

THIRSTON PARISH COUNCIL

At the Annual Parish Council Meeting of the Council held at Felton Village Hall on Thursday 10 May 2018.

Present: Cllrs E Davidson, D Green, J Marshall, A Morton and J Secker.
The Parish Clerk in attendance – Mrs L Hamlin

- 1 **Election of Chairman** - Cllr Morton proposed and Cllr Marshall seconded Cllr Secker as Chairman. This was agreed unanimously.
- 2 **Election of Vice Chairman** - Cllr Davidson proposed and Cllr Morton seconded Cllr Lindley 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 Secker as Reserve
 - b) Recreation Field Group Meeting – Cllr Marshall with Cllr Davidson as Reserve
 - c) Footpath Liaison – It was agreed to remove this group as it is no longer required
 - d) School Liaison – It was agreed to remove this group as it is no longer required
 - e) Environmental Group – It was agreed to remove this group as it is no longer required
 - f) Finance Group – Currently Cllrs Marshall, Lindley and Green
 - g) Felton Relief – This has now been taken over by the Church
 - h) Felton Village Hall – By rotation if agreeable by the Village Hall Committee
 - i) Complaints Committee – members to be confirmed when required depending on the nature of the complaint
- 4 **Apologies for absence** – Cllr Lindley and County Councillor Sanderson
- 5 **Declarations of interest in items on the Agenda** – Cllrs Davidson and Marshall for Felton and Thirston Fair donations.
- 6 **Public Questions (max 5 mins per person)** - None
- 7 **The minutes of the meeting 22 March 2018** were signed as a true record.
- 8 **Matters Arising therefrom:**
 - a) **Notice Board** – The board has been delivered and NCC has confirmed the location is fine for installation. NCC to collect the board and install it – Clerk still waiting on confirmation of date of collection.
 - b) **Bin request for Wintrick Road** – NCC has not come back to the Clerk to confirm ownership of the layby however the farmer has not been in contact again. Clerk
 - c) **Annual Litter Pick** – The litter picks went well despite the lack of numbers helping in Thirston. Thanks have been relayed in The Bridge Newsletter.
 - d) **Defib Guardians** – Two residents have now confirmed they will be guardians for the defib machine and relevant training has been undertaken.
- 9 **Report by County Councillor**

We will start weed spraying soon - we are using a blue dye to show where we have been. Additionally we are going to do this job in-house this year as I wasn't particularly impressed by some of the contract work done for us last year.

Roadside verges will be cut properly again this year and we have come to an agreement with conservation groups to leave some stretches uncut to allow flowers etc to grow.

Road repairs are our biggest headache. I'm trying to meet the roads minister to see if we can get any extra money on top of the £420000 which we have put in from reserves.

We are going flat out and trying where possible to make more permanent patches but it will take a lot of time and money to fix the damage caused.
- 10 **Report back from Meetings and Representations on behalf of TPC**

Recreation Group Meeting – the last meeting was attended by Cllr Davidson – new containers are in place, dog fouling is still an issue, new bark has been spread in the play area.

Cemetery Committee Meeting – the meeting reviewed cemetery charges and staff salaries. Both of which increased slightly. Wooden troughs are to be replaced with stone ones which

THIRSTON PARISH COUNCIL

have been donated. The railings have been repainted and a very good job was done.

Data Protection and FOI Training – the Clerk attended the training session run by NALC. There is a lot of work to be undertaken for the Data Protection compliance and this is to be covered under item 14 Requested Agenda Items.

