

# THIRSTON PARISH COUNCIL

At the Parish Council Meeting held at Northumberland Crematorium, Bockenfield on Thursday 14 March 2024.

**Present:** Cllrs J Day, E Davidson, D Green and J Marshall  
The Parish Clerk in attendance – Mrs L Hamlin

**103 Apologies for Absence** – Cllrs Clarehugh

Simon Allan resigned with immediate effect on 10 March. Clerk has sent the relevant paperwork to NCC to advertise the vacancy. Clerk to write a letter of thanks to Simon for his work as a Councillor and latterly as Chairman and for all his efforts and work. Clerk

Cllr Marshall chaired the meeting and will stand in as interim Chairman until the May meeting.

**104 Declarations of interest in items on the Agenda** – Cllr John Marshall, item 97, 23/04081/FUL - High Park Farm. Cllrs Marshall and Davidson for Felton & Thirston Fair Donation.

**105 Colin Hall, Flood Resilience Engagement Officer – Northumberland** – Mr Hall did not attend the meeting. It was agreed the Clerk contact him and state the Councillors are happy to watch his presentation he gave to Felton PC and look forward to receiving a draft version of his report that he is preparing on the back of the Felton PC presentation. Clerk

**106 Public Questions (max 5 mins per person)** – None

**107 The minutes of the meeting 1 February 2024** were agreed as a true record.

**108 Matters Arising therefrom:**

**1) Matters arising there from (excluding outstanding actions in relation to NCC)**

- a) Lighting on The Peth – Still outstanding with NCC, Clerk to pursue Clerk
- b) Missing Weldon Bridge signage – still outstanding despite three reminders. Clerk to pursue. Clerk
- c) Footpath resurfacing request (02/11/23) – No response from NCC to the Clerk on this however a local resident has also been in contact with NCC and logged footpath issues and that footpath fingerposts need renewing and has received notification from FixIt that these reports are being addressed. Clerk to pursue. Clerk
- d) Bus stop repairs – awaiting better weather.
- e) Repointing of stone wall on the Peth (14/12/23) – FixIt from NCC states works order in place. Clerk
- f) Blackbrook Farm road pot holes (14/12/23) – still outstanding and is in a bad state of repair. Clerk
- g) Water running down the Narrow Bank (14/12/23) – Northumbrian Water has been out to assess the water in comparison to water from neighbouring property. It is not domestic water or foul water and therefore the problem has been referred back to NCC. NCC has drawn up a job sheet for this to be investigated and hopefully resolved. It was agreed to ask if Pumpkin Pie could send in a letter to NCC requesting works due to their use of the pathway. No response has been received in relation to the grit bin and the Clerk has confirmed an 800lt bin would cost £47 plus VAT and it was agreed if NCC are happy to fill this the PC would purchase one. Clerk
- h) Field of Hope update – the infill bulb planting has taken place and the bench and Field of Hope plaques have been installed. Clerk has submitted the final grant paperwork to NCC.
- i) Field run off at Eshott Village – Cllr Green reported that this is worse now. Pot holes were filled in when there was icy water in them so they are now changing from speed bumps to breaking up. The ditches have been cleared to a point but now the water has nowhere to go other than on the road from both ditches. The ditch by the gate on the right before Home Farm is completely blocked. It was suggested that NCC meet with Cllr Green so he can point out the issues. Clerk
- j) Parking at Pumpkin Pie – No response has been received however further complaints have been received. It was agreed to ask the Community Police Officer to keep an eye on this with a view to warning parents about dangerous manoeuvres and also the parking on yellow lines. This is a safety issue which has been raised and the PC cannot ignore. Clerk
- k) BOAT at Blackbrook Farm – no response from NCC on this issue, Clerk to pursue. Clerk
- l) Access road/bridge between Bockenfield Caravan Park and Felmoor Park – NCC state planning is not required and building regulations state as it is on private land they are not required to be involved. The Environment Agency visited the site to assess whether the correct permits were in place but no feedback has been received as yet. Clerk to pursue. Clerk

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- m) Flytipping in Bockenfield layby – this was reported to NCC and items removed with immediate effect.
- n) Kings Garden Party nomination – unfortunately our nominated person was not successful this time but we can look to nominate again next year.

