



**Minutes of the meeting of Chollerton Parish Council held on Wednesday  
22<sup>nd</sup> March 2023 at 7.30pm at Barrasford Village Hall**

**Present:** Cllr Edward Heslop in the Chair

Cllr Andy Bennett  
Cllr Fiona Charlton  
Cllr Malcolm Johnson  
Cllr Bruce Lowdon  
Cllr Michael Smith  
Cllr Maggie Tarbit  
Ms Jayne Longlands in attendance

County Cllr (CC) Nick Morphet

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

**1. Apologies for Absence.**

Received from; Cllr Dorothy Pigg.

**2. Declaration of Interest from Members**

*To receive disclosures of personal and/or prejudicial interest from Members on matters to be considered at the meeting*

None.

**3. Opportunity for Matters Raised by Members of the Public before the meeting to be discussed**

*Questions which require a substantive answer at the meeting need to have been submitted to the Parish Clerk in writing 5 days before the meeting*

None.

**4. Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the PC Meeting held on Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> January 2023 were approved as a true and correct record, and duly signed by the Chair.

**(a) Matters Arising** from the above minutes not addressed elsewhere on the agenda.

It was noted we were still awaiting a response from Susan Ogle at NCC and it was **AGREED** that CC Morphet would follow this up.

**Japanese Knotweed;** the Chair reported that a copy of a historical NCC letter had been forwarded to Rex Robson for information.

**Barrasford Garage;** the Chair said that he had spoken directly to the owner to raise the tidiness issue and this situation had slightly improved.

## 5. County Councillor Report

CC Nick Morphet's report had been circulated to members in advance of the meeting. He reported verbally at the meeting as follows:-

He had met with Paul Lishman and agreed the locations for **the signs at the Species Rich Grassland site** (with the signs being made from diabond). Due to inflation, the cost of the signs had doubled, from £300 to £600. CC Morphet was awaiting a revised estimate, the order would then be placed. The turnaround time was be approximately three weeks.

**Japanese Knotweed on the A68 just south of Barrasford quarry;** CC Morphet had reported this to Highways Maintenance. NCC's Parks and Green Spaces Officer, Sam Talbot, dealt with knotweed on roadsides and an update would be provided in due course.

CC Morphet had contacted the company behind the Mesh-Tech product about control of **the knotweed at tip corner in Gunnerton**. Unfortunately, the mesh was not commercially available yet. Spraying the knotweed with herbicide would cost about £5,600 and takes between 5 and 7 years to control the problem. The alternative would be to physically remove the knotweed and the rubbish by lorry and dispose of it in landfill although the cost for this would be between £56,000 and £61,000. The Chair had spoken to an established contact at Minsteracres (Complete Weed Control) and it was noted that their costs would be considerably less; he had their contact details if CC Morphet required them. The high costs involved may limit the amount of help that we would be able to offer, and the Chair noted that it was highly unlikely we would be able to assist. The PC's view on this issue is shown at Appendix 1.

CC Morphet had spoken to the Minerals and Waste Compliance Officer, Alex Guy, about the noise from **Barrasford Quarry**. He noted that the noise levels at his last monitoring visit were acceptable, and that the latest independent noise report also showed the noise levels to be within acceptable limits. He had also spoken to the quarry manager, Adam Smith, about the lighting. Mr Smith confirmed that they had tilted and repositioned some of the lights, but that they decided to wait until the lights needed replacing before they replaced them with a warmer colour (Cllr Bennett raised the issue of the potential lifespan of the lights). Mr Smith had offered to attend a future PC meeting. The Chair noted that he had

been trying to contact Mr Smith and it was **AGREED** he would pursue this further.

CC Morphet had reported **the broken signs at Edge House Farm and Five Lane Ends**; although no repairs had yet taken place, it was noted that this was all in-hand.

**The build-up of leaves in the lay-by on Dalla Bank**; CC Morphet said that he had tackled this problem himself, together with the kind help of a local resident. He had since contacted the Neighbourhood Services Manager and it has been agreed that NCC would now sweep the lay-by annually.

**The “twenty when lights flash” signs in Barrasford** had been reported in January and again the previous day. It was noted the north sign was now working although the south side was not; Cllr Michael Smith suggested the signs may run on solar power which may be where the crux of the problem lay.