11 Potential Projects

- a) **Riverside** – It was agreed to remove this from the agenda as the project has been completed.
- b) **Footpaths/Rights of Way** – outstanding issues raised with NCC re bridge concerns on FP4 and the footpath issues at the bottom of Thirston House. Clerk to pursue with Tony Derbyshire, NCC Footpath Officer. Clerk
- c) **Landscaping** – Bulbs in the rockery have done well and it was agreed more should be planted in the autumn as they add a burst of colour. Clerk
- d) **Neighbourhood Plan** – The Vision and Objectives have been circulated for approval. Public Consultation is to take place in June in Felton Village Hall and Burgham Golf Club and then for a week in The Gallery – dates to be confirmed. It will be a case of presenting the Vision and Objectives along with a list of potential issues within the Parish identified by the Working Group for residents to comment on. Consultees need to be informed that a Neighbourhood Plan is being prepared along with informing them of the Vision and Objectives. Clerk

12 Planning:

a. To report on any planning decisions:

17/04073/COU - Woodland Burial Site, Bockenfield - COU of woodland for pet burial service – GRANTED

17/04453/FUL - Eshott Airfield - Construct activity centre for team building – GRANTED

b. Planning applications pending:

17/02923/VARYCO - Burgham Park Golf Club - Vary Cond 13 - remove holiday restriction – objections submitted – The Clerk asked NCC what the situation is with regard to this application and NCC has stated they advised the applicant last year that unrestricted dwelling use would normally be unacceptable on this site due to its isolated open countryside location. The only circumstances in which this application may be supported would be if evidence was supplied that the dwellings were needed as enabling development to allow the club to finance the expansion proposals for the leisure facilities.

17/04290/OUT - COU of land and construct 30 houses - Land East of Greystone – Objections submitted

17/04477/FELTPO - Studley Cottage - Fell 2 trees & crown reduce one – Objections submitted

18/00928/FUL - The Brambles - Kitchen Extension – No objections

18/01133/FUL – 1 West Moor Farm Cottages – dropped kerb & hard standing – No Objections

18/01376/VARYCO - Land West of West Moor House - vary cond 2 - change internal configurations – on circulation

18/01510/VARYC) – Felmoor Holiday Park Reception Building – Vary Cond 2 (approved plans) and 9 (approved plan pitch locations) in order to relocate pitches and avoid tree removal – on circulation

c. Planning Issues

Canine Centre Caravan and acoustic barrier update – The caravan has been removed. The owner was informed by NCC that they had to cease trading on 30 March until the acoustic barrier was fitted. This has not been complied with and they were still operating on 16 April – this was reported to NCC who has advised the owner that should they continue operating they may receive an Enforcement Notice.

Update on trees behind Northumberland Arms – The 2 replacement Oak trees have issues – the first requiring restaking and the second tree looks like it has failed needs checking in June. If it needs replacing it has been advised to select a different, more open aspect location. Clerk to check this is being undertaken. Clerk

THIRSTON PARISH COUNCIL

13 Services

- Peth pathway – Clearing of moss at top of steps – this has been completed
- Main pathway – hedges require cutting back – Urgent as it is becoming difficult to walk along this pathway, also leaves need clearing away. Clerk to chase up. Clerk
- Arriva timetable and update of bus numbers on shelters – Clerk to look at what is happening with this following NCC’s initiative. Clerk
- Cutting back of hedge around 30mph sign on entrance to village – this is the farmers responsibility however if NCC will not cut it back Clerk will arrange. Clerk
- Clearing of vegetation on path by Field of Hope – Clerk to pursue NCC. Clerk
- Repairs to drain close to Glenshotton – Clerk to check if this has been done, if not pursue with NCC.
- Pot Holes – Clerk has reported pot holes by the rockery, road through West Thirston, Glenshotton, Bockenfield and on the road to Eshottheugh. Cllr Secker has reported pot holes on the lane from A1 to Eshott and on the back lane. There are also issues with the road resurfacing as the manholes are now too low. No repairs have been undertaken as yet. Clerk to pursue. Clerk
- Water from Wall at The Peth – there was recent leakage again from the wall which has been reported to NCC immediately for them to investigate. No information has been forthcoming from NCC on this matter – Clerk to pursue. Clerk
- Kerb Stone outside Leaside has not been repaired properly and is a potential tripping hazard. Clerk to report to NCC. Clerk

