

# THIRSTON PARISH COUNCIL

At the Parish Council Meeting held at Felton Village Hall on Thursday 1 November 2018.

**Present:** Cllrs E Davidson, D Green, H Lindley, J Marshall and J Secker.  
The Parish Clerk in attendance – Mrs L Hamlin

**66 Apologies for absence –** Cllr S Allan. County Councillor Sanderson

**67 Declarations of interest in items on the Agenda –** Cllr Green – Requested agenda items – Light in Eshott Village.

**68 Public Questions (max 5 mins per person) –**

Vic Brown and Phil Cotton attended the meeting to raise their concerns on the implications on the rights of way in the Parish due to the proposed A1 dualling scheme. Of particular concern is the existing circular route which goes from West Thirston upstream along the river, crosses the river by a footpath on the west side of the bridge and joins St Oswald's way on the north bank, from which one can return past the parish church to Felton. It is a pleasant short (about 2 miles) circular walk, only spoilt by having to cross the A1. If this crossing could be made safer, then more people would feel happy about doing it, and it could be promoted and well used. As they plan to keep the path from West Thirston towards Elyhaugh by routing it under the two bridges, it would be very easy to link it to the existing footpath over the river, which could be separated from the traffic by a crash barrier or even something more structural.

It was agreed that the PC should (along with Felton PC) meet with Highways England to ensure these footpaths and those within Felton Parish are protected. It was also agreed that the Clerk, along with Felton PC's Clerk, put an item in The Bridge asking for evidence of use of the footpaths. Thirston Clerk to liaise with Vic Brown and Felton Clerk on this and try to get Mike Jeffries of NCC involved.

Clerk

**69 The minutes of the meeting 13 September 2018** were signed as a true record.

**70 Matters Arising therefrom:**

- a) Notice Board – update. NCC has agreed to undertake the works to cut down the posts for the noticeboard and this will be undertaken in the next few weeks.
- b) Bin request for Wintrick Road – update. NCC has agreed that the bin can be emptied from the proposed new location between East and West Thirston and the Clerk has contacted Mr Brown to ask him to re-site the bin.
- c) Felton Bridge Meeting – discussion on parking issues – still waiting on a date from Felton PC
- d) Warning Signage for the nursery – NCC has stated that no signage can be installed for warning of the nursery as the one showing children holding hands can only be used for schools and playgrounds.
- e) Parish Council meeting venue in 2019 – The Clerk has written to the nursery with dates for 2019 and is waiting on confirmation that these are okay with the nursery and then will cancel the Village Hall bookings.
- f) Street furniture complaint update – Cllr Marshall has spoken to the residents concerned and they are very appreciative of the work to be done with the noticeboard. He explained about the green grit bin not being an option due to concerns about the contractors not filling a green bin. They were keen to see if the existing one could be moved round the corner. NCC has confirmed that this is acceptable and contacted the Clerk to inform her that the bin was empty so could be moved however on inspection the next day the bin had been filled. NCC is arranging for this grit to be removed and they will relocate the grit bin and arrange for it to be refilled.
- g) Speed strip request for West Thirston – NCC has not yet undertaken this survey.
- h) Bus stop sign replacement of – no further action has been taken with this. The Clerk to chase up, however NCC has stated that in general they are behind in the arrangements for NCC/Parish Councils to take over the management of bus shelter information.
- i) Auditor situation for 2019/20 – The Clerk has spoken with Mr Canner who is happy to take on the role of auditor.

Clerk

Clerk

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## 71 **Report by County Councillor**

The Clerk reported that CC Sanderson would not be able to make the meeting however he has been very helpful and easily contactable by telephone on some urgent issues over the last week for which the Clerk is grateful. CC Sanderson submitted the following report:

Generally things are moving along pretty well - the Local Plan process is on time and the change from Arch to become Advance Northumberland is almost complete. Changes include a much greater focus on Northumberland rather than the buying of property elsewhere in the NE, and improving economic growth along with a greater emphasis in assisting creation of affordable houses for sale and rent.

In my own area of responsibility we are beginning to look at a new Waste Strategy which will take us through the next decade. Fifteen years or so ago we sent 95% of rubbish into Landfill whilst today that figure is around 14% with 36% being recycled and the rest being turned into electricity at the Teeside plant. There is much to do and I want us to look at glass recycling and the option of introducing kerbside collection. This would be more convenient for many and reduce our Landfill even more.

