

# THIRSTON PARISH COUNCIL

At the Annual Parish Council Meeting held via Zoom on Thursday 5 May 2022.

**Present:** Cllrs S Allan, L Clarehugh, E Davidson and D Green  
County Councillor Sanderson  
The Parish Clerk in attendance – Mrs L Hamlin

- 1 **Election of Chairman** – Cllr Davidson proposed and Cllr Green seconded Cllr Allan as Chairman. This was agreed unanimously.
- 2 **Election of Vice Chairman** - Cllr Davidson proposed and Cllr Green seconded Cllr Marshall as Vice-Chairman. This was agreed unanimously.
- 3 **Election and nominations of Members to Committees and Groups**
  - a) Cemetery Committee Meeting – Cllr Davidson with Cllr Jackson as Reserve
  - b) Recreation Field Group Meeting – Cllr Marshall with Cllr Davidson as Reserve – to be discussed as to whether there is a requirement for TPC to attend future meetings. All
  - c) Finance Group – Cllrs Allan, Green and Marshall
  - d) Complaints Committee – to be confirmed when required depending on the nature of the complaint.
- 4 **Apologies for Absence** – Cllrs Jackson and Marshall.
- 5 **Declarations of interest in items on the Agenda** – None
- 6 **Public Questions (max 5 mins per person)** – None
- 7 **The minutes of the meeting 10 March 2022** were agreed as a true record.
- 8 **Matters Arising therefrom:**
  - a) **Ditch on the Burgham Park Road blocked** - NCC reported the area was cleared, and the gullies cleaned to the best of their knowledge. There seems to be a problem with the overland runoff from surrounding fields. NCC will arrange for the ditches and gullies to be cleared again and a letter sent to the surrounding landowners reminding them of their duty of care in maintaining water courses and land drainage. NCC can't offer an exact date for these works as they are currently programming the first round of drainage works and need to prioritise the work load after the winter storms.
  - b) **Street light request for East Thirston** - The pole mounted lighting unit was removed when the new development was constructed and was never replaced by the Developer. This matter has gone on for a number of years and NCC have made several enquiries with Development Control to see whether they can get the Developer to pay for reinstating this light. The matter is further complicated as there are no readily available electrical supplies in the vicinity where the old light was located. An estimated cost to reinstate this light would be in the region of £12,000. At the current time, NCC are exploring 2 more cost effective options: Solar powered or install NCCs own overhead network to get a light in the vicinity of where 4TC was located. NCC will contact the PC once they have a cost on these options.
  - c) **Replacement bus stop sign**- NCC has been in contact with the Clerk to ascertain location of bus stop sign and this is now in hand.
  - d) **Noticeboard at Eshott** – Quotes are being received for a replacement board. Clerk
  - e) **Tree Officer re checking of trees within the parish** – No response from tree officer. Clerk
  - f) **Blocked drain and manhole cover at Wintrick** – NCC have been reminded of this and highways are investigating.
  - g) **Queens Jubilee Arrangements** – The WI has contacted the PC to ask for a donation of £40 to be considered for a prize for the “Best Decorated House”. This was agreed. It has been agreed that a tree can be planted in the rockery and Councillors to meet to discuss location. All
  - h) **Light on the steps down from the Peth not working** – to be checked in the winter.
  - i) **Give way sign onto the A1 from West Thirston has been knocked down** – Both the sign for the A1 and Bockenfield are on order and once delivered will be installed.

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- j) **Defibrillator needs registering with new “the Circuit” database** - Still waiting on information of serial number etc however in the meantime the Clerk has been contacted by First Responder to state the defibrillator has recently been deployed but they do not believe it has been used but it needs to be checked out. Clerk
- k) **Kerb stone on the left hand bend into West Thirston off the A1 need resiting**- NCC are investigating whether this is an area that they cover or if the area is covered by A1 Highways – will arrange for it to be repaired either way.
- l) **Road from A1 to Longhorsley has raised iron works and the edges of asphalt badly broken away both of which can cause damage to cars** – NCC has confirmed they will be looking into this area as soon as possible.
- m) **Felton PC response to letter re change in support for Recreation Field** – Felton PC has noted the letter but were not intending to send a formal response. Thirston PC are fine with this.
- n) **Response from CAA to email sent by PC** – Draft response to be drawn up and circulated. Clerk
- o) **NCC Local Plan inclusion of safeguarding map** – NCC has responded re the query on why not all unlicensed airfields are being included in the LP in relation to safeguarding maps. They state *“You correctly point out that there are other sites for other aviation activities in Northumberland. The Northumberland Gliders Club is also flagged as a planning constraint in our mapping system. Other individuals or businesses with aviation activities did not submit representations to the Local Plan to be expressly identified in the Local Plan, as was the case for Eshott Airfield. Should any operators ask for specific consultation arrangements in the future we would duly consider this as Local Planning Authorities are asked to respond sympathetically to requests for non-official safeguarding. I would emphasise that neither the policy nor the existence of a planning constraint for an aviation related zone, seek to prohibit development. It triggers consultation with the relevant operator / business. The principle of which is about protecting aircraft in the vicinity of the airfield. Any response to such consultation must explain how aviation interests might be affected. Any such comments must then be balanced against all other material planning considerations.”*