14 Requested Agenda Items:

- **Cemetery Terms of Reference – already circulated, formal adoption required** – It was agreed to formally adopt the Terms of Reference. One resident of Felton has raised concerns about a number of issues he does not agree with however all Parish Councils are happy with the arrangements and their compliance.
- **New rules on Data Protection - Action Plan** – The General Data Protection Regulation (“GDPR”) will take effect in the UK from 25 May 2018. It replaces the existing law on data protection (the Data Protection Act 1998) and gives individuals more rights and protection regarding how their personal data is used by councils. Local councils and parish meetings must comply with its requirements, just like any other organisation. The PC may not complete all of the steps by 25th May 2018 when the GDPR comes into force but should have a plan in place by then to complete the remaining steps. There are currently 11 steps in the action plan and the Clerk has drafted a number of the required forms/notices and has circulated the Action Plan to Councillors to make them aware of the requirements and raise awareness of the new regulations. Clerk
- **Update on Felton Bridge** – issues of parking on the bridge have been raised again, via Felton Parish Council, and they have requested a meeting to discuss how the problems can be addressed. Thirston Councillors have agreed to a meeting however they do not know what the answer is to this problem. Awaiting a proposed meeting date from Felton Parish Council.

15 Correspondence

- Cllr Morton – Notice of Resignation at the end of May 2018 – Clerk to advertise vacancy in The Bridge newsletter and post notices at the end of May. Clerk
- Cllr Secker – Notice of Resignation at the end of December 2018 – noted for action in December. Clerk
- NCC – Approach to settlement boundaries/site allocations for Thirston Parish – A response has been submitted by Thirston PC stating *Thirston Parish Council have no desire to change the existing settlement boundary as allocated under Castle Morpeth which has served the parish well. There are no existing committed developments to take into account and therefore the existing settlement should remain as is with no revisions.*
- NCC – Democratic Services – to check details of Declarations of Interest – All Councillors confirmed there were no changes to be made to these.
- NCC – Weed Control notification – weed spraying will be taking place and NCC will be undertaking this work in-house. Harmless blue dye will be added to the weed killer for teams to see where spraying has taken place. It will take up to two weeks for the

THIRSTON PARISH COUNCIL

- application to take effect. The dye does not affect the environment.
- NCC – HR Support and Organisational Development Services notification – for information, not really appropriate for a small parish council.
 - NCC – Cemetery Double Charging update – NCC has confirmed that Thirston PC will receive £75 for the next three years. The first payment has been received.
 - NCC – Gathering Views on road hierarchy – this has been circulated by email due to the nature of the consultation – it is not an easy format to use and discuss. Requests have been put to NCC by NALC as to whether the primary use could be shown against the road and whether NCC could let PCs know the existing status or at least identify those roads with proposed significant change in status. NCC has indicated there is no clear way of answering either of these requests. PC to respond to NCC to state this was impossible to make a response to this consultation. Clerk
 - NCC – Love Northumberland Awards 2018 – nominations are being sought
 - NCC – Compost Bin Special Offer Leaflets
 - NALC – Responses from Councils to CSPL Standards Call for Evidence Survey – The Clerk completed this survey.
 - NALC – Section 137 Limit for 2018/19 set at £7.89 – For information
 - NALC – Unauthorised developments and encampments survey – no response was given by the Parish Council as there have been no issues of this within the Parish.
 - NALC – Data Protection Bill update – There have been issues raised about Parish Councils being required to employ a Data Protection Officer and NALC has informed Government that this is an impractical cost burden. A proposed amendment has been tabled by the Government, the effect of which seems to be removing the need for parish, town and community councils to appoint a data protection officer, no decision has been made on this as yet.
 - NALC – New published Model Standing Orders – NALC has advised that a shorter version is being looked at for smaller Parish Councils as opposed to this new 29 page document which is more relevant to larger councils.
 - NALC – 2018/19 pay awards – The Clerks hourly rate has been adjusted in line with the New National pay scales.
 - NALC – Data Protection Fees – for information as Thirston's fees will continue at £35 as long as the PC pays by Direct Debit.
 - HMRC – Notification of new VAT number – for information
 - Eshott Airfield letter to Chairman – Cllr Secker received a phone call in relation to a complaint letter sent to the Ministry of Defence and he wished to know if this was a personal letter or a Parish Council letter. Cllr Secker confirmed this was a personal letter.
 - Complaint re Airfield from Wintrick Resident, by telephone – a complaint has been received about repeated overflying of Wintrick. The resident spoke to the operator of the Airfield and was informed that he has no control over flying and denied the red microlight had anything to do with Eshott Airfield despite being told residents had watched it land. The resident of Wintrick contacted the Parish Council over concerns as to how the operator could state as an unlicensed airfield he has no control over how the airfield is used. He is concerned about safety issues and stated there should be someone who has to be responsible. He stated he was going to raise this with Anne-Marie Trevelyan. The Clerk has heard nothing further.
ElanCity – Evolis Radar Speed Sign brochure – information brochure. Clerk to look at costs for installation and maintenance. Clerk

