

The minutes of the Meeting of Acklington Parish Council held on 7.00pm on 9 May 2023 at Acklington Village Hall.

PRESENT: Cllrs S Malone, T Mezza, J Newton (Chairman), S Shanks (Minute 2023/10(b) onwards), S Thorpe.

2023/1 Election of Chairman

RESOLVED To elect Cllr Newton as Chairman and for him to sign his Declaration of Acceptance of Office before the next Meeting.

2023/2 Election of Vice Chairman

RESOLVED To elect Cllr Ingleby as Vice Chairman and for her to sign her Declaration of Acceptance of Office before the next Meeting.

2023/3 Apologies for Absence

Cllrs Barras, Craig and Ingleby

2023/4 Disclosure of Interests

None.

2023/5 Minutes of Previous Meeting

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 7 March 2023 and on 18 April 2023 were agreed as a true record.

2023/6 Appointment of Members to Groups and as Representatives to other organisations

RESOLVED

- a. To appoint Cllrs Malone, Shanks, Newton and Ingleby to the Footpaths Working Group.
- b. To appoint Cllrs Craig, Ingleby and Mezza to the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group.
- c. To appoint Cllr Ingleby as the Parish Council's Representative on the Village Hall Committee.

2023/7 Approval of Policies

RESOLVED to approve the following policies:

- a. Standing Orders
- b. Financial Regulations
- c. Risk Management and Internal Control Policy
- d. Code of Conduct
- e. Equality and Diversity Policy
- f. Health and Safety Policy
- g. Safeguarding Policy
- h. Grants Policy
- i. Complaints Policy

2023/8 Deferral of Remaining Items of Business from Standing Order 5j

RESOLVED to defer the following items of Business:

- a. Confirmation of Arrangements of Insurance Cover – defer until due
- b. Review of Subscriptions – defer until budget setting

2023/9 Time and Place of Ordinary Meetings

RESOLVED To determine the time and place of ordinary meetings of the Council as follows, all meetings to be held in Acklington Village Hall at 7:00pm unless otherwise specified on the meeting agenda:

4 July 2023, 5 September 2023, 7 November 2023, 9 January 2024, 5 March 2024 and 7 May 2024

2023/10 Report from County Councillor

- a. The dog bin has not been emptied at the crossroads beside the bus shelter.
[Cllr Shanks joined the Meeting.]
- b. Cllr Watson is willing to provide money from his Members Small Schemes Budget for new village gateways.

2023/11 Planning

- a. 22/03118/FUL – Rigg and Furrow Brewery. Permission has been granted.
- b. 22/02845/FUL – Land North of 18-24 Acklington Village. The Ecology Officer has withdrawn their objections based on the mitigation measures put forward by the applicant. The Built Heritage and Design Officer was not happy with the design but has suggested changes. Northumberland Estates have revised their statement to suggest removing the Open Space status of the former school playground as it is landlocked and there are other open spaces in the area.

2023/12 Annual Accountability and Governance Return for the Year Ended 31 March 2023

- a. The Internal Auditor commented that the Policies needed to be reviewed and re-approved, which has been done at this meeting. The Internal Auditor has also suggested an interim bank reconciliation takes place, which will be arranged.
- b. **RESOLVED** to approve the Annual Governance Statement with the answer 'Yes' to each assertion.
- c. **RESOLVED** to approve the Annual Accounts for the Year Ended 31 March 2023.
- d. **RESOLVED** to approve the Accounting Statement and Explanation of Variances.
- e. **RESOLVED** to confirm and approve the Certificate of Exemption.

2023/13 Finance

- a. The financial summary, bank reconciliation and budget monitoring to 2 May 2023 was received.
- b. **RESOLVED** to authorise the following payments.

Supplier	Reason	Amount	Payment Ref
Ludman Planning Ltd	Neighbourhood Plan Consultancy Fees	£4,000.00	22/23.36
Acklington Village Hall	Neighbourhood Plan and Parish Council Meetings	£56.66	23/24.1
NALC	Subscription and Website	£227.89	23/24.2
Robson & Cowan	Personal Safety Equipment	£152.76	23/24.3
C Lewis	Salary (Dec-Apr and backpay under SLCC Pay Agreement £69.54)	£529.34	23/24.4
HMRC	PAYE	£68.60	23/24.5
S Ingleby – reimbursement	Plants	£20.00	23/24.10

- c. The following receipts were noted.

Date	Payee	Reason	Amount
9/1/23	Lloyds	Interest	£5.16
9/2/23	Lloyds	Interest	£6.16
6/3/23	NCC	Precept	£4,880.00
9/3/23	Lloyds	Interest	£5.70
11/4/23	Lloyds	Interest	£7.65

- d. Early grass cutting does not seem to have taken place. The length of times between cuts has resulted in large amounts of loose grass cuttings left after cuts do take place. Bringing the work in house would create difficulties around training, insurance and equipment, with a new mower needed.

2023/14 Footpaths Working Group Update

- a. Northumberland Estates have scheduled work in Station Wood for early May, with a view to reopening the footpath.
- b. A safety fence is being installed around the open drainage culvert on the Cheviot Meadow Permissive Path.
- c. An 80 metre length of Footpath 101/020 has been cleared of obstructions by the volunteers. A good relationship has been established with the landowner.
- d. NCC Area Countryside Office Tony Derbyshire has committed to helping with the repair of fingerpost signs in the parish, which will be repaired at the NCC workshop and reinstalled.
- e. The team has been joined by some new parish residents, who are welcomed.

2023/15 Neighbourhood Plan

The consultant has advised that the Parish Council's suggested amendments should be incorporated into the Draft Plan before it goes to consultation, in particular the additional Local Green Space designations (next to the Paddocks and Inglenook). The consultant is still working on the amendments and the wording for the reinstated Acklington Policy to try to avoid triggering a Strategic Environmental Assessment.

2023/16 Bins

RESOLVED to purchase three new bins to be located at the crossroads, Millenium Way and the football pitch.

2023/17 Play Area

Site visits still to be arranged.

2023/18 Streetlights

67AA is still not working. This may be because the area is still under construction.

2023/19 Items for the Next Agenda

- Local Transport Plan priorities
- Co-option of new councillor
- Village Gateways

2023/20 Date of Next Meeting

Tuesday 4 July 2023 at 7:00pm, Acklington Village Hall.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 8:10pm.