

The minutes of the Meeting of Acklington Parish Council held on 7.00pm on 7 September 2021 at Acklington Village Hall.

**PRESENT:** Cllrs S Ingleby (Chairman in absence of Cllr Newton), L Craig, S Malone, T Mezza, S Thorpe, J Whiteley

038/21 Apologies for Absence

Cllrs Barras and Newton

039/21 Disclosure of Interests

None received.

040/21 Minutes of Previous Meeting

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Council held 12 July 2021 were agreed as a true record subject to the following amendment:

a. Minute 035/21 – Referred to Cllr Malone in error, corrected to refer to Cllr Thorpe.

041/21 Report from County Cllr Watson

- The vehicle activated speed sign at the East end of the Village (near Togston) appears to be working. County Cllr Watson is still getting queries from residents about speeding traffic who are requesting help with this issue. County Cllr Watson has asked NCC for possible solutions. County Cllr Watson commented that one of the difficulties with reported speeding is that 95% of traffic may be within the speed limit but it is the 5% over the limit which people notice and report. Most speeding surveys measure the average speed of traffic not the speed of the fastest vehicles. The Parish Council agreed to accept responsibility for the new speed signs after the initial five year warranty has expired.
- The developer of the new estate at the West end of the Village did agree to erect speed signs at that end of the Village. The development now has two occupied properties and the developer should be asked to put the sign in place as soon as possible. Northumberland Estates agreed to pay for a speed sign for the other end of the village. The new development will be named 'Paddock View'.
- There have been traffic and parking issues connected to the Paddocks development in the centre of the Village, with vehicles parking on the grass and obstruction of the footpath. The footpath access has now been cleared and there is clear signage in place.
- County Cllr Watson was very disappointed with the outcome of the planning application at Barn Hill and the lack of support from some of his colleagues. Cllr Craig thanked County Cllr Watson on behalf of the residents of Guyzance for his support and hard work. The Parish Council noted that despite concerns in the Report from Highways about traffic and road safety, the Planning Committee dismissed these concerns stating that Highways raise similar concerns in all cases. Cllr Thorpe reported that the Planning Officer has implied that the application would have been refused if it had been on green field site. The Parish Council noted that the Conservation Area status clearly has no weight. The Parish Council also noted that although many of the recent planning applications refer to "much needed housing", properties at Guyzance have been taking on average three years to sell.

#### 042/21 Report from Clerk

The Parish Council received the Clerk's Report (as appended to the Agenda). The bank mandate has been processed and the Parish Council is being compensated by Lloyds Bank (£88). Airfields of Britain Conservation Trust would be very happy to supply and install a granite memorial to RAF Acklington. The charity will contact the Parish Council when one is available. The marketing company WalkersXChange are also trying to have the signs and marketing information corrected for Southfields Estate and will continue to do so.

#### 043/21 Finance

a) The financial summary, bank reconciliation and budget monitoring to 1 September 2021 was noted.

b) **RESOLVED** to authorise the following payments.

Supplier	Reason	Amount	Payment Reference
S Malone	Reimbursement for brush cutter hire	£257.60	21/22.10 (609)
C Lewis	Clerk's Salary and Expenses	£310.38	21/22.11
HMRC - PAYE	Clerk's Salary	£76.60	21/22.12
Coquet Pest Control	Wasp Nest	£50.00	21/22.13

c) The following receipts were noted.

Date	Payee	Reason	Amount
09/07/21	Lloyds	Interest	£0.10
09/08/21	Lloyds	Interest	£0.10
11/08/21	Lloyds	Compensation for issues with change to bank mandate	£13.00
11/08/21	Lloyds	Compensation for issues with change to bank mandate	£75.00

d) The Parish Council discussed the Precept and how this is affected by holiday lets. County Cllr Watson state that there are 471 known holiday lets in the area comprising Amble, Warkworth and neighbouring villages. Registered businesses do not pay Council Tax and so do not contribute to the Precept. They may pay business rates unless they are fall within the Small Business Exemption. In areas with 20% holiday lets, new builds are required to be for local use. However, Amble, Warkworth and area are not yet at 20%. The restriction only applies to new builds and not to existing buildings. The Parish Council noted that the Precept was raised to £8,000 last year after being kept static for a number of years. The Parish Council intends to raise the Precept gradually each year to avoid any large increases from time to time. Provision will need to be made for the play area improvements and for the Footpaths project.

#### 044/21 Planning

- a. 21/02287/FUL – Land South of Waterside Cottage, Guyzance – Convert and extend redundant Cow Byre to residential use (C3) for holiday let.

The applicant submitted a rebuttal to the Parish Council's objection, which was based on the number of existing and proposed holiday lets in Guyzance Village and immediate area. The applicant has also submitted a rebuttal to the issues raised by NCC Highways. The applicant is refuting that the PROW (Byway Open to All Traffic) should be formalised.

- b. 21/02512/FUL – Cloverfield Cavil Head Farm – County Cllr Watson offered to look at this application if it has not already been dealt with.

#### 045/21 Footpath Working Party Update

The Footpath Working Group is working with landowners to encourage collaboration to improve the surface of footpaths despite it not being their legal duty. Several landowners are now on board, for example, Northumberland Estates have agreed to improve Footpath 20. Coal Houses Farm has agreed to cut the hedges along Footpath 15 and to improve the surface.