Our winter services teams have ready been out on several shifts following the recent cold weather and we have topped up almost all grit piles and sand boxes now. We are adding 6 new gritters to the fleet which will keep our gritting lorries up to date and in better shape.

We are in the middle of the current round of new structural patching where we cut out a stretch of potholes and lay a large patch of much stronger material. Whilst we will still need to put in "slodges" of tarmac when we need to react quickly to new potholes this is a practice which we are greatly reducing. I hope that we will be able to increase the amount of new resurfacing next year and to help us with that we have a new mechanical paver which has just arrived.

We have a thumbs up for the Bridge and money allocated so this job is going to be done. And those awful railings replaced hopefully within the next two years!!

A delegate from Felton PC raised at the recent Parish Council conference at County Hall grass verge cutting at each junction into Felton - we have looked at this and it turns out that the West Moor junction into Thirston is being cut to the old Castle Morpeth BC specification which the other one up at Acton is cut under the Alnwick DC spec - thus the difference. We will need to look at this although it will be a shame if we have to cut less coming into Thirston.

On grass verge cutting we have achieved all cuts by July this year compared to October and later in the previous regime. I want to keep this high standard going along with the better grassweed spraying we did this year - despite the dry summer and then the rain in late summer which made dormant weeds flourish suddenly.

Budget time is with us and I am preparing our new parking strategy which will be published next week. There will need to be some unpopular decisions made by the Council but I am determined to maintain and improve ordinary everyday frontline services.

And we have just launched our anti-littering campaign. I wanted to find some new money and a fresh impetus to highlight the littering of road verges in particular and to try to bring a change in behaviour. There is advertising on the back of buses and at petrol stations. We currently spend thousands of pounds picking up litter which could be much better spent. Let's hope it has some effect.

## 72 **Report back from Meetings and Representations on behalf of TPC**

**Recreation Field Meeting** - Cllr Marshall reported that the meeting was good. RoSPA report was reviewed, minimum maintenance required and a programme of works has been drawn up. Chippings under swings have moved, which is to be expected, more chippings needed but not until spring. Hard Court Surface breaking up – need to look at options for resurfacing.

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The potential user survey results have come in re the rec field building. A number of organisations would use a facility on the rec field especially if it includes toilet access so looking at putting forward a project plan for a structure.

**Cemetery Meeting** – Remembrance Day arrangements were finalized. Insurance requirements for Health and Safety issues of working in graveyards were looked at and a training course may be required.

## 73 Potential Projects

a) Footpaths/Rights of Way – outstanding issues raised with NCC re bridge concerns on FP4

b) Landscaping – work has been undertaken on the rockery to tidy it up but contractor states it needs some more work doing in the next week or two to complete it. Clerk to speak to contractor about who will be planting bulbs in the rockery.

Clerk

c) Neighbourhood Plan Update – NCC has provided the Clerk with details of consultants to contact from the local area. Clerk waiting to hear back on availability and costings and whether they are willing to undertake the initial work at reviewing the draft Policies following the consultation on the Vision Statement and Objectives. It was agreed that the Clerk can go ahead and look to appoint a consultant and that fees will be taken from the ring-fenced money for the Neighbourhood Plan but this will be reimbursed once the grant is applied for.

Clerk

## 74 Planning:

### a. To report on any planning decisions:

18/02714/LBC – Felton New Bridge - removal, refurbishment and reinstatement of the parapets - GRANTED

### b. Planning applications pending:

17/02923/VARYCO - Burgham Park Golf Club - Vary Cond 13 - remove holiday restriction – objections submitted – to be decided by the Local Area Council

18/01510/VARYCO - Felmoor Park, East of A1 - Vary 2 and 9 relocate pitches to avoid tree removal – No Objections

18/02877/FELTPO - The Limes, Eshott Village - 4 x trees for removal, 3 x trees for pruning and dead wooding and remaining for thinning out – waiting documents on this

18/03414/FELTPO - Woodlands House, Pipistrelles - Prune trees

18/03398/PRUTPO - Snowdrop Cottage, Eshott - Crown lift and prune

18/03411/FUL - The Croft, East Thirston - Erect Falcon chambers and aviaries – a site visit was undertaken by Cllrs Lindley and Secker. NCC contacted the Clerk to ascertain what the PC's view is now on the application as NCC is going to recommend refusal based on the impact on the character of the surrounding area. The Parish Council has no issues with this application and cannot see that it will have any impact on the character of the surrounding area or the neighbours. Clerk to relay this to NCC via the planning portal.

