



**Minutes of the meeting of Chollerton Parish Council held on Wednesday
26th July 2023 at 7.30pm at Colwell Village Hall**

Present: Cllr Dorothy Pigg (Vice Chair) in the Chair

Cllr Malcolm Johnson
Cllr Bruce Lowdon
Cllr Michael Smith
Cllr Maggie Tarbit
Ms Jayne Longlands in attendance

County Cllr (CC) Nick Morphet
Delian Faran, Locality Co-ordinator for NCC

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

1. Apologies for Absence

Received from; Cllr Edward Heslop (Chair), Cllr Fiona Charlton and Cllr Andy Bennett.

2. 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

Cllr Maggie Tarbit raised the following two items:-

(a) Chollerton PCC

Although Chollerton PC had previously given Chollerton PCC a financial contribution, it was noted that their bill was more than expected; they asked if the PC would consider giving them additional monies. It was **AGREED** that the PCC be invited to put forward their case in writing.

(a) Weeds in Barrasford

There were weeds on the Barrasford pathways, particularly from the school to play park, and also from the shop to Elwood. It was **AGREED** to ask NCC for help with this matter, although it was noted that local residents could also take an active role in addressing this issue themselves.

Cllr Malcolm Johnson asked for tidiness in Barrasford village and praise for the Monday Men to be recorded within the minutes.

To be ratified at Chollerton Parish Council Meeting on 27th September 2023

3. Declaration of Interest from Members

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

The Vice Chair declared an interest in Barrasford Play Park, as she was the newly elected Treasurer for this committee.

4. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 24th May 2023 were approved as a true and correct record, and duly signed by the Vice Chair.

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

It was noted that our **letter to NCC regarding the LTP and Walk Mill bridge** asked for “priority notices” only, as “road narrows” signs already existed.

5. County Councillor Report

including a presentation on sewage works and water pollution (Delia Faran, Locality Co-ordinator, to also attend)

NCC Nick Morphet reported as follows:-

1. He had emailed Susan Ogle in NCCs Housing dept. regarding **the possibility of Karbon reinstating local adverts**. He hoped to have an update for the next meeting.

2. Benches had been ordered in June and were due to be delivered to Newbrough Cricket Club on Tuesday. It was **AGREED** that Cllr Michael Smith would collect Chollerton PCs bench and deliver this to the Vice Chair’s home, for installation by the Monday Men.

3. The **signs** at Edge House Farm and the top of Dalla Bank had been erected, whilst the sign at Middle Farm was still to be installed; although this matter was being followed up. It was **AGREED** that CC Morphet would also follow up use of the gulley machine at Gunnerton.

4. The **“twenty when lights flash” signs** at Barrasford’; Cllr Bruce Lowdon and Cllr Malcolm Johnson said that signs had been working both mornings and afternoons.

5. Every **gulley** in the ward should have been cleaned out over the last couple of months.

6. Everyone should now be using **Fix My Street** to bring highways maintenance issues to the Council's attention. However, if an issue isn't dealt with within a reasonable period of time people should provide CC Morphet with their Fix My Street reference number and he would make enquiries by email.

7. **The Species Rich Grassland project** was going well. The signs had been installed, and a plant and insect survey conducted in late June, which identified 15% more plant species and 73% more insect species than 2022. There had been a bioblitz with the children from Chollerton First School last week, and they'd had a great time. Northumberland Communities Together had put more money than expected towards the cost of the signs; it was **AGREED** that Chollerton PC would pay £36.95 towards this cost.

8. When the signs for the Species Rich Grassland project were installed, CC Morphet had to identify the edge of **the footway** so that it wasn't damaged, and it seems that the footway is a full two metres wide! It was also clear that scraping the vegetation off it along its whole length would be far too big a job for a small group of volunteers [the Vice Chair noted that the Monday Men had started to scrape the path off but found this was too big a job for them], so the Neighbourhood Services Senior Team Leader (Geoff Cairns) has said he would aim to do it in October or November.

9. CC Morphet carried out **the Footways Accessibility Audit in Gunnerton** on 15th July. He discovered that West Crescent has great footways but no dropped kerbs, and that the rest of the village has a smattering of rough and narrow footways. Plans had been drawn up and the parish council's opinion would be obtained before sending them to the Highways Programme. Cllr Bruce Lowdon suggested that speed limits should be reduced through the village due to a lack of suitable footpaths; CC Morphet said he would recommend this idea to NCC.

10. **The New mobile library vans** had arrived but weren't in use yet because of various risk assessments. The vans would be used for community outreach work as well as providing a mobile library service. They were heated, accessible and well equipped with IT equipment.

11. CC John Riddle would be the Tynedale representative on **the new Local Bus Board (LBB)**. The first LBB meeting would be in autumn.

