains need replacement or some other solution sought.

ix Village Map

The Osprey Company in Etal had indicated cost of c£1500 for a new map. After discussion agreed that this project should proceed. VLC to send examples of Osprey's work to councillors with a request for information/points of interest they would like to see highlighted on the map.

x NCC Draft Local Plan-De-allocation of Land

No change

xi Jubilee Field

Agreed that the Jubilee Field would undergo a refresh for the Platinum Jubilee and that the Trustees would meet to discuss this. Agreed that the repair works on the wall would be put on hold (as they had not yet started!) and those funds would be included in the refresh. Agreed that funding sources would be sought for new equipment e.g., benches/picnic tables/ outdoor equipment e.g., Community Chest. In addition consideration might be given to a Jubilee event in the field in the new bank holiday weekend. CllrGS had mentioned a new Jubilee Fund for small grants for this kind of event.

xiii Community Police Report.

It was reported that there has been 5 incidents and no crimes.

The police had also asked that it be reported that there had been a recent incident where a dog had killed a sheep, and it is the owner's responsibility to be in control of their dog. Dogs should be kept on a lead around livestock as this causes the sheep stress and can lead to them dying from shock. This can also cause issues with them breeding and can cause them to miscarry.

Discussion re speeding – CH will ask police for some high visibility speed checks.

xiv Norham 900

The BBQ and Bonfire had been cancelled due to concerns and anxieties regarding health and safety.

xvi Stackyard Lane.

Discussion re possible improvements. Agreed Jubilee Field refresh would be the priority for the time being. Costings would be needed once a plan had been formulated. Ownership needs to be investigated before the project proceeds. Still waiting to hear further from Diocese. GS will chase.

xv NCC Free Tree Giveaway

VLC has ordered 120 free hedge plants to be collected 24 January.

Finance

11.21.6 To review Payments and Receipts since last meeting

Payments from Current Account:

28th Sept S Broadbent £150 (WCs); 30th Sept Playdale £5817.42 (play equipment); 3rd Nov S Broadbent £150 (WCs); 4th Nov V Craig £600 (clerk's salary).

17th Nov Royal British Legion £30 (poppy wreath); 17 Nov D Gibson £1956 (Path works)

Receipts into Current Account:

19 Oct HMRC £1007.57 (VAT reclaim); 8 Nov Anon £1000 (donation re play equipment); 16 Nov NCC £1630 (path works)

11.21.7 To look at Bank balances in Current and Deposit Account

As at 22 November Current Account £19746.01; Business Account £ 743.23

11.21.8 To review system of Internal Control including Internal Auditor and Insurance cover/risk assessment Approved

11.21.9 To agree appointment of Internal Auditor for 2022-2023

Agreed that Roseanne Bennet of Greaves West Ayre would again be asked to act as internal auditor.

11.21.10 To set a Budget and Precept for 2022-2023

After discussion agreed that the precept would be set at £5500. Agreed that Support payments and Donations would remain at the same level as 2021-22. Admin expenditure would remain at (roughly) the same level as 2021-22. Noted that D Gibson had raised his costs to £1700 for path works. Agreed that (if uncompleted by April 2022) Jubilee Field and Village Map would remain as Special Projects.

11.21.11 To look at Planning Application decisions

Outline Planning permission: Land South of Border View: Granted

Query re Galagate-it is believed the development will start shortly. It would appear plans have changed since the parish council was last consulted., including access which was a material change. Agreed VLC would contact planning Dept to query lack of consultation.

11.21.12 To look at state of Roads and Pavements

Noted that the roadside path from Birchill to Norham station was becoming overgrown again, as was the path to Norham Bridge. CH will raise these matters with NCC.

11.21.13 Dates of Meetings 2022

Agreed

11.21.14 General Correspondence

None

Any Other Business (For information only)

Agreed GS should source a Christmas tree.

Date of next meeting: 24th January 2022