

THIRSTON PARISH COUNCIL

At the Parish Meeting of the Council held in the Coquet Room, Felton Village Hall on Thursday 22 March 2018.

Present: Cllrs E Davidson, D Green, H Lindley and J Marshall.

- 99 Apologies for absence** – Cllrs A Morton and J Secker, Co Cllr Sanderson
- 100 Declarations of interest in items on the Agenda** – None
- 101 Public Questions (max 5 mins per person)** – None
- 102 The minutes of the meeting 1 February 2018** were signed as a true record.
- 103 Matters Arising therefrom:**
- a) Railings at the top of The Peth** – NCC has checked the railings and stated that they are safe but will put on their list to monitor.
 - b) New website – picture required from Cllr Green** – picture now on the website
 - c) Brambles at Field of Hope to be cut back** – Cllr Lindley and the Clerk met with John Hood who will ensure the area is cut back in October this year.
 - d) Letter to Planning Department** – The Clerk sent a letter to Mark Ketley raising concerns with the Dog Training Centre and Eshott Airfield. These have been passed to the relevant officers by Mr Ketley and responses are given below.
 - e) Notice Board** – The Clerk met with NCC re the location of the new noticeboard. They raised concerns that there may be cabling in the area for the board to be sited but will investigate this. If there is no issue with cabling NCC will install at the proposed location, if there is an issue with cabling then they will identify where it can be installed and liaise with the Clerk on this. The noticeboard has been ordered with a 10 week lead time.
 - f) Bin request for Wintrick Road** – the bin has been installed however Mr Brown of The Farmhouse, Thirston New Houses visited the Clerk to request its removal as he stated it is on his land. The Clerk checked with NCC and it is NCC owned land and they are happy for it to be here. Mr Brown stated it would attract rubbish in the area. It was agreed to write to Mr Brown stated the PC note his concerns and will monitor the situation.
 - g) Annual Litter Pick** – NCC has confirmed all the arrangements for the litter pick. Notices to go up around the parish and the Clerk has included in The Bridge Newsletter.
- 104 Report by County Councillor** –
The worst parts of the East Thirston and Eshott roads are down for repair next week. We are really struggling with a huge increase in potholes everywhere. We have taken over £400k from Council reserves and have an extra £900k from government to help but we will need much more. We have applied to government for extra help as it has been a very expensive winter.
I am very grateful for all our frontline staff and contractors who did so much when the snow was here.
- 105 Report back from Meetings and Representations on behalf of TPC**
Meeting with NCC on The Trees at the Peth – a lengthy discussion took place and a request was made by the Councillors for the Tree Officer to give an explanation as to why he has changed his views in the last two years. It was also requested that the Conservation Officer be consulted. Also the lack of consultation with residents was raised and a request put to NCC as to why no one had been consulted.

Clerk

Meeting with NCC re Eshott Airfield – The noise assessment has been submitted and early indications stated there was no issue with noise levels. The Public Protection team had no issue with the 0800 start time of the activity centre and it was raised as to how this would be policed in terms of the airfield operation. NCC stated that an application is being submitted to change the operation hours of the airfield along with some other changes. Cllr Secker stated that all the areas that the Airfield are operating illegally will then be legal if approved. There appears to be a lack of clarity in relation to the proposed vehicles being operated on the site. The cumulative impact of other applications being submitted on the back of approval, ie Bywell Shooting Ground were raised but NCC state each application is dealt with separately. It was agreed that the Parish Council should submit a revised consultee comment to state

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they object to the application based on the operating hours and CC Sanderson would look to having this referred to Committee following the PCs objections.

Also at this meeting the caravan at the Dog Training Centre was raised. NCC state they can take the owner to court and impose a fine but cannot enforce removal of the caravan.

