



Minutes of (Virtual) Meeting held on Monday 22 February 2021 via Microsoft Teams

Present; Councillors J Oliver (Chair), S. Armstrong, V Gibson, A. Saunders, C Kennedy, D. Finlayson, J. Benson, County Councillor A. Sharp, M. A. Smith (Clerk).

1. Introduction and Welcome.

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. Apologies for Absence.

All in attendance.

3. Declarations of Interest.

None received.

4. Public Questions.

None received.

5. Minutes of the previous meeting held on Monday 28 January 2021.

5.1 These were read and approved.

5.2 The Clerk was authorised to sign the approved version of the minutes on behalf of the Chair.

6. Matters arising and actions from previous minutes.

6.1 All matters were covered in the meeting.

7. General Amenities (Footpaths, Access, Seating and Lighting).

7.1 The overgrown hedging restricting the footpath east of Broadacres has still not been attended to and Cllr Sharp to take this up again with the County Council Highway's team.

7.2 The footpaths from Henshaw School to Bardon Mill have now been inspected and are scheduled for repair. Cllr Sharp has offered a contribution from his Members Allowance and the Parish Members expressed their thanks for this offer.

7.3 The County Council have said they will provide additional bottle banks outside Redburn Park and a suitable site would be found at the entrance to the park.

7.4 Clerk to arrange for the Council seating to be inspected and repaired as necessary.

8. Maintenance Programme.

8.1 Village Greens and Grassed Areas. It was discussed that the village green at Towhouse has again been damaged by delivery vehicles and taxis attempting to drive across the green, into the narrow access, and then having to turn around when they could not get through. This is already being discussed with the County Council who are to advise on suitable signage and the Clerk/Chair to look at the installation of a barrier.

8.2 The access road at the west end of Henshaw, which is the Parish Council's responsibility, has been inspected and estimates for repair are awaited.

8.3 There have been several complaints about dog fouling on the greens in Henshaw and these complaints have been passed to the County Council dog wardens for action.

8.4 There is a large accumulation of rubbish on the elevated roadside verge on Wellbank, Henshaw, and this to be passed to Environmental Services.

8.5 Once grass cutting starts, the Clerk will ask the County Council to cut all of the verge outside Henshaw School as a section is always missed which is overgrown and unsightly.

8.6 The Clerk to ask for details of the County Council programme for verge cutting in the area as it is always left too late in the season when the verges are totally overgrown.

8.7 General maintenance. No further matters were raised.

9. Planning Applications.

9.1 Cllr Finlayson asked for an update on the empty/abandoned Falcon Grange properties as this had been the subject of a recent Facebook debate. It was stated that these properties are in



demand and would provide homes for local residents. Cllr Sharp explained he has made enquiries in the past to see what the County Council planners could do about the situation but unfortunately there were no powers available. It was also explained that it was understood there was a dispute over land ownership/building contractors. It was asked if Compulsory Purchase powers could be used. Cllr Sharp would again chase this up and provide an update.

10. Highway Matters.

10.1 A69 Issues. The Clerk had circulated a summary of the recent email from Highways England who advised that there were arranging further speed and noise surveys. A further meeting was scheduled for 12 March.

10.2 Following a request from the Parish Council, Highways England have confirmed they will install a safety barrier to protect the properties at Falcon Grange.

10.3 A further request had been submitted to Highways England to consider extension of the safety barrier on the section of footpath past Starbucks, to consider a footpath and barrier on the north side of the road to connect Henshaw to the minimarket, and to improve the two pedestrian crossing points at Henshaw and the Service Station.

10.4 General Highways Issues. Local Roads (north of A69). The Clerk advised he is still awaiting details of the County Council's proposed improvement programme to Park Lane, Well Bank etc.

10.5 New signage and road markings should soon in place at the Huntercreek junction.

10.5 Pothole and road repairs are due to start again following the winter weather.

10.6 Road to Scotchcoulthard. There is a section which floods and will lead to erosion and damage to the road surface. Cllr Sharp agreed to look into this.

10.7 Work to repair the road from Henshaw Church to Melkridge has been delayed due to the recent winter weather but was scheduled to be done at the end of February.

11. Redburn Park.

11.1 The Clerk advised that inspections were continuing but improvement works were on hold until the Spring and/or improved weather.

11.2 The recent wet weather has caused part of the play area to become waterlogged and this has been made worse by problems/blockages with the drainage. This has been inspected with works to be done in the drier weather so as not to cause further damage to the surrounding waterlogged ground.

11.3 There is still a problem with people taking dogs onto the playing pitch and play area despite the warning signs. The Clerk to ask the County Council wardens to undertake patrols.

12. Bardon Mill & Henshaw Village Hall.

12.1 The hall remains closed as a result of COVID-19.

13. Northumberland National Park.

13.1 The Parish Council has been attempting to have brown tourism signs installed on the Military Road at the approaches to the Sill junction to advise of the availability of local services in Bardon Mill and Henshaw. The County Council have refused this request and efforts are being made to have this decision reversed as there are comparable signs for Haltwhistle services on the Military Road near Greenhead.

13.2 The NNPA are to arrange a meeting with the Parish Council for feedback on the Sill.

14. Henshaw School.

14.1 The school is only open for children of essential workers at the present time and the Parish Members expressed their gratitude at the continuing hard work and efforts of the school staff.

15. Report by Clerk on Financial Matters.

15.1 Funds held by the Parish Council were confirmed as follows:

- Current Account £2,733.93
- Easement Account £5,361.92



15.2 Transactions between meetings:

- Field Rent (Adjacent to Redburn Park) £190.00 (Income)
- Bardon Mill Parish Council (Shared Assets Contribution £1569.58 (Income)
- Northern Powergrid (Wayleave) £20.91 (Income)
- War Memorial Maintenance (Shared Assets Contribution £133.00 (Expenditure)

16. Members Issues.

16.1 Rail Services. It was reported that the improvements that were supposed to be carried out at the Bardon Mill Station were not going ahead. It was also raised that the poor service and transport links adversely affected tourism and the local economy and that Bardon Mill was promised better links with the National Park and the Sill. Agreed the Clerk review recent advice and information and prepare a letter for consideration by Members to send to Northern Rail.

16.2 The defibrillators in the area need servicing and the costs of this would normally be paid by fundraising which has not been possible because of current restrictions. Cllr Sharp and Cllr Oliver agreed to make personal contributions for this and Members expressed their thanks.

17. Northumberland County Council Councillor Update.

17.1 Councillor Sharp had provided comprehensive update throughout the meeting and would follow up any issues as soon as possible.

18. General Matters and Correspondence since last meeting.

18.1 No additional matters and correspondence had already been circulated.

19. Any other relevant business.

No additional items were raised.

20. Date and time of next meeting to be Monday 22 March 2021 at 7.00pm. It was agreed that this would again be a virtual meeting as it appears unlikely restrictions would be eased to allow physical meetings until at least April or May.

Approved at the Virtual Meeting held on 22 March 2021

Michael Anthony Smith, Clerk to Henshaw Parish Council
c/o 1 Wilsons Cottages, Henshaw, Hexham, Northumberland, NE47 7EN. Tel: 01434 344647
Email: henshawparishclerk@outlook.com Web: <https://northumberlandparishes.uk/henshaw>