Clerk

18/02154/FUL - Land West of Eshott Heugh Farm - steel framed building

18/03534/FUL - Bywell Shooting Range - retro - retention of ground butt

18/03562/FUL - Bywell Shooting Range - Form mound, widen paths, erect 16 shelters

### c. Planning Issues

**Canine Centre acoustic barrier update** – The Clerk contacted NCC as the barrier being installed is not having any positive impact on Mr Young at West Moor. The response from NCC was *“I can confirm that the fence isn't actually finished. It doesn't meet the required dimensions and I have advised the owner that it needs to be increased in height and length so that it does. The location and size of the fence has been assessed by our Public Protection department and found to be acceptable so, provided it is constructed in accordance with the approved details, I can take no action. Once the owner has provided me with dates by which the fence will be completed I will revisit the site and inform you.”*

**Update on trees behind Northumberland Arms** - NCC have spoken to the owner and the works will be carried out shortly. This being because we are not yet in the planting season. NCC will keep the PC updated on this case and when the works have commenced.

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**New Beer Garden – Northumberland Arms** – The Senior Enforcement Officer has come back to the PC following the complaint of lack of communication in relation to this issue. “Thank you to your email. I apologise that you have received no response from Joe in relation to the issues raised by a local resident. Although there has been little by way of an update to you Joe is actively pursuing this matter. None the less I am very sorry for the delay and following this review Joe will be in contact to provide an update. Enforcement can take time so inevitably there will be occasions when there is little to update on. That said we are committed to providing a monthly update and will continue to do so until matters on the site are resolved.

In relation to the beer garden planning permission is not always required if the land where the beer garden is located is within the same planning unit and therefore the same use class. As the land is separated from the pub by a road we will need to determine if planning permission is required. Joe has a meeting with a Planning Officer next week to discuss this and he will contact you by the end of next week with the outcome of the meeting.

In relation to the fire escape door being open, blocking of the main road and glasses being left in the beer garden unfortunately these matters are outside of the remit of planning and the Council as a whole, however we will mention it whilst in discussions regarding the beer garden.”

This response was 13 days ago and since then no further information has been forthcoming despite the meeting having taken place by now with the Planning Officer and Enforcement Officer.

## 75 Services

- Cutting back of hedge/tree around 30mph sign on entrance to village – still outstanding, Clerk to chase this up with contractor. Clerk
- Repairs to drain close to Glenshotton – still outstanding. Clerk to chase up with NCC. Clerk
- Pot Holes – Road through West Thirston, Glenshotton, A1 to Eshott – all repaired. Clerk
- Water from Wall at The Peth – NCC is investigating this again. Clerk to pursue. Clerk
- Clearing of steps at The Peth – NCC has recently cleared the steps but with the leaves falling required to be done again, however this will be in the automatic winter programme.

## 76 Requested Agenda Items:

- Data Protection Documents – It was agreed that despite some of the references not being relevant to Thirston Parish Council it was agreed to adopt the Privacy Notices as they stand following the recommendation of NALC. However in relation to the Consent Form the Clerk to check with NALC as reference is made to communications by email/mobile phone/text but there is no section to include this information. Clerk
- Draft Budget 2019/20 – The draft budget was slightly revised and the Clerk to circulate amended version. The deadline for the precept request is 25 January 2019 so there are two more meetings to make any amendments before NCC require the precept figure.
- Field of Hope – vegetation has been cut back and removed by Willie Ryle. Clerk to write a letter of thanks. Clerk
- Light in Eshott Village – there is one street light in Eshott - 2TC - located on the main road through Eshott. When Eshott was developed the residents elected for no street lighting. At that time the original neon light on the main road was not illuminated but some 5 years or so ago NCC switched it on. The neon that had a soft yellow light has been replaced by glaring white LED. The lamp stand has been moved from inside Chapel ground to outside on the street verge and is much taller. Complaints from the immediate neighbours that this light is shining into bedroom windows and downstairs front rooms. Cllr Green has consulted with the affected residents, three requested that the light be turned off and two are not bothered either way. Clerk to request the light be switched off. At the same time Clerk to request details of what is happening with the lights around the rockery in West Thirston, especially as the residents did not want so many lights in this location. Clerk  
Clerk

## 77 Correspondence:

- NCC – Settlement Boundary and Housing Allocations – NCC has written stating that they

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propose to including the following in the draft Local Plan in relation to Thirston Parish boundaries – “a boundary to West Thirston is proposed informed by the current boundary in the Morpeth Local Plan, but updated to reflect any new permissions if necessary; No housing allocations are proposed”. Councillors are happy with this but did raise concerns about the inclusion of the “but updated ...” part of the statement.

