

Minutes of meeting of Norham Parish Council held on Monday 23rd November 2020

Those present were George Straughen (GS), Jim Greenwood (JG), Jim Blythe (JB) John Grahamslaw (JJG) and Alison Murphy (AM). Two members of the public were also present.

AGENDA

11.20.1 To accept apologies for absence

Apologies from Dougie Watkin and Sheelagh Hume.

11.20.3 To make any Declaration of Interest

None

11.20.4 To confirm Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting of 28 September were confirmed as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

11.20.5 Matters Arising from Minutes

i Proposed Joint Neighbourhood Planning in Norham and Islandshire

No progress to report.

ii Play Areas

JJG continuing to visually inspect – no defects to report. DW continuing to disinfect play areas. (and school play equipment). Re renewal of play equipment, VLC has contacted Cllr Lawrie who confirmed he would be interested in helping financially. He has asked for some more information re what is planned, the age group the new equipment is aimed at etc. VLC will gather information and send it on.

iii Public Conveniences

Continue to be cleaned three times per week.

iv Lower Tweed Trail

No meetings since March but hope to be in a position to start to publicise by next Easter. One comment re draft leaflet is that perhaps there is too much history not enough wildlife/natural points of interest.

v Mobile Mast/BT Phone box

Letter from local MP considered. Agreed VLC will respond thanking her for her assistance so far and asking for contact details of providers. VLC will also ask Cllr Lawrie to urge NCC to press for improvements. In addition, there is still time to object to the proposal to remove the phone box. Councillors urged to encourage others to do so.

vi Northumberland LED street lighting/Undergrounding of cables

Nothing to report

vii Street Signs/Village Map

The frame for the new map should be in position by early spring. Discussion re previous request to rename road that goes past Birchill as Turnpike road. VLC to ask NCC re procedure for renaming.

viii New Speed signs/30mph reminders

New speed sign on Castle Bank should be in position within the next few weeks. Noted that Scottish Borders Regional Council has reduced speed limits to 20mph in all built up areas, and they have regular reminders. After discussion agreed (after a vote 4 to 1 in favour) to contact NCC to ask what the procedure would be.

ix Norham Development Trust

There have been regular meetings of the coordination group which has now put to together a provisional list of Norham Castle 900 events - which are very dependent on Covid restrictions being lifted.

x Norham Website

Still being added to and improved. Country Living Magazine is proposing an article on Northumberland next February and was in touch to ask about Blessing of the Nets/Lines - text and photos have been sent.

xi NCC Draft Local Plan-De-allocation of Land

Objection to de-allocation has been sent to NCC. Awaiting outcome.

xii Flagpole

Fundraising has begun, and it is hoped sufficient will be raised by early spring to enable a flagpole to be put up. Agreed that 8m should be sufficient height, with appropriately sized flags.

xiii Trees

Planning permission has been sought to take down two trees in Jubilee Field which should be forthcoming shortly.

xiv Jubilee Field

Agreed after discussion that GS, AM JG JJG and VLC would meet to discuss (after restrictions lifted) a 'refresh'. There is a need to cater for all age groups in the village. There was a suggestion that perhaps the Forestry Commission might help create a walkway round the field and provide some trees for planting. The fate of the goalposts is to be further considered.

xv Pedwell Way Mud

GS and JJG had met with Trevor Smith to discuss possible solutions. GS had also been in touch with owner of the fishing rights who has agreed in principle to make a contribution to the cost. A financial estimate had just been received so agreed GS would contact owner again to discuss what size of contribution might be forthcoming. Also discussion re a request received that the path from school to the river and along to Pedwell way be made more disabled friendly so that disabled scooters could use the path. After discussion agreed VLC will contact NCC to discuss the matter and possible funding. It was noted that the path from the school is on Diocese of Newcastle land. Rob Kelsey indicated that he did not believe there would be any issues regarding footpath improvements.

xvi Christmas Lights

Agreed that GS should approach Ladykirk Estates to see if they might donate a tree. VLC/GS will purchase new lights.

11.20.6 Community Police Report

The terms of the report were noted. Agreed that once the new community officer was in place the question of speeding and oversized agricultural machinery would be raised again.

11.20.7 Norham 900

As noted above a provisional framework of events had been agreed, and more detail would be issued as and when available.

11.20.8 Shoreswood Parish

Shoreswood had been informally asked some time ago if they wished to join Norham Parish. A representative from Norham had been asked to attend Shorewood's next Zoom meeting. GS will attend. Agreed that there is no desire to force the issue in any way and it would be made clear that there is no attempt to 'empire build' – but it should perhaps be recognised that there may be more advantages in joining up.

Finance

11.20.9 To review Payments and Receipts since last meeting

Payments: 30th Sept to S Broadbent (re WCs) £150, and 3rd Nov £214.15; 6th Nov to V Craig (clerk's £485.14; 6th Nov to Royal British Legion (poppy wreath) £30; 10th Nov To D Gibson Tree and Forestry Services Ltd (pathworks) £1956

Receipts: 18th Nov from NCC (pathworks) £1630

11.20.10 To look at Bank balances in Current and Deposit Account

As at 23rd November Current Account £17809.37; Business Account £ 971.15

11.20.11 To review system of Internal Control including Internal Auditor and Insurance cover/risk assessment
After discussion these were unanimously agreed.

11.20.12 To agree appointment of Internal Auditor for 2021-2022

Agreed that Roseanne Bennett of Greaves West & Ayre would be asked if she would be prepared to act in this role again.

11.20.13 To set a Budget and Precept for 2021-2022

After lengthy discussion it was agreed that the Precept would remain at £5200. It was agreed that the Jubilee Field 'refresh' and the village map/noticeboard would remain as designated special projects. Donations and grants would also remain at the same level. Other expenses to be incurred were expected to stay at same level as this year.

11.20.14 To look at Planning Application decisions

Galagate hedge removal – granted.

11.20.15 To look at state of Roads and Pavements

Agreed NCC would be asked to meet to discuss the lane between St Cuthbert's Square and West Street. There is a very bad pothole on Boathouse Lane – JB will report. A letter from Natural Environment Group was considered - after discussion it was agreed that the situation would be monitored. A number of councillors walk extensively in and around the village and were not aware of bikes and horses using the paths.

Agreed that NCC would be contacted to thank them for works to date on the pavement up past Birchill – it was recognised to be a difficult job. NCC would be asked to complete the job up to the Station junction.

The terms of the email from NCC footpath officer were noted, regarding the delayed closure of the Twizel viaduct.

11.20.16 General Correspondence

None

11.20.17 Dates of Meetings 2021

Agreed as

25th January, 22nd March, 17th May, 26th July, 27th September, 22nd November

Any Other Business (For information only)

Agreed that GS should source and replace the light in the Millennium Clock.

In addition, GS thanked JJG on behalf of the parish council and the village for keeping the war memorial area in such good and tidy condition. GS also thanked the church, and in particular Rob Kelsey and Margaret Sentamu, for the way the Remembrance Sunday services had been conducted. It was appreciated that they had proceeded in what were otherwise difficult circumstances.

Date of next meeting: 25th January 2021