Emails Forwarded:

NALC Newsletters

NCC – Northumberland Local Plan – Spring 2018 Consultation

NCC – Action Plans to improve town centre parking – in Morpeth the preferred option is to provide extra capacity through the redevelopment of Morpeth First School once the site is vacated.

On Circulation:

Clerks and Councils Direct, CPRE Newsletter, CAN News

THIRSTON PARISH COUNCIL

16 Finance

- (a) **Financial Summary** was reviewed with no issues and the current balance stands at £12,780.58
- (b) **Payments** - The following list was put before members and was approved:

Payments this meeting:		
IB149	L Hamlin – salary and expenses	368.65
IB150	Design Art – domain name	36.00
00737	Felton and Thirston Fair Donation	100.00
00738	Bridge Magazine Donation	100.00
IB151	Zurich Insurance	257.60

- (c) **Receipts** – HMRC VAT refund £618.50 (in accounts 2017/18), NCC Precept £4,000, NCC reimbursement of Cemetery Charges £75.00
- (d) **Approval for Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR)** - exempt authorities with financial transactions during the year. If PC have income or expenditure of less than £25k and have had no external auditing issues in the previous year then it is not a requirement to have an external audit undertaken. If the PC wish to go through the external audit process it would cost £200 unless there have been previous issues and then it would be free. NALC recommend that PCs fitting the criteria for not requiring an external audit should follow the exemption route. The Councillors considered the options and agreed unanimously to proceed with the exemption. Clerk
- (e) **Approval of Annual Governance Statement** was approved unanimously by the Council.
- (f) **Approval of Accounting Statements** was approved unanimously by the Council.
- (g) **Insurance Renewal** – The Clerk received two quotes - Norris & Fisher and Zurich. Norris & Fisher were slightly cheaper however they are an insurance broker and unknown to the Parish Council. The Councillors agreed to continue using Zurich as the PCs insurance provider as they are well known and used to dealing with Parish Councils however the Clerk to investigate Norris & Fisher further in anticipation for next years quotes.
- (h) **TSB Banking** – There have been major issues with TSB in the last few weeks when TSB were transferring operating systems. This was discussed and it was felt that the situation should be monitored but was probably a one off. The time to change would be when new signatories are required for the bank accounts which will be the case with the resignation of Cllrs Morton and Secker. Clerk

17 Urgent Items –

Thanks were given to Cllr Morton for her support and efforts over the last 8 years and it was agreed she will be sorely missed.

18 Items for next agenda

- Policies Review
- Review of ring fenced money

Chairman closed the meeting at 9.23pm
 Date of Next meeting: Thursday 21 June 2018