The **Bench** order had been delayed due to extenuating circumstances beyond CC Morphet’s control; however, it was reported that this would be ordered in due course.

The government was now accepting applications for the £400 **Energy Bill Support Scheme Alternative Fund** (<https://www.gov.uk/apply-energy-bill-support-if-not-automatic>) and the £200 **Alternative Fuels Payment Alternative Fund** (<https://www.gov.uk/apply-alternative-fuel-bill-support-if-not-automatic>). These links should be accessed by anyone who lived in a park home or was completely off-grid. Everyone else would receive both payments automatically.

**Footway Accessibility Audits** had been conducted in both Newbrough and Humshaugh. CC Morphet had since been asked to do them in six more villages, including Gunnerton and Barrasford. A Footway Accessibility Audit involved looking at the width and surface quality of every footway in a village, and also looking at where dropped kerbs were required. A map was then created showing where the problems were and this was sent to the Highways Programme. They normally responded by installing a few dropped kerbs and resurfacing the worst footways. More expensive improvements had to be requested through the Local Transport Plan programme. Every parish councillor would be very welcome to help with footway audits. CC Morphet **AGREED** to share the dates for both audits once they had been set. The Chair noted the footpath next to the wild flowers at Barrasford which required some work, with the option of possible assistance from the quarry to help finance this.

There were a few road closures coming up which included:-

- The A6079 closed at Chollerton viaduct from 8am to 6pm between Monday 17<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> April for repairs to the viaduct.
- The C216 closed for surface dressing between Barrasford Quarry and Wark Bridge from Monday 8<sup>th</sup> to Friday 19<sup>th</sup> May, and the A6079 closed for resurfacing between Low Brunton and Chollerton from Friday 12<sup>th</sup> to Friday 19<sup>th</sup> May. Because these two road closures overlap, Gunnerton, Barrasford and Chollerton residents would have to travel via the A68 between the 12<sup>th</sup> and the 19<sup>th</sup> May. Gunnerton residents would also be able to come and go via the Coal Road.

**McDonald's litter** was getting really bad on our roadsides, especially along the A6079. CC Morphet had met with the managers of Hexham McDonalds last week to discuss the problem. CC Morphet noted he might be able to pay for traffic management out of his Members Local Improvement Scheme Allowance at a cost of £2,250 to pay for three days' to litter picking on the A6079 between the A69 and the A68. Cllr Bennett said the litter problem would be an ongoing issue and it felt wrong to spend the money on this, he suggested a stronger push from NCC to McDonalds was required for them to clear up after themselves; Cllr Morphet noted that NCC had limited powers to do this. The Chair said that McDonald's were picking litter up locally in and around Hexham, he suggested that McDonald's were an easy target for criticism and there were many other fast food outlets that were also responsible for the roadside litter. Cllr Morphet suggested this matter be added to the agenda of the Tynedale Local Council. It was **AGREED** that we would not support the £2,250 to deal with this matter.

The Chair thanked Cllr Morphet for his report.

## **6. Items for Discussion**

*To discuss issues which have arisen or are causing concern within the Parish of Chollerton*

### **(a) Coronation Mugs**

It was noted that 132 coronation mugs had been ordered for the price of £4.45 each, with delivery costs of £28 (therefore a total cost of £615.40 plus VAT) and it was **AGREED** that this would be paid.

### **(b) Insurance 2023/24**

It was noted that the 2023/24 insurance premium would be due in June 2023. It was **AGREED** that a payment for £657.47 would be issued to BHIB Limited for this premium (which had previously been secured for a three year period, i.e. from 2022/23 to 2024/25).

**(c) Car Parking at Chollerton First School**

The Chair reported on the current car parking situation when school children were being dropped off and picked up from the village school. He had emailed the Chair of the Governors; the minibuses were now reversing in the school car park and the situation was working much better.

**(d) Gunnerton Footpath**

Zara Quinn, Definitive Map & Search Technical Officer for NCC had issued a Review of the Definitive Map and Statement of Rights of Way correspondence relating to alleged Public Footpath No 48, between the Coal Road and Hawthorne Terrace (E/11/48z).

The recommendation was that this route be approved as a footpath on the definitive map. It was **AGREED** that the PC would respond in support of the recommendation for this.

