



Minutes of Meeting held on 24 January 2022 in Bardon Mill & Henshaw Village Hall

Present; Councillors J Oliver (Chair), V. Gibson, D. Finlayson, A. Saunders, C. Kennedy, J. Benson, S. Armstrong, County Councillor A. Sharp, M. A. Smith (Clerk), 2 Members of the Public.

1. Introduction and Welcome

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. Apologies for Absence

All Present.

3. Declarations of Interest

Cllr Oliver (Potential land ownership issue re Falcon Grange).

4. Public Questions

Two residents from Falcon Grange attended the meeting (as they had at the November 2021 meeting) on behalf of a number of residents to again voice their concerns about the lack of progress and feedback from the County Council with regard to this estate such as the condition of the access road and drains, land ownership and responsibilities, and installation of bollards by one of the residents to block off parking bays. They themselves have written to the County Council but have not yet received any meaningful response. Cllr Sharp advised that he had continued to press for an answer on these matters but had been informed that Officers were still carrying out investigations into land ownership. Agreed that all parties would continue to pressure the County Council for resolution to the complaints.

5. Minutes of the previous meeting held on Monday 29 November 2021

5.1 These were read and approved.

6. Matters arising and actions from previous minutes

6.1 All matters were covered in the meeting.

7. General Amenities (Footpaths, Access, Seating and Lighting)

7.1 An update was given on the outstanding works:

- The new Bardon Mill sign has been replaced and the nearby bushes would be cut back asap.
- The new grit bin has been installed at Broadacres.
- Most of the gates on the right of way between the Roman Hall (Henshaw) and Brockalee were to be replaced as soon as work teams are available.
- Additional lighting is needed on the approach to Bardon Mill from Redburn. Cllr Armstrong and Cllr Sharp were to look at this and Cllr Sharp would make the necessary request.
- Drainage works are still to be done on the road to Scotchcoulthard. Cllr Saunders advised this was becoming urgent as the water ponding on the road was freezing in cold weather and causing a danger to road users. Cllr Sharp to follow this up.
- The County Council would be undertaking tree pruning works through the villages in the next few days.

8. Maintenance Programme

8.1 Village Greens. No issues to report.

8.2 General maintenance. The access road in Henshaw still needs further repair work and the Clerk and Cllr Oliver to meet on site to identify these and progress.

9. Planning Applications

9.1 No new applications to report.

10. Highway Matters

10.1 A69 Issues. A meeting between the Parish Council and Guy Opperman MP had been held on Teams with the MP continuing to fully support the request for improvement and would write to both National Highways and the Police.



10.2 A further meeting between the joint Parish Councils and National Highways had also been held on Teams with the results of speed surveys still awaited. National Highways have agreed to look at upgrades to the footpaths and crossings and would also review the decision not to erect barriers at Falcon Grange to see if there were alternative measures possible.

10.3 Road widening at Broadacres. Works have been outstanding for many years now on the proposed road widening which would see part of the grassed area taken up and surfaced/curbed to create easier and safer turning for vehicles on the estate. It was understood there was agreement reached between Karbon Homes and the County Council on this with disappointment expressed that things seem to have stalled again with problems compounded by a caravan parked on the road at this point. Agreed Cllr Sharp and the Clerk follow this up as soon as possible.

10.4 Road through Wark Forest. There is an unclassified road through Wark Forest from Scotchcoulthard to Whygate which is in both Henshaw and Wark Parish Council areas. This road (which is a 'forest' road rather than a general thoroughfare for vehicles) is now in such a poor condition that it is impassable by anything other than 4x4 vehicles. In addition, there have been instances when the route has been blocked by the Forestry Commission who undertake tree felling operations in this area. It is unclear where maintenance responsibilities lie as it could be either the County Council or the Forestry Commission (it is also a NCN cycle route 68 'Pennine Cycle Way' and work has been done by Sustrans in the past). Agreed the Clerk look into this matter further and liaise with Wark Parish Council where necessary.

11. Redburn Park

11.1 The Clerk advised that the monthly inspections were continuing as planned.

11.2 The noticeboard at the entrance had recently been repaired but has again been vandalised.

11.3 Work was needed to place flagstones next to the glass recycling bin and a request to be made to the County Council to replace the two recycling bins with one larger glass recycling bin. The broken traditional litter bin is still in need of repair.

12. Bardon Mill & Henshaw Village Hall

12.1 The hall continues to be well used with bookings stretching into next year.

12.2 The wooden flooring is uneven in several places and will potentially need replacing. This will be looked at further to determine costs and possible fund raising.

13. Northumberland National Park

13.1 Cllr Gibson and Cllr Saunders gave an update on the Sill and the National Park with the Government response to the Glover Report being considered to determine the future direction of the Parks.

14. Henshaw School

14.1 An update on the school was given by Cllr Sharp and Cllr Finlayson.

14.2 Cllr Saunders enquired if there were any proposals to mark the Queens Jubilee and it was confirmed these would be looked at now that there was more community involvement at the School now that COVID restriction were easing. It was suggested that the Parish could offer a contribution to any plans (such as a gift of Jubilee mugs which had been done on similar occasions).

15. Report by Clerk on Financial Matters

15.1 Funds held by the Parish Council were confirmed as follows:

- Current Account £2,431.21
- Easement Account £5,361.92

15.2 Payments approved between meetings:

- Northumberland County Council (Grounds Maintenance) £3,829.46
- Haltwhistle & District Joint Burial Committee (Redburn Park) £216.20
- Wages £638.92
- HMRC (Tax) £159.80



- Expenses £104.22

15.3 Payments to approve:

- The Books Accountants £42.00

15.4 The Clerk advised that following the above transactions the estimated Parish Account would be £2,245.21.

15.5 Precept 2022/23. The Clerk reported on the finances of the Parish Council and highlighted that expenditure continues to exceed income and this was primarily as a result of the Parish Council now being responsible for maintenance of the village greens and the increasing repair and maintenance costs at Redburn Park. This was not a sustainable position and the year end balance showed a steady decrease over the past few years. It was agreed therefore that the precept be increase by £2000 to £14,000.

16. Members Issues

16.1 It was agreed that the Parish Council should look to publicise the amount of work it did for the Community to show that the increase in the precept was justified. Clerk to consider ways this could be done.

17. Northumberland County Council Councillor Update

17.1 Cllr Sharp had updated on relevant issues throughout the meeting.

18. General Matters and Correspondence since last meeting

18.1 Nothing further to report.

19. Any other relevant business

No additional items were raised.

20. Date and time of next meeting Monday 28 February 2022 at 7.00pm in the Village Hall.

Signed and Approved at the Meeting held on 28 February 2022.....

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