The Brush Cutting Team has cut around seven stiles. The brush cutters are very good for high impact work, for example for short stretches under hedges or around stiles. Hiring the flail mower was a success: 3km was mowed by the team, including long stretches on two priority footpaths (9 and 10), as well as the Millennium Footpath, Cheviot Footpath and part of Bunny Lane. The Brush Cutting Team is also extending its reach to include short stretches adjacent to Highways/pavements where it makes sense to do this, for example, to link to newly cleared footpaths. The Team also carried out some work clearing the play area, and were very pleased to receive a thank you card from some local children.

The Footpath Working Group will be meeting to review the success with the flail mower and to look at how this could be improved further for future work, for example, by hiring it in the summer when it could be used up to ten or even twelve hours a day.

#### 046/21 Neighbourhood Plan

Cllr Ingleby thanked the Parish Council for assisting with delivery of the Neighbourhood Plan leaflets. There have been 61 responses to the questionnaire representing approximately 25%. There were no responses from businesses. The main themes identified were: maintaining the rural character of the parish; the community feel; the environment; the conservation area; protection for Guyzance against over development; traffic calming; and housing for locals. The following points were noted and discussed.

- a. Respondents identified the following things positive about the area: friendly; wildlife; dark skies; and proximity to footpaths and the coast.

- b. Respondents identified the following negative things: traffic speeding; poor road surfaces; narrow pavements within Acklington; overdevelopment with no improvements to infrastructure; poor broadband; no provision of allotments and small gardens; lack of street lighting to North Broomhill; lack of amenities; closure of the school; housing development changing the character of the village; too many holiday lets at Guyzance; suburban growth of Acklington; and through traffic to Amble.
- c. Residents suggested the following improvements to the area: improvement of biodiversity; wildflower verges; better public transport; extension of the 30 mph zone; faster broadband; control of holiday lets; a footpaths pamphlet; a shop; better conservation area control; more community events.

The Parish Council discussed the possibility of wildflower verges along the road to Broomhill. It was noted that these can be a lot of work. The verges are the responsibility of NCC Highways and not the Parish Council. NCC currently has a policy of only cutting the verges twice a year to improve biodiversity and has a statutory duty to mow a specified distance back from the edge of the road even if the rest of the verge is given over to wildflowers. The Clerk will contact Rotary Warkworth for advice as they have taken responsibility for some wildflower verges.

The next step is to establish a Neighbourhood Plan Team. A number of respondents expressed an interest in becoming more involved. The Parish Council expressed concerns that there will be insufficient interest and that it is a big commitment financially, and in terms of time and effort.

**RESOLVED** to hold a public event, ideally a Saturday Coffee Morning, at which people can get more information and express interest in joining the team. The Clerk will email NCC to ask for assistance with this from the NCC Neighbourhood Planning Team.

#### 047/21 Acklington Village Well/Water Pump

Cllr Whiteley has carried out extensive research through old Minute books (1894-2006), which Cllr Malone had located. Cllr Whiteley reported references to issues with the water supply as early as 1908. However, she was not able to find details of ownership. It is believed the water pump opposite the Church is owned by Northumberland Estates. The Parish Council discussed how best to proceed.

#### **RESOLVED:**

- a. Water pump opposite the Church – The Brush Cutting Team will trim around the water pump. Cllr Malone will contact Mr Davis and explain the Parish Council’s plans.
- b. Water pump opposite Morwick Road – Cllrs Malone and Whiteley will contact the Dairy Court residents adjacent to the pump. The Brush Cutting Team will trim around the water pump if residents are in agreement.

#### 048/21 Village Planters

The village planters have previously been informally planted by volunteers and councillors. Initially a survey of planters is needed and then plants can be purchased. Cllr Ingleby volunteered to coordinate efforts.

#### **RESOLVED:**

- a. Cllrs Ingleby, Thorpe and Mezza will survey the planters.
- b. The Clerk will write to Morrisons to ask for donations.
- c. To approve a budget of up to £150 for plants.

#### 049/21 Local Transport Programme Plan 2022/23

The Parish Council discussed transport issues in the parish.

**RESOLVED** to put forward the following three priorities to be considered for inclusion in NCC's Local Transport Programme Plan 2022/23:

1. Resurfacing and repairs to structural soundness of C100 from the Bridge to West Lodge, including the addition of a passing place at West Lodge.
2. Extending the 30mph zone along the road to HMP Acklington.
3. Resurfacing the U3088.

#### 050/21 Custodian Trustee Deed of Appointment

The Village Hall Committee has submitted a draft Deed of Appointment for approval and signature and have asked the Parish Council to resolve for two councillors to sign this. However, since providing the draft, the Village Hall have received advice that they may not have the authority to appoint the Parish Council as Custodian Trustee. The Village Hall Committee is seeking confirmation from the Charity Commission. The Clerk confirmed that as custodian trustee the Parish Council would only be responsible for holding the title to the land and property and would have no management or other responsibilities.

**RESOLVED** Cllrs Newton and Ingleby as Chairman and Vice-Chairman to sign the Deed once the Village Hall have confirmed that this can proceed.

#### 051/21 Items for the next Agenda

- Cllr Mezza reported on the play area repairs required. Cllr Mezza will begin work on the minor repairs.
- Policy Review

#### 052/21 Date of Next Meeting

Tuesday 2 November 2021 at 7:00pm.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 9:15pm.