

WARK PARISH COUNCIL

Chairman: Mrs Anne Hutchinson, The Haining, Wark, Hexham, NE48 3ED. **Tel:** 01434 230680

DRAFT MINUTES OF ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

The Annual Assembly of the Parish Meeting for Wark was held on Tuesday 10th May 2022.

Please note the Annual Parish meeting for Stonehaugh ward will be held at Stonehaugh Community Hall on Thursday 19th May 2022.

Agenda

1. Appointment of Chair for the meeting: Councillor Anne Hutchinson
2. Welcome and apologies for absence:

Present: Councillor Mr E Jeffrey (EJ), Councillor Mrs A Hutchinson (AH), Councillor Mrs L Charlton (LC), Councillor Judith Weir (JW), Councillor Steve Batey (SB), Clerk to Parish Council Louise Keeney (LK). Two members of the public present.

Apologies: Councillor Phil Leadbitter, County Councillor Nick Morphet and Mr David Healey.

3. Approve minutes of meeting held on 16th June 2021: Approved, SB proposed and seconded by EJ.

4. Matters Arising:

1. Parking: EJ provided update relating to implementation of interactive 20mph restriction signs – hoped to be in place by end of year. EJ advised the whole village was walked recently to consider 30mph limit (interactive signs to remind drivers) – talked about putting light at end of straight at Joe Potts entrance (JP has agreed to this) as public have complained about speed on this section - cost of each is £5000 and low maintenance. MOP asked about installation on road to Bellingham, Highways suggested it was situated at entrance to where new houses will be situated. AH advised moving sign north. AH explained that Parish Council currently have reserves of around £10000 as a result of not having a clerk on payroll which will be used to fund two, queried options for sourcing additional funding for third one. EJ advised poles are £2000 which is accepted as being significant. MOP queried NCC responsibilities, EJ confirmed position that NCC responsible for static signs but flashing, interactive signs are Parish responsibility. EJ confirmed Parish are committed to two, three would be hopeful and dependent upon additional funding. MOP queried if letter could be

circulated to MOP in the community to explain and outline costs, issues and what is required for additional signage. MOP queried value of concert for fundraising which has been suggested.

2. Julie Nixon's email summarised in meeting – appears a misunderstanding relating to the yellow lines Ms Nixon mentions - these relate to corner known locally as Dr Coker's corner (where cars park and narrows bend further), however EJ, JW are in support of Julie's second point to move 30mph sign and post to other side of bridge beyond sawmill on road out of Wark, JW believes it used to be there originally.

Decision/Action: PC to send letter of recommendation along with Julie's letter.

Suggest petition might be helpful – EJ, AH in agreement with this – to liaise with Julie on timing and support her with this. Petition Proposed by EJ and seconded by AH
MOP present in meeting queried whether parking/ layby/widening of Hexham Road could be done too – PC advised that this is an ongoing issue and is hoped to be resolved soon.

5. Chairmans Report on activities of the Parish Council – AH apologised as report not yet complete – to be presented at Stonehaugh ward meeting.
6. Parking –As above, Ongoing discussions to explore options, Yellow Lines – ongoing, 20mins maximum parking in front of post office – ongoing, Request for charging point – site visit completed, ongoing. AH outlined parking in village is an ongoing, challenging issue, PC continue to be asked about yellow lines on corner as detailed above.
7. EV Electric charging point – site assessed and suggested land opposite Battlesteads is appropriate. AH advised that original proposal by NM next to War Memorial was felt inappropriate as it would result in loss of parking and MOP agreed with PC commenting on the negative visual impact on the war memorial and village green. MOP queried maintenance of chargers advising that her understanding is there is no maintenance of them – PC to clarify this with NCC.
8. Speeding – in process of purchasing interactive signs – as detailed already. Volunteers needed for speed watch. AH explained this role, AH has published this on FB however PC recognise that this is not always accessible to all. MOP suggested letter going letterboxes –suggested this could be a sheet in the broadsheet- proposed by SB and seconded by LC
9. Wark Area Red Squirrels – volunteers still needed. MOP to email the Clerk their interest.
10. Celebrations post covid – No further contact from Town Hall committee. AH advised that JW confirmed it was not the Town Hall. Meeting discussed commemorative plaque – JW, EJ and AH did not support this– dismissed.
11. Celebrations Queens 70th Jubilee – Wark Beacon will be installed and lit on Battlesteads Green. Stonehaugh Beacon will be installed and lit on Bullring (this was updated at