106 Potential Projects

- a) Riverside – Nothing to report
- b) Footpaths/Rights of Way – outstanding issues raised with NCC re bridge concerns on FP4. Also a resident has emailed concerns following the installation of a new fence along the northern boundary of Thirston House adjacent the riverside path. The eastern end of this path had a tendency to be wet but since the fence was installed the situation has become much worse. Water is now visibly running from the grounds of Thirston House across the path and creating difficult conditions underfoot plus erosion to the surface. The resident believes there is a pond immediately above the point where the water is appearing, and suggests this is overflowing or drainage is blocked. The Clerk has already reported this to NCC and their response is *A few people have raised this matter with me since the new fence was erected. As you know this section of path has suffered from water draining on to it for many years now. We installed some drains under the path (close to the old brick building) over 10 years ago. It sounds like something has changed recently, and I intend to look at the problem and work out what can be done just as soon as priorities allow.* Clerk to monitor.
- c) Landscaping – Bulbs are growing nicely
- d) Neighbourhood Plan – a meeting of the Working Group was held and David English attended. It was agreed to look at other Neighbourhood Plans to gauge what areas other parishes are covering. A consultant should be appointed when the Working Group has drafted a plan. Need to define the issues and then undertake drop in session for residents input. Need to look at what planning applications are already in place. A list of public bodies to be contacted to be provided by NCC as a start point. Best to contact them to inform them of the plan along with the Vision and Objectives so they can feed in any input before the plan is drafted.

Clerk

107 Planning:

To report on any planning decisions:

17/04077/LBC - Felton New Bridge - LBC for removal, refurbishment & reinstate parapets – REFUSED – Did not provide “clear and convincing justification” for any loss or harm to this heritage asset arising from replacement of sections of the cast iron parapets with steel. The Councilors were very disappointed by this refusal especially in light of all the work undertaken to get to this point of an application being submitted. Clerk to write to NCC stating this and asking what the next steps are.

Clerk

17/04453/FUL - Eshott Airfield - Construct activity centre for team building – Objected based on the operation hours to bring it in line with the Airfield operational hours following the meeting with NCC however this application was approved with operational hours of 0800 to 1900.

18/00411/MISC – West Thirston Church - part of the above site is to be used as a café (A3 use). Given the existing church use (D1), the site benefits from temporary permitted development rights in accordance with the above mentioned GPDO 2015. The church hall element would be used as a café from the 1st March 2018. – Application is Permitted Development. Concerns have been raised by a neighbour in relation to the use of hours of operation of the play group and the increase in traffic. It was suggested the resident contact the developer to raise their concerns and find out exactly what is planned for the area.

Clerk

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

17/04073/COU - Woodland Burial Site, Bockenfield - COU of woodland for pet burial service – No objections

17/04290/OUT - COU of land and construct 30 houses - Land East of Greystone – Objections submitted. The Clerk has also contacted NCC raising concerns that Alnwick reports have been used in the Historic Environmental Statement provided by Durham University, not

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Castle Morpeth reports. Also the Clerk has contacted NCC stating that as this development is on agricultural land and outside the settlement boundary these properties should be tied to agricultural use as defined in Section 336 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 17/04477/FELTPO - Studley Cottage - Thirston Fell 2 trees and crown reduce one – Objections submitted. CC Sanderson reported that he thinks this will go ahead. There is some interest from some locals to ensure that the pub conservatory is made safe from falling trees and this is perhaps why we are where we are.
18/00928/FUL – The Brambles, West Thirston – Kitchen extension – on circulation

Planning Issues

Canine Centre Caravan and acoustic barrier update

The Enforcement Officer has met with NCC legal department and drafted an Enforcement Notice requiring the removal of the caravan and at this meeting he also discussed the condition relating to the acoustic barrier. He has managed to make contact with the owner of the site, he has advised them that in order to avoid the notice being served they will need to cease the use of the site with immediate effect and remove the caravan. The business should not operate until condition 6 has either been discharged and the acoustic barrier installed or the condition has been removed. The owner has responded stating the business cannot cease trading with immediate effect and it has been agreed she can operate until 30 March 2018. Operating hours were also raised, NCC requested the Clerk monitor the situation and report to NCC over the next few weeks however the Clerk stated this issue was more during the summer months.

Clerk

108 Services:

- **Peth pathway** – Clearing of moss at top of steps – on NCC's winter programme list – some work has been done. Clerk to pursue. Clerk
- **Main pathway** – hedges require cutting back – on NCC's winter programme list. Clerk
- **Arriva timetable and update of bus numbers on shelters** – Clerk waiting on details from Arriva or NCC due to the new initiative being instigated. Clerk
- **Cutting back of hedge around 30mph sign on entrance to village** – this is the responsibility of the hedge owner which is the farm. Clerk has chased NCC on this issue (however as there are no leaves on the trees at present it is not a pressing issue). Clerk
- **Highways Agency** – The Clerk has reported the potholes on the A1 along with concerns about rusty poles on signposts. The signposts have now been taped off so it looks like work to these will be imminent. Clerk