### Councillor Clarehugh joined the meeting

- p) **A1 dualling – concerns re footpaths** – An email has been circulated giving greater clarity to the proposals for the A1 and footpaths.
- q) **Litterpick** – Felton CAN arranged the litter pick for 23 April – 17 people took part and a lot of litter was collected. Clerk
- r) **Scam Awareness session from Age UK** – The Clerk has liaised with Felton PC to see if a joint group awareness sessions should be held and is awaiting a response.
- s) **Pathway improvements at riverside** – NCC footpath officer has been contacted to see if NCC can put down some gravel on this footpath – to date no response.
- t) **Boundary Commission changes - concerns raised with NCC** – NCC Planning has stated The Area Planning Committees (and LACS) etc are not automatically changed with Constituency Boundary reviews, but they will need to check how this will be confirmed or otherwise changed
- u) **Meeting between Felton and Thirston PCs** – Cllr Allan waiting for a response from FPC.

### 9 Report by County Councillor Sanderson

It has been a year since the election. Factory at Blyth will provide 4000 jobs. £25m turnover for Port of Blyth, their highest in history.  
Budget – key things are £48m for affordable housing over the next 3 years, extra £1m for parks and open spaces and extra £1m for public toilets.  
Keeping parking in town free of charge and public seem happy with this even though there is a cost in council tax charges. Parking charges have been increased for coastal villages.  
Road programme is pretty good and half way through constructing the car parks in Amble and Goose Hill. An extra £2.2m for U and C class roads to get extra attention

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Storm Arwin review is making good progress and need to get the message to Northern Powergrid and the Government that this is not a 1:100 event so need to address the issues that arose during the storms.

Burgham Park application – there have been several calls from the developer and hopefully a way forward can be found. Looks like they are not going to appeal the decision though.

**10 Report back from Meetings and Representations on behalf of TPC - None**

**11 Potential Projects**

a) Footpaths/Rights of Way – Nothing to report

b) Landscaping – Need to decide on the tree by June. All

c) Short term / Medium term / Long term projects – Clerk to look at Village gateways/welcome signs for costings and contact NCC about any concerns about site location/installation. Clerk

**12 To report on any planning decisions:**

**20/02026/COU** – Cottages at Burgham Park Golf Club – Change of use from holiday cottages to residential dwellings – REFUSED

**21/02941/FUL** - Dukes Cottage, West Thirston – Side extension and front porch – GRANTED

**21/03090/FUL** - Northumberland Country Zoo - Extend cafe to add a large indoor soft play facility to create an all year round attraction – GRANTED

**21/04084/FUL** – Land W of Foxhemels – 2 storey residential dwelling – REFUSED

**Planning applications pending:**

**20/04177/FUL** - Land North East of Felmoor Caravan Park - Extension to existing holiday comprising 139 no. pitches for holiday lodges plus ancillary features including water feature, play area and vintage vehicle museum – objections based on Neighbourhood Plan

**21/04280/FUL** - Paintballing Site Eshott Heugh - Hybrid planning application consisting of a detailed application for 30no holiday lodges, storage barn, parking and access and an outline application with access and all other matters reserved for the associated leisure building (Use Class E)

**22/00368/FUL** - 2 Eshott Heugh Farm Retrospective permission for a biomass boiler at the Zoo

**22/00708/FUL** – 7 Thirston Court West Moor Farm – Construction of garage and garden shed

**22/00875/LBC** – Bockenfield Manor - LBC request to use alternative material of block paving or concrete for edging of driveway. Timber edged board with retaining peg on driveway was suggested but quickly deteriorated.

**22/01312/FELTPO** – Tanglewood, Eshott Village – numerous tree works

**Planning Issues:**

**Bockenfield Caravan Park** – blue lights illuminating entrance – NCC Enforcement are looking into this. There have been a number of complaints and despite the lights being lowered down they are still a distraction at the side of the A1 and looks like there has been an emergency situation there.

**Eshott Airfield** – viewing area and café – concerns have been raised as to why no planning permission has been put in for the viewing area and also whether permissions are required to run a café serving food and beverages to the paying public. NCC has stated planning permission is required and will be contacting the airfield in relation to this.

