

THIRSTON PARISH COUNCIL

At the Parish Council Meeting held at Northumberland Crematorium, Bockenfield on Thursday 2 February 2023.

Present: Cllrs S Allan, E Davison, J Day and D Green
The Parish Clerk in attendance – Mrs L Hamlin

92 Cooption of New Councillor

Jamie Day was coopted onto the Parish Council and welcomed by Cllr Allan. All the relevant paperwork was duly completed.

93 Apologies for Absence – Cllr L Clarehugh and J Marshall

94 Declarations of interest in items on the Agenda – None

95 Presentation by Felton CAN

A well received presentation from the members of Felton CAN outlining the work they have undertaken and future plans. There is a comprehensive website which provides information and is well accessed and also information is sent out in The Bridge Newsletter. They are liaising with other villages who are setting up similar groups. They would like to open a repair café but have yet to identify a suitable site. Also they would like to engage with residents to use less power or use power in a different way and felt that this would be easier to move forward with this is the PCs are on board.

96 Public Questions (max 5 mins per person) – None

97 The minutes of the meeting 15 December 2022 were agreed and signed as a true record.

98 Matters Arising therefrom:

1) Matters arising there from (excluding long term outstanding actions in relation to NCC)

- a) Noticeboard at Eshott – Ordered, awaiting delivery to Cllr Green, anticipated delivery date is tomorrow, and then installation required.
- b) Paving slabs on steps down from The Peth (08/2022) – these have been repaired to a very high standard and Clerk has sent an email of thanks.
- c) Path in West Thirston – repairs (08/2022) – NCC has confirmed they can undertake repairs to the footpath however they are unsure where the water issue is coming from and think this may be an NWL issue but will confirm with the Clerk. Clerk
- d) Path in West Thirston – Cyclists (08/2022) – NCC to review when repairing the footpath and report back to the Clerk.
- e) Dog Bin West Thirston – Clerk waiting on a response from NCC as to type of replacement and where it can be located.
- f) Road at Bywell Shooting Ground in need of repair (11/2022) – a request has been put into NCC for a full patch repair as opposed to just filling in pot holes. Clerk
- g) Light issue in West and East Thirston – Two lights in West Thirston are now not working and NCC state this is a Powergrid issue that was due to be looked at at the end of January but this may have been delayed due to the snowy weather earlier in the month delaying works. A resident has requested baffles be put on one of the lights at East Thirston which the Clerk has duly done, they also reported the light being on permanently however this had already been repaired well before his report. Clerk

2) Long-term Outstanding issues being addressed by NCC for information

- a) Ditch on the Burgham Park Road blocked (11/2019 & 04/2022) Clerk
- b) Blocked drain and manhole cover at Wintrick (12/2021) – still outstanding Clerk to pursue with NCC. Clerk
- c) 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 (01/2022) Clerk
- d) Pathway improvements at riverside (03/2022) – still outstanding Clerk to pursue with NCC.

99 Report by County Councillor Sanderson –

Our budget is due soon - it has been difficult to juggle the inflation costs for wages - around an extra £6million - and higher fuel costs for taking our 45000 children to school - whilst wanting to retain our front-line services.

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We are working through a three-year Strategic Change programme which will involve well known consultants and our own staff and residents to reach a saving target of around £17 million/year on a recurring basis - above all it will look at how we deliver our services and how we might do things differently and better. One of our three key priorities is to deliver value for money and we have a way to go on that I feel. This is not about our staff for whom I have great respect but more about our working practices in some cases so we will work with staff and customers on this.

We have had a good turnout and reception at our Parish and Town Council summits recently and I will want those to happen again next year - it was a very useful exchange of views which will help us with our new Corporate Plan.

And we have recruited a new Chief Executive who starts next week and a new Executive team. It will help maintain the so much better way things are running now and I feel very confident about the future.

100 Report back from Meetings and Representations on behalf of TPC – None

101 Potential Projects

a) Footpaths/Rights of Way - None

b) Landscaping – None

c) Short term / Medium term / Long term projects –

1. Village gateways – awaiting a meeting with NCC on locations for West Thirston gateways
2. Bus shelters – to be looked at in Spring.