meeting on 19th May and is now to be lit at Community Hall in Stonehaugh). Suggested that nominations for lighting the beacons are made by members of the public (names put into box in the Wark Post Office or emailed to clerk.wark@gmail.com.) Names will be randomly drawn on 19th May 2022 at Stonehaugh. AH and EJ advised a meeting of proposed plans for Beacon and lighting of the Beacon, to be lit Thursday 2nd June at 9.45pm. Supervision of installation – EJ to lead on this with Dave Healy (DH) who is providing the beacon, AH and SB to sort Stonehaugh. EJ explained need to clarify safety aspects of lighting it, materials for combusting, notify Northumberland Fire Service. EJ to liaise with DH. Discussed nomination process, JW highlighted need for inclusivity of all. EJ suggested extending the date to 26th May 2022, agreed nomination box in Wark Post Office and by email to clerk, to include name of nominee and reason for nomination – eligible nominees to be aged 70 or over which reflects the platinum jubilee and 70 years of reign from Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II

12. Questions from members of the public.

Sue Hardy, Member of Public, Wark, shared has been in Wark three years, wished to raise the condition of the road running parallel with Storey Terrace, feels poor condition and quite dangerous, not against HGV, farmers using it but does not feel the road was built to reflect its use and weight of vehicles, additionally speed of traffic is an ongoing issue – would support flashing 20mph restrictions signs in village, public safety raised concerned that some residents are unsteady on their feet and struggle to get out of the way of traffic quick enough, the poor road condition increases the risk of falling, accidents or injury.

Sue Hardy wished PC to advise on action that can be taken to repair finger posts in the parish, noted whilst walking that many are in poor state – advised to contact NCC Footpath officer.

Maureen Grace, Member of Public, Wark – supports the comments of Sue Hardy, particularly that there is no pavement along Storey Terrace road side, has made Nick Morphet aware of concerns particularly risk to older population, feels the narrow road space and speed of traffic is a worry and the surface in Maureen's view wasn't meant for weight of logging vehicles (poor surface) – wrote to Guy Opperman, received two letters of response from HOC and was informed that it was intended to take up with NCC – EJ advised PC not heard anything yet. Maureen acknowledges that cannot get pavement as houses were built before time when cars were so prolific, go down to one lane, additional concern expressed about vulnerable member of the community and navigating road. EJ queried speed of HGV and heavy traffic – MOP advised it is not always the HGV, it is cars too – EJ advised that plans are progressing for interactive speed restriction sign. MOP would seek to advocate

for 20mph limit. PC sympathetic of issue, AH queried if PC could write to NCC relating to re-surfacing of highway.

Maureen Grace wished to notify PC of camper van parking in layby to left of bridge and their being witness to early morning emptying of what appeared to be liquid human waste into the river – following discussion it was queried whether it is worth siting a sign/notice “No overnight Parking” – PC to look up rules and legislation on ownership of land and permissions. AH suggested PC make and erect a sign. Decision: Invite Colin Hall from the Environment Agency – hope to obtain instruction from him and Highways on what actions PC can take.

13. Any other issues.

Suggestion/ offer has been made of raising additional funding for speed restriction signs through a concert, discussion about musicians in local community and need for someone to pull it together. SB queried whether a busker night would be attractive to the public? Discussed volunteers to coordinate and progress will be needed – to discuss again at next parish meeting.

Meeting closed at 8.15pm.

Louise Keeney

Clerk to Wark Parish Council