

Minutes of Meeting of Norham Parish Council held on 27th July 2020

Those present were: Jim Greenwood (JG) Jim Blythe (JB), Sheelagh Hume (SH), John Grahamslaw (JJG) and Alison Murphy (AM).

7.20.1. To accept apologies for Absence

Apologies from George Straughen and Dougie Watkin

7.20.2 To make any Declaration of Interest

None.

7.20.3. To agree Minutes of previous meeting

The Minutes of the Annual Meeting held on 18th May 2020 were confirmed as an accurate record and signed by the Chairman.

7.20.4 Matters Arising from Minutes

i. Proposed Joint Neighbourhood Planning in Norham and Islandshire

The Planning Workshop document had been circulated and there were no comments other than the situation in relation to the de-allocation of land for housing in the NCC Draft Local Plan. VLC will confirm this.

ii. Play Areas

JJG confirmed he had carried out a visual inspection and all was well, including the chains which had been mentioned in the RoSPA report. The play areas were now open. DW is disinfecting roughly every other day-weather/time permitting. Signage is up. Thanks were noted to Ian Simpson and Stuart Kellet for giving their time and help so quickly with this. After discussion it was agreed that strimming by NCC would be preferred to the use of poison. VLC will confirm to NCC. As regards the possibility of buying new play equipment, AM reported funding in the current circumstances may be difficult especially for a parish council. After discussion agreed that VLC will raise the issue with Norham Development Trust. It is possible that NDT may be able to raise funds through a variety of applications and then pass the funds to the parish council so they the council could purchase the equipment, and also save on VAT. This would require some careful consideration. AM confirmed she was happy to continue to be involved.

iii. Public Conveniences

These continue to be cleaned three times per week. Appropriate signage is up, and hand sanitizing stations are in place.

iv. Tweed Way

Jim Gibson has produced a first draft leaflet which is currently with GS for consideration.

v. Mobile Mast/BT Phone box

BT are in process of seeking permission to remove inter alia the Norham phone box. An objection has already been lodged. NCC have now intimated that the consultation process will be extended to Feb 2021 to allow for consultation. After discussion agreed that VLC will put something on Facebook, the website and in newsround asking for opinions. JB requested that if the current phone box is to be removed, we should try to obtain a traditional red one from BT. In addition, VLC will contact local MP and NCC regarding the mobile signal, including JJG technical input.

vi. Northumberland LED street lighting/Undergrounding of cables

No developments to report.

vii Street Signs/Village Map

GS has this in hand. DWs request for planting by the new fence was noted but it was agreed this would be left for GS to decide.

viii New Speed signs/30mph reminders

The speed sign on Birch Hill is out of action but is still under warranty. An engineer will come 5th August. NCC had confirmed the proposed speed sign on Castle Bank should be in place within a couple of months if all goes smoothly. There were complaints regarding speeding on both roads and along West Street. VLC will contact Community Police for advice/help.

ix Norham Development Trust

NDT has had its first AGM, and had received £4070 from Awards for All. Still looking at insurance, and had purchased gazebos for use by groups.

x Norham Website

The website is slowly building and generally needs more people to use it so that it becomes the go-to place for all things Norham.

7.20.5 Northumberland County Council Draft Local Plan-De-allocation of Land

The information regarding Historic England's objections to the area next to Glebefield continuing to be allocated for housing had been considered. The main problem is the adverse effect development would have on the old Vicarage. After discussion agreed that all were happy for VLC to continue to deal with this matter. She will draft comments to be sent in in response to the current consultation which includes this.

7.20.6 Flagpole

There was a desire for a flagpole on the village green. Costs were estimated at c£1000 in total (for a 10m fiberglass moveable pole, including flags, internal ropes etc.) The Tommy Fund had £255 which could be put towards this cost. The Masons Arms planned a fund-raising campaign and were asking the council to contribute. This campaign had not yet started. An option was for the council to pay upfront and wait for the Masons contribution later. After lengthy discussion agreed that this will be considered further – time was too tight to give the matter proper consideration - in particular it was necessary to agree the proposed height type and position of any flagpole as this might have ramifications for planning. A 10m flagpole was considered too high. It was also agreed that council should not pay for the whole project upfront. JJG indicated that in his view that VJ Day in Norham was not a celebration but a commemoration.

7.20.7 Illegal camping

After discussion it was noted that from Cow Holme to Fishers Walk is common land, and agreed that VLC will obtain a 'no overnight parking' sign for the foot of Pedwell Way, and a 'no vehicles past this point' sign for the riverbank upstream of Pedwell Way.

7.20.8 Community Police

VLC has been in contact with community police who have introduced themselves. Alexandra Carr had already responded to request for help as regards the 'illegal' parking. They intend to produce a report for every meeting of complaints to the police, and will attend meetings if they can. It was agreed they would be asked to provide a 'police presence' from time to time on Birch Hill and Castle bank to discourage speeding.

7.20.9 Complaint re Boy Racers

Community police had also been contacted re a complaint about boy racers. Their main advice was if possible, to report the incident as it was happening, and if possible, to take registration numbers/photos. After discussion of the pros and cons of traffic calming measures it was agreed that these could cause more problems than those were intended to solve, and that generally there were sufficient number of parked cars to act generally as a deterrent.

7.20.10 Trees

AM reported there were a number of trees which had suffered damage in Jubilee Field and down Pedwell Way that should be looked at, tidied up and/or made safe. VLC will contact D Gibson and ask him to have a look and estimate the cost of works required.

7.20.11 Jubilee Field

Agreed that JJG would look at the benches in the field some of which were rotten and therefore a health and safety hazard. He will remove or repair as appropriate. Agreed that Jubilee Field remained a special project.

7.20.12 Heritage Orchard

After discussion it was agreed that VLC would contact the Norham Natural Environment Group to discuss ongoing maintenance/grass cutting in the new heritage orchard, where NCC would not cut the grass.

Finance

7.20.13 To review Payments and Receipts since last meeting

As follows

19th May - Came and Company £503.51 (insurance); Norham and Duddo PCC £150 (graveyard maintenance) and £150 (newsround costs); HospiceCare North Northumberland £50; CAB £50; Great North Air Ambulance £50; Norham Village Hall £250.

20th May – Norham Community Website £75

2 June - S Broadbent £162 (WCs); V Craig £18.24 (stamps)

17 June – Playsafety Ltd £164.40 (annual inspection)

24 June – G Straughen £140 (paint costs); T Simpson £355 (map frame)

3 July – S Broadbent £248.30 (WCs)

7 July – Spooner & Davidson £109 (equipment repair)

22 July – Greaves West Ayre £186 (internal audit); V Craig £23.74 (disinfectant) and £75.82 (signage)

7.20.14 To look at Bank balances in Current and Deposit Account

As at 27 July the current account balance was £13663.36 and business account £971.02

7.20.15 To look at Planning Application decisions

7 West Street granted.

Query raised re work being carried out on a property in Castle Street. VLC will check the position re any planning applications.

7.20.16 To look at state of Roads and Pavements

JJG queried what was happening re road from Galagate to Salutation. This will be reviewed at next meeting as all NCC works delayed by pandemic.

7.20.17 General Correspondence

After discussion agreed that VLC would contact Horncliffe parish council as regards registration of their village green.

Any Other Business (For information only)

After discussion agreed that VLC would write to English Heritage to complain about the state of the fence by the Marmion gate. In addition, VLC will write to BT to request that the vegetation around the exchange in West Street be tidied up.

Date of next meeting: 28th September (Venue to be confirmed)