## 2) Long-term Outstanding issues being addressed by NCC for information

- a) Manhole cover at Wintrick (12/2021) Clerk
- b) Road from A1 to Longhorsley has raised iron works and the edges of asphalt badly broken away both of which can cause damage to cars (01/2022) – two letters of complaint have been received along with photographs showing the damage to the road and verges. These have been passed to NCC and the Clerk has again requested works be undertaken. Clerk
- c) Pathway improvements at riverside (03/2022) – the Clerk has received another complaint about this footpath entrance following the recent rain. Clerk to report to NCC. Clerk
- d) Road at Bywell Shooting Ground in need of repair (11/2022) – Notice of works has been received for C134. Work will start 18/03/2024 for 18 Working Days (WEATHER PERMITTING). Resurfacing of Carriageway & Civil Repairs. Road closure to be in place with a full diversion plan. The road closure will be in place Weekdays 08.00am to 16.00pm hours (We ask that you try use the diversion route put in place to allow the work to be carried out efficiently and safely). Access for residents and businesses will remain as far as practicable but delays should be expected. Clerk to add to facebook. Clerk

## 109 Report by County Councillor Sanderson – None

## 110 Report back from Meetings and Representations on behalf of TPC

Cllr Day reported back on the latest CRAG meeting. They have received two grants from NCC – Rothbury WI for £1,200 and Felton CAN for £500. Sites have been chosen for water testing and a risk assessment has been undertaken. Kits have been received for the testing from the Environment Agency. All being well groups will be testing along the River Coquet from 1 April. Felton PC are covering the insurance for people doing the testing. Cllr Day gave a talk at Haltwhistle as they are keen to have a coordinated testing along the Tyne.

## 111 Potential Projects

- a) Footpaths/Rights of Way – need to strim where picnic table has been installed. Cllr Davidson offered to do this in the spring. The path from the river to Cllr Marshall's house is having drainage issues and is resulting in a sink hole. Works are being undertaken so this is for information.
- b) Landscaping – None Clerk
- c) Short term / Medium term / Long term projects – Village gateways, bus shelters. Pumpkin Pie are keen to be involved in the bus shelter decoration. It was agreed to get NCC to power wash the bus stop when the weather improves so any work undertaken will be done in a clean environment and the Clerk to inform Pumpkin Pie and the WI of this. Clerk still to arrange a meeting to look at location for village gateways. Clerk

## 112 Planning

### To report on any planning decisions:

**23/01921/FUL** - Bockenfield Aerodrome Ltd Eshott Airfield - To allow amended operating hours to 07:00-23:00, training and fuelling of military and emergency services aircraft, provision of temporary structures and retrospective café – REFUSED

### Planning applications pending:

**20/04177/FUL** - Land North East of Felmoor Caravan Park - Extension to existing holiday comprising 139 no. pitches for holiday lodges plus ancillary features including water feature, play area and vintage vehicle museum – objections based on Neighbourhood Plan

**22/04112/FUL** - Northumberland Arms Construction of first floor rear extension to provide 1no. additional en-suite bedroom and store room, and ground floor rear extension to provide covered goods reception area

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**22/04113/LBC** - Northumberland Arms Construction of first floor rear extension to provide 1no. additional en-suite bedroom and store room, and ground floor rear extension to provide covered goods reception area

**23/04081/FUL** - High Park Farm Change of use of agricultural building to a facility to dry paper pulp to produce animal bedding to include feeder, drum, burner, stack installation and control room. The Clerk has been approached in relation to the proposed vehicle route. Part of the PCs objections were that the traffic would go through West Thirston. The Applicant has now stated the traffic will come from the other direction along the farm cottages and the top entrance to Eshott Village which was felt to be equally unsuitable and this should be relayed as a further planning objection.

Clerk

**24/00517/FUL** - North High Moor Farm - Single storey oak frame extension to the main front elevation of the house, oak frame extension to porch and new garden building

Clerk

**23/02325/FUL** - Inspectorate Ref: APP/P2935/W/24/3338945 - Erection of a single new self build holiday let including hard standing and landscaping.

Clerk

Clerk

## Planning Issues:

Bockenfield Caravan Park – blue lights illuminating entrance – this is an Environmental Health Team issue and the Clerk has been in contact with them.

Felmoor Park – Entrance lighting and signage – this is an Environmental Health Team issue and the Clerk has been in contact with them.

Felmoor Park – Not complying with planning approval for timber cabins – no response from NCC on this issue. Clerk to pursue.

