

The minutes of the Meeting of Acklington Parish Council held on 7.00pm on 2 November 2021 at Acklington Village Hall.

**PRESENT:** Cllrs J Newton (Chairman), D Barras, A Caiger, L Craig, S Ingleby, S Malone, T Mezza, S Thorpe, J Whiteley

053/21 Apologies for Absence  
County Cllr Watson

054/21 Disclosure of Interests  
None received.

055/21 Minutes of Previous Meeting

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Meeting of the Council held 7 September 2021 were agreed as a true record subject to the following amendment:

- a. Minute 041/21 – Northumberland Estates agreed to pay for a speed sign for the other end of the village. The new development will be named ‘Paddock View’.

056/21 Report from County Cllr Watson

County Cllr Watson sent apologies for his absence.

057/21 Finance

- a. The financial summary, bank reconciliation and budget monitoring to 27 October 2021 was received.
- b. **RESOLVED** to authorise the following payments.

Supplier	Reason	Amount	Payment Reference
S Malone	Reimbursement for brush cutter parts	£119.54	21/22.14
S Malone	Reimbursement for Footpath Signs	£47.94	21/22.15
Acklington Village Hall	Room Hire – Footpath Training, Footpath Working Party Meeting and Neighbourhood Plan Coffee Morning	£100.00	21/22.16
T Mezza	Reimbursement for materials (play area repairs)	£8.95	21/22.17
Royal British Legion	Poppy Wreath	£50.00	21/22.18

- c. The following receipts were noted.

Date	Payee	Reason	Amount
11/10/21	Lloyds	Interest	£0.11

#### 058/21 Finance

The Parish Council considered the draft Budget for the Year Ending 31 March 2023. The following main points were discussed:

- a. The Parish Council discussed whether it would be more cost effective to purchase and use its own grass cutting equipment rather than continuing with the NCC Service Level Agreement. A business proposal would need to be worked up, to include working practices, training, storage and maintenance.
- b. The Parish Council wishes to increase the precept gradually in small increments each year to cover rising costs, to avoid the need for a large jump in any one year.
- c. The Parish Council discussed the costs associated with taking responsibility for defibrillators and speed cameras. The Parish Council acknowledged the cost implications of doing so, but agreed that these were important to have in the village.
- d. **RESOLVED** to approve the draft Budget for the Year Ending 31 March 2023 with no changes.

#### 059/21 Policies

**RESOLVED** to approve the following policies:

- a. Standing Orders
- b. Code of Conduct
- c. Complaints Policy
- d. Safeguarding Policy

#### 060/21 Planning

- a. The Parish Council noted that certain planning applications submitted by Guyzance Hall Estates refer to a Strategic Planning Document, which has been shared confidentially with NCC. The Parish Council has requested a copy but has not yet received one. The response received from the Estate does not clearly state whether the Document will be provided.  
**RESOLVED** to request a copy of the document from NCC Planning Department.
- b. The Parish Council noted that its response given previously in relation to a change of use application is being misquoted by Guyzance Hall Estates in subsequent applications and comments.  
**RESOLVED** to write to Guyzance Hall Estates (via their agent) to request that they stop doing so.

#### 061/21 Footpath Working Party Update

The Footpath Working Group has cleared around the two water pumps in Acklington Village in preparation for maintenance and refurbishment. The Working Group has also been focussing on responsible policing of footpaths, supporting landowners to keep these in good clear condition. Cllr Caiger has taken on responsibility within the Working Group for liaising with landowners. Footpath 101/015 has been cleared along its entire length with help from the landowner. The Footpath Working Group will focus next on Footpath 101/008, where

overgrown hedging is blocking the pathway. The Footpath Working Group has offered its support to a new team in Warkworth while they get established.

#### 062/21 Neighbourhood Plan

The Neighbourhood Plan Coffee Morning went very well. Two representatives from NCC Neighbourhood Planning Team attended. The main concern expressed by attendees relates to new developments. The Clerk will add a list of planning applications to the Parish Council website as some attendees stated that they did not know about applications.

As a result of the Coffee Morning, Mr Bill Byatt volunteered to join the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group and was appointed to be its Chairman. Three other residents have volunteered to join the Steering Group, along with Cllrs Craig, Ingleby and Mezza.

The Steering Group has held its initial meeting which Mr Rob Naples (NCC) attended. The Parish Council agreed that the Steering Group should report on its actions at each Parish Council meeting. Cllr Ingleby gave a summary of some of the topics discussed by the Steering Group, in particular the potential use of smaller ward areas within the Neighbourhood Plan to apply different policies to different areas to best meet the needs of each area.

The Steering Group's Terms of Reference are being finalised and will be presented for approval at the next Parish Council meeting.

#### 063/21 Acklington Village Water Pumps

The Parish Council thanked the Footpath Working Group for their efforts clearing around the two water pumps. The wooden structure over the pump opposite the Church (believed owned by Northumberland Estates) appears to be sound and there was no evidence of bird nests. The appearance of the wooden structure needs to be improved. Cllr Thorpe suggested that a plaque could be installed beside the pump to provide some historic information and will carry out some research. In the meantime the Parish Council will continue to monitor the condition of the wooden structure.

[The Parish Council resolved to extend the meeting].

#### 064/21 Acklington Village Planters

Cllrs carried out an assessment of the four wagons and four planters currently in place and have now also liaised with ACT. The wagons have a false floor which was put in place to save on compost; this will be removed in the Spring before planting to allow sufficient depth for bulbs. The planters will be filled with perennials and some annuals. The intention is to focus on the planters beside the Village Signs and to give height and colour throughout the season. One of the planters has previously been seeded with wildflowers but unfortunately these have not done well and it was agreed not to continue with this.

#### 065/21 Play Area

The Parish Council thanked Cllr Mezza for his work in the play area, carrying out repairs. The nuts, bolts and screws on equipment have been greased and replaced as required. The swings have been greased. The zip line has been checked. Two planks have been replaced. The matting has been replaced. Removal of the poles in the reading area had previously been considered but this is not easily possible: the poles extend two foot below the ground and have been concreted in place. It was agreed to leave these in situ for the time being. The Clerk is following up on previous quotes received for repairs to the slide and for new toddler swings. The Parish Council discussed wood treatments and that the play area might need to be closed for this.

#### 066/21 Items for the next Agenda

- Correspondence received
- Tree Surgeon – Cllr Barras meeting with Mr David Orange
- Update on Planning Applications

#### 067/21 Date of Next Meeting

Tuesday 4 January 2022 at 7:00pm.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 8:47pm.