12. **The County Council declared an ecological emergency** the week before last. The decision was made by cabinet after the Chief Ecologist presented them with a report advising them to declare an ecological emergency as part of a package of measures which included agreeing to lead the North of Tyne Local Nature Recovery Strategy on behalf of the



North of Tyne Combined Authority. CC Morphet was starting to think about ways that his group could push NCC to act on the emergency declaration. The Chief Ecologist's report to cabinet was well worth reading; [Chief Ecologist's Report to Cabinet](#).

CC Morphet invited residents and parish councillors to suggest ways in which our bus services could be improved to him.

CC Morphet then gave a presentation on sewage pollution in the North Tyne.

His presentation included information on legal and illegal sewage spillages, spillage locations and other monitored locations. It was noted that there were many discharges of untreated and partially treated sewage in and upstream of Chollerton parish. Colwell sewage treatment works was the worst offender for sewage pollution in the whole of the North East. CC Morphet said that both monitoring and spillage rates had now reduced although the situation regarding spillage rates was still not good. He added that the river had a good ecological status, although ammonia and phosphate levels were high and the river failed on its chemical status. CC Morphet said there were many organisations and campaigns which people could support if they wanted to help with the sewage issue.

It was **AGREED** that CC Morphet's presentation would be added to the PC website.

Delian Faran, Locality Co-ordinator from Northumberland Communities Together (NCT) attended the meeting and spoke of this NCC service.

She explained there was a telephone number that people could ring to seek holistic help; available for all residents as well as for referrals (although the latter would be with the consent of the individual). An attendance allowance was available for over 65s to apply for (up to £96 per week) if they have a disability, which was not means-testing.

Support planners could give advice and signpost people to services. They assisted with asset-based community development which included networking. Funding streams were available with finance to support house energy efficiencies (Warmer Homes Fund, Borthwick Heating). There were also food banks and support with paying energy bills.

All calls were triaged the same day (with lines open Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm) and referred to the appropriate body/person. Delia Faran confirmed that help with the attendance allowance application was available.

She suggested that a home visit by a support planner would be the best

way forward to deal with individual cases in order to assess them comprehensively.

6. Items for Discussion

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

- (a) **Finance and Planning Assistance to Chair**
and
- (b) **Flood Plan Addendum to the Emergency Plan**

It was noted that these items would be deferred to the following meeting when Cllr Andy Bennett would be in attendance.

(c) **Parking Hazard in Colwell**

A local resident had contacted the PC, raising concerns about the hazardous parking in Colwell, with parked cars totally blocking vision to the right, and tractors and horse boxes regularly pulling out of the noted junction.

Cllr Bruce Lowdon suggested that the residents in question had been given a few chances and we should now make this complaint official. It was **AGREED** that CC Morphet would speak to NCCs Highways Dept, with the Vice Chair to speak to the Chair about how to progress this matter further with the Police in order to take it forward.

7. Correspondence

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

- (a) **Gunnerton Green Playing Field Wall: email from Galbraiths dated 5th May 2023**

It was noted that the larger of the two gaps in the wall at Gunnerton Green Playing Field had been repaired by the party who damaged it and the other gap was in-hand. It was **AGREED** that Cllr Lowdon would follow this matter up with Playing Field Committee, and the Clerk would message Galbraiths to say we were looking into this.

(b) **Barrasford Quarry Visit Update**

Adam Smith had informed the Clerk that the Barrasford Quarry Visit would now probably be in September due to renovation works taking place within their current meeting room.

(c) Barrasford Play Park and Trees

Northumberland Estates had agreed to look at the sycamore tree in the play area at Barrasford; at the same time (on this occasion) they would look at the Cherry tree which had been planted in the park by a resident a number of years ago which required some cutting back as it was hanging over on to the footpath at head height.

8. Financial Matters

(a) Bank reconciliation as at 21st June 2023: £9,811.56

This figure was noted and accepted.

(b) Galbraiths - Gunnerton Playing Field Rent: £150 to pay

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

(c) Sport Tynedale Request for Support in 2023/4

It was **AGREED** that a donation of £200 would be presented to Sport Tynedale as funding for 2023/24.

9. Planning Applications

(a) Permission Granted: Fell House Farm Cottage, Colwell, NE46 4TS

This application was noted.

(b) Planning Consultation 23/02349/FUL Cowden Burn Birtley Hexham Northumberland NE48 3JE

It was **AGREED** we would inform NCC that there were no objections to this planning application.

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) Gunnerton Bridge



Cllr Bruce Lowdon noted that this matter had been attended to.

(b) Knotweed at the Quarry Entrance and near The Tone Inn

CC Morphet said these areas may be due for spraying again in 2023 and said he would remind NCC about this.

13. Date and Venue for Next Meetings

(a) Business Meeting

Wednesday 27th September 2023 at 7.30pm at Gunnerton Church

The Chair thanked everyone for attending. There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.10pm.