



Minutes of Meeting 26 February 2024 held in Bardon Mill & Henshaw Village Hall

Present: Cllrs J Oliver (Chair), V. Gibson (Vice-Chair), S. Armstrong, A. Saunders, J. Benson, C. Kennedy, D. Finlayson, County Cllr 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 had been received but the owners of Wychwood Barn, Henshaw attended the meeting with regard to item 9.2. The Chair invited them to speak but advised that they could not be part of the Councils consideration of the matter as this contained legal and financial matters. The owners put forward their view on this item and stayed until item 9.

5. Minutes of the previous meeting held on 22 January 2024 These were read and approved.

6. Outstanding/Ongoing Repairs

6.1 No additional matters other than those on the agenda.

7. General Amenities

7.1 Footpaths – nothing to report.

7.2 Seating – repainting or treatment of all seats to be undertaken in April 2024.

7.3 Lighting – nothing to report.

7.4 Verges – The Clerk is to set up a meeting with the County Council regarding the grass strips through the villages, with the Parish Council to finance cuts on a more regular basis in 2024/25. Chair and Cllr Armstrong to attend.

7.5 The dog waste bag dispensers will be refilled as soon as possible and a new dispenser is to be installed at Bardon Mill Village Green. It was reported that there was an issue with regular dog fouling in Bardon Mill/Towhouse. This to be reported to the County Council to ask if the Warden could look into the issue (there is a £100 fine for owners who do not clean up after their dog/s).

8. Miscellaneous

8.1 Grazing Site Woodland Thinning. Denis Fleming has been appointed to carry out thinning of the woodland at Redburn Park (at nil cost in return for any felled trees). Clerk to contact the tenant to make arrangements for access and timings.

8.2 Electric Charging Points. It was noted that these points are increasingly being used.

8.3 Broadband Provision. Further information is awaited regarding the possibility of an initiative to improve the broadband in Henshaw, Bardon Mill and Melkridge Parish areas.

8.4 Review of Venue for Parish Meetings. The Clerk advised that the accommodation for the previous meeting was not acceptable and that other options may have to be explored. The meeting room at the hall has gradually turned into a storage area. Efforts had been made to clear this room and Members agreed that they would assist in further work to return it to a primary use as a meeting room. Clerk to keep this under review.

9. Village Greens

9.1 Tree Surveys. The Clerk provided details of the 3 quotes which had been received from Tyne Valley Woodlands, Wark Forest Landscapes, and Peter Dodds Agricultural Services. All 3 quotes were a very similar price and following discussion it was agreed that the tender from Peter Dodds be accepted. Although this was slightly more expensive, they could provide the digital mapping requested in the brief for the surveys.

9.2 Correspondence has been received from the owners Solicitor to confirm they would be agreeable to paying the compensation fee (with the calculation being that used in the granting of the original easement) regarding a variation to the easement for access across Henshaw Village Green to Wychwood Barn. Accordingly the Parish Council agreed to the variation and the Clerk to reply to the Solicitors to progress the final arrangements.

9.3 Repairs to Access Road across Henshaw Village Green. Minor repairs were made to this unmade road 2 years ago and the Clerk is to look at costing of any current, and potential future repairs, and report back for consideration.

9.4 Further details from Northumbrian Water, relating to access across Towhouse Village Green to install an electricity supply and connection point for a temporary generator, were considered. The Parish Council agreed to the proposal in principle and agreed that the Chair and Clerk could finalise the arrangements and report back for information.

9.5 A request had been received from the Bardon Mill Pottery for permission to use the Village Green for the Spring Fair. This was agreed as it brings a lot of visitors to the area which benefits the local economy and proceeds are given to local charities and organisations.

10. Planning Applications and Issues

10.1 No matters to discuss.

11. Transport and Highways Matters

11.1 A69. Still awaiting details from National Highways and Clerk to chase up.

11.2 Speed Limit at Twice Brewed. Cllr Sharp advised that the proposal to install gateway signs has been agreed and the final design and costings are expected shortly.