**(e) Pads for Barrasford Defibrillator**

Cllr Dorothy Pigg had noted that the pads for the Barrasford defibrillator were due to be replaced; the Chair would speak to Cllr Pigg and email PC members with an update in due course.

**(f) Gunnerton Coronation Celebration: 7<sup>th</sup> May 2023**

It was noted that the Gunnerton Playground Committee had requested £450 to help fund the Gunnerton Coronation Celebrations on 7<sup>th</sup> May 2023 from the NCC Coronation Fund (they also required other items which would cost an additional £200). All PC residents would be invited to attend the celebrations with many fun activities planned (rather than providing food, they would be encouraging people to bring picnics).

It was **AGREED** that the PC would donate the sum of £250 to help with their costs and also offer additional financial support to meet any shortfall once they had heard back from NCC about their coronation funding application.

It was also **AGREED** that PC members would speak to local residents about the option of planting a Coronation Tree within each village.

**(g) Gunnerton Playing Field**

Gunnerton Playgroup Committee had been successful in their application to fund two goal posts, a new seat and part funding for a basket swing and mats.

However, it was noted that NCC would not release S106 funds until the items had been bought and paid for. The Chair said that he had contacted NALC to advise whether Chollerton PC would be able to help pay these funds as a temporary loan (the amount required via loan would be £2,408) and it was **AGREED** that we would respond to Ms Gemma Nixon accordingly.

## **7. Correspondence**

*To note items received and sent out and consider their contents, as necessary*

### **(a) The Carbon Literacy Project webinar on Monday 20 March to mark the launch of the new Parish, Town and Community Councils Toolkit Course**

This event was noted.

## **8. Financial Matters**

### **(a) Bank reconciliation as at 27<sup>th</sup> February 2023: £12,482.70 (enclosed)**

This figure was noted and accepted.

### **(b) Online Banking Update; authorisation of online payments (and Maggie's online banking application)**

It was noted that Cllr Maggie Tarbit's online banking application would be presented again; in the meantime it was the Chair, Vice Chair and Clerk who were able to authorise payments (requiring two people to agree each payment).

It was **AGREED** that future online payments would be made with the authorisation of any one of the three agreed Parish Councillor signatories, together with the Clerk.

### **(c) Clerks Expenses: £100 per annum**

It was **AGREED** that this payment would be issued.

### **(d) Northumberland Estate: Barrasford Village Green Rent: £30 per annum**

It was **AGREED** that this payment would be issued.

**(e) Lime Design for website hosting: £178.80 to pay**

It was **AGREED** that this payment would be issued.

**(f) Barrasford Playground Insurance Contribution: £558.61 being the total invoice amount**

It was **AGREED** that a payment of £280 would be issued as part payment (50%) for this.

**9. Planning Applications**

- (a) Application Withdrawn: St Christopher's Church, Gunnerton**
- (b) Planning Granted: 2 The Cottages, Colwell**
- (c) Planning Application: Station House, Barrasford**
- (d) Planning Application: Fell House Farm Cottage, Colwell**
- (e) Planning Application: Valley View, Gunnerton**

These applications were noted.

**10. Information Items**

*To note information items received and passed to Parish Councillors via email.*

None.

**11. Any Other Business**

*Business taken under this agenda item is for discussion only.*

**(a) Chipchase Road Tidy-up**

Cllr Andy Bennett noted the C215 Chipchase to Knightfold Ridge road which was extremely dirty (this being through general traffic use over time) and said it would benefit from a good clean. It was **AGREED** that CC Morphet would follow this up at NCC.

**(b) Colwell Village**

It was noted that Colwell village would also benefit from a sweep-up and it was **AGREED** that CC Morphet would follow this up.

**(c) Dog Fouling Warning Signs**

The Chair duly provided dog fouling warning signs to Cllr Lowdon for use within Gunnerton.



**(d) Parish Heroes**

The Chair declared an interest in this item; he noted the sterling work of local resident, Richard Hay, and felt his efforts should be commended. It was **AGREED** he be invited to attend the next PC meeting and be awarded with a certificate.

**(d) Brambles**

Cllr Johnson noted the overgrown brambles at the south side of Gunnerton; Cllr Lowdon said he would directly help to tackle this issue.

**12. Date and Venue for Next Meeting**

Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> May 2023 at 7.30pm at Barrasford Village Hall

The Chair thanked everyone for attending. There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.45pm.