109 Requested Agenda Items:

- **Defib update** – The Defib Machine has now been installed and this has been put into The Bridge. A familiarisation session took place this week which was an excellent session that 8 residents attended. Clerk to contact Colin Bates to see if he would be willing to be a “guardian” of the machine along with Peter Fields who has already agreed to this. Clerk
- **Flytipping at Recycling Bins** – There have been two instances of flytipping which have resulted in prosecution. One was a person from Felton, the other was local but the Clerk does not have any further details. Both have been fined £400. This has been raised in The Bridge to make residents aware that flytippers will be fined and how to go about reporting issues of flytipping. Clerk
- **Damaged Drain** – The drain on the opposite side of the road just up from Glenshotton is in a dangerous state and this has been reported to NCC Highways who are arranging repairs. Clerk to monitor. Clerk
- **Field of Hope Pathway** – The Clerk has put in a request to NCC for the footpath to be cleared of encroaching grass. Clerk to monitor.

110 Correspondence

- NCC – Review of the Definitive Map and Statement of Public Rights of Way, informal pre-order consultation – no comments to be made.
- NCC – Post 16 Transport Consultation Document – discussed and Clerk to submit response Clerk
- NCC – Getabout Access Scheme Questionnaire – circulated then completed by the Clerk

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- NALC – Data Protection Briefing Note – issues are arising as to whether the Clerk can also be the Data Protection Officer. ICO has stated it is permissible where the professional duties of the employee are compatible with the duties of the data protection officer and do not lead to conflicts of interest. Therefore this will have to be decided on a case by case basis. NALC is still seeking clarification on the situation as this is very relevant to small Parish Councils.
- NALC – Data Protection/GDPR Tool Kit email x 2 – a 63 page document to assist with the implement of the General Data Protection Regulations. Clerk to review and NALC is arranging workshops in the future. Clerk
- NALC – Changes to External Auditors Process – further information to be sent direct by the new auditors.
- Felton & Thirston Fair stall request – defer to Neighbourhood Plan meeting. Clerk
- Alnwick Playhouse – donation request letter – no donation to be made Clerk
- Healthwatch Northumberland – requesting link on PC website – agreed. Clerk
- Citizens Advise – requesting link on PC website – agreed. Clerk
- Job Centre Resource – requesting link on PC website – this is not an official job centre website and does not hold local centres in the search engine

Correspondence Since the Agenda

- NALC – request to complete online survey into standards (deadline 27 April) – it was agreed the Clerk complete this survey. Clerk
- NALC – Briefing and Training Programme – Clerk to attend the FOI session. Clerk

Emails Forwarded:

- National NALC - Self-Assessment Capability Tool – this was reviewed at the meeting. The majority of the questions were correct with no issues to resolve. The only areas to review are staff appraisals and budget for training. Clerk
- NCC - Northumberland Local Plan Update and 'Call for Sites' – no sites identified
- NCC – Parish Council Planning Training Slides
- NCC - Neighbourhood Planning Updates - Jan/Feb Newsletter 2018
- NCC - Civic Head Northumberland County Council - Swan Song Charity Concert - 27 April
- NALC News

On Circulation: None

To Circulate: Clerks and Councils Direct, CAN News, Alnwick Playhouse 2018 Programme

111 Finance

- (a) **Financial Summary** was reviewed with no issues. The current balance is £10,719.36
 (b) **Payments** - The following list was put before members and was approved:

Payments this meeting:		
IB43	Notice Boards Online (already approved and paid)	2,224.80
IB44	L Hamlin (salary and expenses)	411.33
IB45	Felton PC insurance recharge	6.64
IB45	Felton PC Rec Field Recharges	1,287.38
IB46	Glasdon UK Ltd – Rubbish Bin	392.43
IB47	Felton Village Hall – Room Hire for 2018	96.00
IB48	John Hood Landscapes – Rockery Maintenance	280.00
00736	Peter Brown – fencing and 2 x bin installation	142.50

(c) **Receipts** – 56p interest

112 Urgent Items – None

113 Items for next agenda

Update on the bridge works
 Apologies from Cllr Lindley

Chairman closed the meeting at 8.55pm

Date of Next meeting: 10 May after Annual Parish Meeting