11.3 Additional road markings at Bardon Mill. As in 11.2 this has been agreed and designs/costs are awaited.

11.4 Bardon Mill Station Access Road. The Clerk advised a further estimate had been received with resurfacing to be approximately £8.5k. It was considered that contributions to this from the Parish Council, Bardon Mill Parish Council, and Cllr Sharp would provide a substantial part of this. If Network/Northern Rail and the local residents were to contribute then a scheme seemed viable. It was again reiterated that this was not a Parish Council matter and the work done to date by the Clerk in contacting the main stakeholders and obtaining quotes should now be passed to others to progress and organise the work and contributions.

12. Redburn Park

12.1 General Maintenance. Work has been completed at the park and the monthly inspections are to start in April. Bardon Mill Parish Council have contributed to these works under the shared assets agreement.

12.2 Repairs and Inspection by Kompan. Specialist work to the cableway and spacenet has been completed.

12.3 Woodland Management. There are only a few days' work to be undertaken which was on hold to allow the weather to improve as ground conditions are poor. It was reported that there is a damaged tree on the narrow strip of woodland next to the park entrance near to the power lines. Clerk to action.

12.4 Redburn Community Park Group. This is a developing idea and would seek input and representation from the community to improve facilities at the park and seek out external funding opportunities. Members of both Henshaw, and Bardon Mill, Parish Councils agreed to attend, as did Cllr Sharp, with Cllr Finlayson to represent the Village Hall Committee. Members of the Community to be invited to an initial meeting to look at aims and objections.

13. Bardon Mill & Henshaw Village Hall

13.1 The hall continues to be very well used with regular classes and bookings.

13.2 Agreed the Chair, Clerk and Cllr Finlayson would progress work on applying for a grant to have an emergency generator installed at the hall and report back to the next meeting.

14. Northumberland National Park

14.1 Cllr Sharp and Saunders gave a brief update on the recent developments.

15. Henshaw School

15.1 Cllr Armstrong advised he had recently worked with the School and Northern Rail for the children to produce artwork which would be installed at Bardon Mill Station. All in attendance thanked Cllr Armstrong for his efforts.

16. Report by Clerk on Financial Matters

16.1 Estimated funds held by the Parish Council as at 18 February 2024 as follows:

- Current Account £11,384.37
- Easement Account £5,620.45

16.2 Expenditure and Income to approve/note:

- Mark Watson (Redburn Park Works) £996.00
- Northumberland County Council (Grass Cutting 2023) £4,181.02
- Kompan (Redburn Park Works) £1,176.00
- JRB Enterprises (New Dog Waste Bag Dispensers) £104.34
- HSBC (Bank Charges) £10.00 (already debited)
- Great North Air Ambulance Donation £10.00 (already debited)
- Northern Powergrid Wayleave payment £20.91 (Income)
- Bardon Mill Parish Council Shared Assets payment (Income)

Estimated balance following outstanding transactions **£6,003.01**

17. Northumberland County Council Update

17.1 Cllr Sharp had updated on all matters during the meeting and added that the County Council had allocated substantial additional funding to roads maintenance which included £80,000 for Park Lane (Bardon Mill/Henshaw to the Sill).

18. General Matters and Correspondence since last meeting

18.1 Cllr Benson submitted donations towards Redburn Park improvements/repairs from the Leek Club (£100) and Darts Club (£50) and was asked to pass on the Parish Council's thanks for these donations.

18.2 Town and Parish Council Spring Conference on 14 March 2024. Chair and Clerk to attend.

19. Items to be included on the next Agenda No items raised.

20. Date and time of next meeting. The next meeting is on Monday 25 March 2024 at 7.00pm. The meeting finished at 8.43pm.

Signed and Approved at the Meeting held on 25 March 2024.....