## 113 Requested Agenda Items:

West to East Thirston Road – sightline on the corner of Thirston Mill – since the last meeting when Cllr Marshall raised this issue the hedge has been cut back and the sight lines have improved slightly. It was agreed the Clerk would request that the hedges be cut at the start of the hedge cutting season as opposed to the end which may help with this issue.

Clerk

## 114 Correspondence:

- NCC – Land East of Greycroft – street naming – it was agreed to go back to NCC and state that the Councillors object to this street name - to be in keeping with West Thirston the properties should have individual names not a street address. Clerk
- NCC - Review of Parliamentary polling districts and polling places – NCC are looking for an alternative polling station than Felton Village Hall due to the change in constituencies. Thirston being in Hexham and Felton in North Northumberland. Venues could include a public house or a residents property. Two options were suggested and the Clerk to contact them if NCC believe Felton Village Hall is not appropriate. Clerk
- NCC – Working at Elections and Changes to Voting posters – Clerk has put on facebook and in the noticeboard.
- NCC - Household DIY waste changes in Northumberland from 1 February 2024 – for information.
- National Highways 2024 Yorkshire and Northeast Stakeholder Survey – wanting feedback on engagement and the efficiency of their working methods. The outputs will be used to help them better understand our interest and priorities in the Strategic Road Network in our region that will allow them to tailor their engagement approach according to our needs – Clerk to complete. Clerk
- Northumberland Wildlife Trust – Have your say on Network Rail's Biodiversity Programme – circulated for Councillors to join webinar should they wish to do so.
- Northumberland Estates Survey – The Clerk started to complete this questionnaire but it was irrelevant to the parish so emailed to state this.
- The Circuit – defib check – undertaken and The Circuit has been updated.
- Groundwork Feb & March Newsletters – circulated for information.
- Email complaints re Felmoor Park entrance lighting and blue lighting – covered in 112 above.
- Emails re concerns about access road/bridge joining the holiday parks – covered in 108 above.
- Emails re issues along the Burgham/Longhorsley road – covered in 108 above.
- Email re fallen tree on The Peth – Clerk contacted NCC that evening and it was removed that night.

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- Email requesting help to locate a local benefactor – The Clerk was requested for track down a resident who had undertaken a good deed. This was duly done and the Clerk is acting as a go-between with the two people concerned due to data protection.
- Email request from Italy for some illustrated postcards (for personal collection use) or historical and cultural news of Thirston parish – it was agreed to forward this to The Bridge newsletter team as they may have some information they may send him and also Eleanor George from the History Society.
- Email re police training helicopter – copy email received and circulated for information.
- NALC news (incl Speeding monitoring form) – Clerk has requested speed monitoring via the speed team at East Thirston.

Clerk

## 115 Finance

- (a) **Financial Summary** was reviewed with no issues and the current balance stands at £12,173.70 TPC funds and £4,929.97 FCJC Funds totaling £17,103.67. The balance was reconciled with the bank statement and agreed by the Councillors.

Clerk to change the bank account signatories now that Cllr Allan has resigned. Cllr Day agreed to be the third signatory.

Clerk

- (b) **Payments** - The following list was put before members and was approved:

Payments this meeting:		
IB186	L Hamlin Salary and Expenses to 14 March 30 hours at £17.58 (£527.40) Home working allowance of 6 weeks (£6.00) L Hamlin Salary and Expenses to year end 10 hours at £17.58 (£175.80) Home working allowance of 2 weeks (£2.00)	£711.20
IB187	Felton Parish Council Felton Cemetery Contribution (£884.49) War memorial insurance recharge (£49.26) Recreation Field contribution (£500.00)	£1,433.75
IB188	Swarco UK – Speed Camera Contract	£469.06
IB189	Felton and Thirston Fair	£100.00+#

- (c) **Income** –

NCC – Members Scheme grant - £277.44  
HMRC VAT refund - £293.54

## 156 Urgent Items –

- Felton Fair donation request and stall information – it was agreed to donate £100 to the Fair.
- Cllr Marshall stated there have been a number of complaints about the gas guns being used from 7am at the moment. The frequency, noise and early start differs greatly to what has been experienced in the past 20+ years. Residents are aware they are required but not necessarily as loudly or as frequently as these new ones are. There is a significant change this year and it is even distressing local dogs. Clerk to ascertain whose land they are on and request they are looked at.

Clerk

Clerk

## 157 Items for next agenda – None

Chairman closed the meeting at 8.55pm

Date of Next meeting: 2 May 2024 after the Annual Parish Meeting