102 To report on any planning decisions:

22/04401/FUL - Garden Cottage West Thirston - Alterations to existing bungalow to create additional accommodation within the existing roof void - APPROVED

22/04181/FUL - Field House, Eshott - Single storey rear extension, front porch/portico, detached garage and summerhouse - APPROVED

22/04420/FUL - Chase Lodge, Eshott - Single storey side utility extension linking onto existing rear extension - APPROVED

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)

22/03759/FUL - South High Moor Farm - Proposed demolition and rebuild of existing dwelling and conversion of existing agricultural barn to dwellinghouse

22/04112/FUL - Northumberland Arms Construction of first floor rear extension to provide 1no. additional en-suite bedroom and store room, and ground floor rear extension to provide covered goods reception area

22/04113/LBC - Northumberland Arms Construction of first floor rear extension to provide 1no. additional en-suite bedroom and store room, and ground floor rear extension to provide covered goods reception area

23/00132/FELTPO - Woodlands House The Pipistrelles Eshott – Tree Works

Planning Issues:

Bockenfield Caravan Park – blue lights illuminating entrance – awaiting update from Environmental Protection – Clerk to pursue. Clerk

Eshott Airfield – viewing area and café – NCC awaiting a planning application. Awaiting update from NCC.

Eshott Airfield – Enforcement Notice – this has been issued and the Airfield has not appealed this notice which means any breaches are now liable to enforcement action. NCC has been made aware of possible breaches since the enforcement notice.

Felmoor Park – Tree removal and building works without planning – Awaiting update from NCC.

Felmoor Park – Entrance lighting and signage – Awaiting update from NCC.

APP/P2935/W/22/3303503 - Burgham Park – Appeal submitted to Planning Inspectorate – no date has been given for a decision on this appeal as yet.

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103 Requested Agenda Items:

- Warm Hub – Toasty Tuesdays – The volunteer group ran 4 sessions and apart from a couple of 'friends' of the group there has been zero take up of the service they wanted to provide so the initiative has stopped stating that if anyone does require help to contact Felton Parish Clerk.
- Commonwealth War Graves Commission: request to install sign indicating there are 4 war graves at Felton Cemetery. The sign would be paid for and maintained by the commission on a permanent basis. It was agreed that Thirston Councillors support this request and Clerk to relay to Felton and Swarland PCs. Clerk
- Boundary Commission – responses to the Boundary Commission from the consultation are being reviewed and final report and recommendations submitted to Parliament by 1 July 2023. The Clerk is trying to ascertain if there is anything more the PC can do to prevent Thirston Parish being moved over to Hexham Constituency. Clerk
- Councillors Numbers – NCC has come back with the following information should the Parish Council wish to increase the Councillors numbers. A request to change the number of Parish Councillors is something that can be done via a Community Governance Review. In order to request a review, the Parish Council would have to formally discuss the issue at a meeting and clearly outline why it thinks the number should increase and have formally agree to request the County Council to undertake a review. A review would then take place in which the local NCC Councillor would be consulted and press releases issued to consult the electorate. After the consultation period of four weeks, any consultation responses received will be considered and then recommendations drawn up. These are then again published for a period prior to the recommendation to the County Council meeting being finalised. The final decision, whether to accept or reject the request, will be made by the Council. If agreed, then an official order will be drawn up and the changes will come into effect with at the next normal Parish Council elections in 2025. The whole process is likely to take a minimum of six months, probably longer.