**13 Requested Agenda Items:**

**Bottle bank update** – New lockable bottle bins have been installed which should stop people putting general rubbish directly into the bins. The Clerk has also forwarded a complaint to NCC from a landowner about the rubbish being dumped being blown over his land. The situation needs to be monitored now the new bins are installed to see if flytipping continues there and if so action needs to be taken by NCC/Police on this. Article to be put in The Bridge about the new bins and flytipping situation. Clerk

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## Green Lane access by vehicles

There is an issue with the green lane from Blackbrook Farm to the Zoo which is used by 4x4s. Clerk to speak to NCC about whether this can be looked at, it was reviewed a few years ago and NCC stated they could not close it off but need to ascertain if this is still the case

Clerk

## 14 Correspondence:

- NCC – Northumberland Local Plan 2016 to 2036 was adopted by full council on 31 March 2022 – email circulated
- NCC – launch of freepay payment scheme – not applicable to TPC as we do not invoice NCC for anything.
- NCC - Planning Validation Checklist Re-consultation April 2022 – already circulated, no comments made.
- NCC – new sporting opportunities in Northumberland - Northumberland has been invited to submit a portfolio of potential venues to develop Play Zones – not applicable as TPC has no venues
- Northumbria Police - Northumbria Connected – Northumbria Connected is the new tool to ensure that the police are delivering on the issues that affect all our communities across the North East. They want to understand the issues that most impact residents so that they can shape their Neighbourhood Policing to tackle them. They want to tell us about the issues that we want to hear about and in a way that we choose. On sign up we can decide on the updates we will receive in either text or email – Clerk will sign up for TPC and add to the website so residents can sign up as well
- Email re defibrillator having been deployed but not actually used – see item 8 above
- Costain Community Relations – exploring options on how best to liaise with community re A1 - Costain are currently beginning to explore options around how they communicate with the locals who live close to the scheme. They are aware that there are several Parish Councils and would like to understand how regular our meetings are – and whether we would be interested in Costain coming to meetings to give updates on progress or whether we would be happy to receive an invite when they host their first round of Public Information Events. It was agreed the PC would like to be included in public events.
- Emails re helicopters at Airfield – Wildcat, Coastguard and Chinook – complaints have been received as these appear to exceed the weight restrictions. There is confusion about the weight restrictions and the wording of the NCC condition relating to these. Also would it not be less confusing if MTOW was the basis of the weight of helicopters and planes. Cllr Allan is waiting to hear back from NCC Planning re a further meeting.
- Email Green Lane Association re 4x4s using green lanes – covered under item 13 above.
- Email Healthwatch Northumberland – survey as to how pharmacies are performing – Clerk to complete
- Email from Citizens Advice on new directory of service/referral platform which is launching soon called Northumberland Frontline – no relevant to TPC
- Email re: Dementia Awareness - musical tea to register interest in hosting an event
- Email from British Red Cross with details of training courses that can be held
- Email Plant Life International – cowslip survey
- Email Great Northumberland Forest Team – Application process open for ordering trees to plant in the parish
- Email from Felton CAN re Biodiversity and Climate Change Committee – it was agreed that it would be best to join the Felton Group and work together on this and Cllr Clarehugh offered to represent TPC.
- Emailed NALC updates

Clerk

Clerk

Clerk

Clerk/ Cllr  
Clarehugh

A discussion took place in relation to number of emails being received that are irrelevant to the Council and whether these should continue to be included on the agenda – it was agreed the Clerk should take a view on all emails omitting those that were irrelevant and if in doubt include on the agenda.

Clerk

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### 15 Finance

- (a) **Financial Summary** was reviewed with no issues and the current balance stands at £14,647.93 TPC funds and £4,968.60 FCJC Funds totaling £19,616.52.
- (b) **Payments** - The following list was put before members and was approved:

Payments this meeting:		
IB139	L Hamlin Backpay following National Salary Award 2021/22	£137.28
IB140	L Hamlin Salary and Expenses 25 hours at 16.10 (£402.50) 2 x Zoom Conferencing (£28.78) 2 x Home working allowance (£22.18) Microsoft Office Licence (£79.99)	£533.45
IB141	Viking Direct – Stationery	£59.95
IB142	NALC – Subscription and Website fee	£232.09
IB143	Zurich Insurance	£421.83
IB144	Donation to Felton & Thirston WI for Jubilee	£40.00

(c) **Income** – HMRC VAT reclaim £512.97, NCC Precept £4,750.00

(d) **Internal Audit** – it was agreed that TPC submit a Certificate of Exemption to the external auditors as gross income and gross expenditure did not exceed £25,000. The Clerk is handing over the accounts to the internal auditor on 16 May which include 2020/21 restated accounts along with 2021/22 accounts.

### 16 Urgent Items

- Pot holes on the Wintrick Road
- Pot holes on the road to Blackbrook Farm

Clerk

Clerk

### 17 Items for next agenda –

Policy Review – Clerk to circulate before the next meeting.

Clerk

Recreation Group Meeting attendance

Chairman closed the meeting at 8.50pm

Date of Next meeting: 16 June 2022