- NCC – Council Tax Support Consultation – Questionnaire was completed at the PC meeting for the Clerk to complete on line. Clerk
- NCC - Refuse Collection Routes – new routes and days have been proposed for certain areas within the County but this does not affect Thirston Parish.
- NCC – Council Tax Base 2019-20 letter – NCC cannot advise on the definitive council tax base until late January due to a decision on the proposed reduction in the level of council tax support not being reached until the consultation process has been undertaken. Clerk
- NCC – Precept Request – deadline 25 January 2019.
- Royal Mail – Scam Mail poster – to be put in Notice Board
- Contact from concerned resident re airfield accident – to be covered under urgent items with other issues relating to the airfield.
- Emails in relation to planning application for Falconry – comments noted.
- CAN – donation request – no donation made.
- GNAA – donation request – It was agreed to donate £25 as per the budget. Clerk

**Emails Forwarded:** NALC Newsletters

**To Circulate:** CPRE Newsletter

## 78 Finance

- (a) **Financial Summary** was reviewed with no issues and the current balance stands at £14,249.97. No invoices have been received from Felton PC to date for Cemetery or Recreation Field payments which will amount to at least £2,000.
- (b) **Payments** - The following list was put before members and was approved:

| Payments this meeting: |  |        |
|------------------------|--|--------|
| 0001                   | L Hamlin – salary and expenses             | 387.96 |
| 0002                   | British Royal Legion – Wreath and donation | 30.00  |
| 0003                   | Viking Direct – Stationery                 | 135.53 |
| 0004                   | Compete Weed Control                       | 270.00 |
| 0005                   | Great North Air Ambulance                  | 25.00  |

- (c) **Receipts** – None
- (d) **Issues with TSB Banking** – All money has been transferred from TSB to the Lloyds Bank account. The Clerk was contacted by TSB to complete a Customer Satisfaction Questionnaire. The Clerk has also been in contact with Lloyds as the Parish Council has not been set up for internet banking as Lloyds stated they had not received the relevant paperwork despite it being in the same envelope as the request to set up the account. Eventually after speaking to Customer Complaints the lady there found the relevant paperwork and has stated internet banking should be set up within the next 10 days. Lloyds has apologised for any inconvenience.

## 79 Urgent Items

A number of issues have been raised in relation to the airfield by locals.

1. Two aircraft crashes have taken place in the last two weeks. One crash has resulted in contamination of a landowner’s land. This landowner has contacted NCC to advise on this issue and report the incident however NCC state they are not the responsible authority for the airfield and referred the landowner to the CAA. On speaking to the CAA the landowner was informed that it is the responsibility of NCC as they have the responsibility of licensing and controlling activities at the airfield as it is an unlicensed airfield.
2. A report has been received that the airfield is burying industrial waste materials on the activity track and this has been reported to the Environmental Team at NCC with

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little response as again NCC state this is not their responsibility.

3. Runway lighting has been installed on the North-South runway at the Airfield despite numerous statements from the operators that no lighting would be installed. A planning application has not been submitted covering the installation of runway lights. This has been reported to NCC and they are going to meet with the operators of the airfield next week.
4. Anne-Marie Trevelyan has requested a meeting with the Parish Council Chairman, Clerk and concerned members of the public in relation to the airfield application and how the application was handled by NCC and subsequent issues that have arisen. A date has been proposed and the Clerk is waiting on confirmation that the Village Hall is available.

Note. It is of considerable concern to the Parish Council that NCC continue to deny responsibility for activities at the airfield particularly as the CAA have made it clear that NCC is the Lead Authority for this unlicensed airfield. This issue needs to be resolved.

### **80 Items for next agenda**

Revised Budget Review

Chairman closed the meeting at 10.00pm

Date of Next meeting: Thursday 13 December 2018