104 Correspondence:

- NCC re Voters urged to check they have the right ID to vote – Nationally if voters wish to vote at a polling station new ID is require. This is being publicised nationally. It was agreed to put a reminded on the website in advance of any elections taking place. Clerk
- NCC re applications for EV Charge points – Parish Councils can submit an expression of interest form for installation of a 11kw EV Charge Point. Locations were discussed and the only area that would be possible is The Peth. Clerk to submit an expression of interest to NCC. Clerk
- NCC who's who and revised charter – for information and to circulate. Clerk
- Email re lighting on The Peth – A resident has requested more lighting down The Peth. There are currently two lights there but they are not very effective as obscured by trees. Clerk to contact Street Lighting to make existing lights more effective and look at installing more lighting. Clerk
- Email re water leak on Narrow Bank – NCC are trying to ascertain where this is coming from but think it may be a Northumbrian Water issue and Clerk is liaising with NCC on this. Clerk
- Email re flytipping in Bockenfield Layby – vehicle body parts were dumped in the layby, as they are on the boundary of the farmers field NCC are stating it is the farmers responsibility. Clerk to request that NCC remove the items.
- Email introduction to PARISH.UK network – Email inviting Thirston Parish to confirm contact details on the PARISH.UK Network. The network has been recently launched to provide a consistent and recognisable framework on which to display open-source data about parishes across England and Wales and it links to other government held information. Clerk
- Email re East Thirston footpath request – An email was received requesting a footpath be installed from East Thirston to West Thirston. An email was also received from a different resident stating What is needed is for the footpath to be extended from the Old Forger to the turning to Wintrick Lane opposite to The Croft. It was agreed to set up a meeting with the residents to clarify exactly what they are looking for and then submit a request via the LTP for consideration. Clerk
- Email from NCC re flytipping media release – following the success of the fly tipping enforcement at the recycling bins NCC are looking to issue a press release which may deter future flytippers.

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- Email re Northumbria Neighbourhood Watch – The Neighbourhood Watch Coordinator in Ashington has recently been made a Single point of contact for the Northumbria area for Neighbourhood Watch. They want to see if Thirston has a neighbourhood watch schemes and if so what help they can give or what support they can give to set up a scheme. Clerk to respond stating there is no official scheme in place as people do this informally. Clerk
- Email re Research on Youth Councils Survey – Clerk has completed this on behalf of the PC.
- Email re alter that defibrillator could have been used – this was checked into and the defib had not been used.
- Verbal request re replacement signage for Weldon Bridge – this has been submitted to Highways England, a reference number has been received. Clerk
- Email from Char.gy re FREE Government Funded EV Charge points – Clerk to review alongside the NCC expression of interest.
- Email re Data Protection payment due – Direct Debit in place and no changes to required in relation to information provided.
- Email re Field of Hope damage – Powergrid parked on the Field of Hope and churned up all the grassed area. A resident complained to them and they stopped parking there however the damage was not repaired.
- Email re Grit Bin in West Thirston – email received to say bin empty. Clerk requested for it to be refilled and NCC did this the next day.
- NALC News

105 Finance

- (a) **Financial Summary** was reviewed with no issues and the current balance stands at £10,814.90 TPC funds and £4,968.60 FCJC Funds totaling £15,783.50. The balance was reconciled with the bank statement and agreed by the Councillors
- (b) **Payments** - The following list was put before members and was approved:

Payments this meeting:		
IB159	Payment to Lisa Hamlin 30 hours at £16.10 (£483.00) Reimbursement of Auditor Gift (13.50) 2 x Zoom Conferencing (£28.78) 2 x Home Working Allowance (£22.18)	£547.46
SO	Mr & Mrs Bates (Defib electricity)	£50.00
DD	Information Commissioners Office (data protection)	£35.00
IB160	Swarco camera maintenance	£599.46

- (c) **Income** – None

106 Urgent Items –

Concerns have been raised by a number of people about the film evenings and triple tipi for holding large events including wedding receptions being publicised by the Airfield. Guidance will be sought from NCC on these issues. Clerk

Swarco had not sent through the renewal notice so the Clerk requested it in time for the meeting. The quote for Gold Maintenance Service is £599.46, last year the cost was £582.09. It was agreed to go ahead with this quote immediately. Clerk

107 Items for next agenda – None

Chairman closed the meeting at 20.50pm

Date of Next meeting: 16 March 2023