

Draft Minutes of Meeting of Norham Parish Council held on 26th September 2022

Those present were George Straughen (GS), Jim Greenwood (JG), Jim Blythe (JB) John Grahamslaw (JJG), Dougie Watkin (DW) and Alison Murphy (AM). Cllr Glen Sanderson (CllrGS), Leader of Northumberland County Council was also present as was Rob Kelsey.

9.22.1 To accept apologies for absence

Apologies were accepted from Sheelagh Hume

It was agreed by all present that there was great sadness at the passing of HM Queen Elizabeth and the parish council wished to express its gratitude and appreciation for all her actions during her long reign.

9.22.2 To make any Declaration of Interest

None

9.22.3 To confirm Minutes of Previous Meetings

The minutes of the meeting of 25th July were confirmed as accurate records and signed by the Chair.

9.22.4 Welcome to Glen Sanderson

GS thanked CllrGS for attending. CllrGS explained some of the aims and goals of NCC. He also explained that as a result of number of issues the council faced challenging financial circumstances but hoped to deal with them the least painful way, without affecting frontline services. Levels of management would be looked at and also ways of more effective communication.

9.22.5 Matters arising from Minutes

i Working relationship/communication with Northumberland County Council

GS confirmed that he was looking for improved communication between parish councils and the county council. CllrGS acknowledged this could be improved. There are regular(ish) meetings between parish councils and County Council and he would ensure we Norham parish council was invited.

GS confirmed that Grass cutting by NCC this year had been excellent. CllrGS confirmed he would pass this on.

GS confirmed there were broken paving stones between Foremans and the village shop which had been raised with NCC at least twice in the past few months, but no action had been taken. CllrGS confirmed he would pursue this.

GS confirmed that the new speed sign has still not been put upon castle bank notwithstanding the fact that the speed limit had been legally changed in September 2020. In addition, the issue of changing the speed limit throughout the village to 20mph had been raised some time ago but no progress had been made, although moves were afoot to change the limit when lights flashing by the school. Speeding especially of very heavy farm traffic was a problem and a village wide 20mph limit might help address that. After discussion CllrGS agreed to pursue this matter.

GS raised the issue of the lighting in West Street where a resident's petition had been acted on by NCC without any consultation with or confirmation to the parish council. Whilst it was accepted that the changes to the lighting might be an improvement in the long term many residents in West Street itself had not been consulted and acting without contact with the parish council undermined the whole system of communication. CllrGS confirmed he had looked into this and would ensure that an apology would be made. It was unacceptable and inappropriate that the work had been carried out in this way.

GS raised the issue of the Norham renewable project. After discussion agreed that Nick Johnston should meet with NDT for an update and to investigate any other ways that NCC could assist.

JB raised issue of potholes, near the school, and on Grindon/Duddo road and the state of the footpath near the bridge. After discussion it was agreed a that a walk-through of the village should be arranged with Graeme Bucknall. CllrGS confirmed he would ensure this would take place. He confirmed that Colin Hardy should also be invited, He should be used generally as a conduit to NCC for any problems, and if no progress was being made CllrGS should be contacted personally. At this point CllrGS left the meeting

ii Proposed Joint Neighbourhood Plan

A meeting had been cancelled due to death of HM Queen but was to be rescheduled.

iii New Speed sign/limits

See discussion above

iv Dogs

There had been recent problems re dog poo in the Jubilee Field, highlighted on Facebook. After discussion re possible solutions, it was agreed that further notices would be put up on gates highlighting the fines. The NCC dog wardens would also be contacted.

v Community Police Report

Unfortunately, the community police officer had been unable to attend. The report that there had been no reported crime was encouraging. He would be asked to attend another meeting in particular to discuss speeding.

vi Play Areas

Are in good condition and being well used.

vii Public Conveniences

In reasonably good order. Agreed that they should continue to be cleaned three times per week.

viii Lower Tweed Trail

GS confirmed he had had a recent meeting with NCC footpaths Officer. The path below the castle has now been 'closed' by English Heritage. He is trying to put pressure on EH to make some progress – it is now very nearly a year since Storm Arwen, It became apparent during

discussion that it had been EH contractors who had damaged the footbridge whilst working on the fallen tree.

ix Northumberland LED Street lighting/Undergrounding of cables

See discussion above re issue of lighting in West Street.

x Village Map

A further draft had been issued. Councillors were asked to look at it and confirm they were happy with it ASAP.

xi Norham Development Trust

JG had circulated the attached report prior to the meeting. JG was thanked for all his efforts to date.

xii Jubilee Field

Work on the wall should be started shortly. After discussion agreed that an oak tree would be planted to commemorate the life of HM Queen. A formal wooden or metal tree protector would be used, with a small plaque. In addition, after discussion agreed that an information board would be put up recording the gift of the field to the village in 1977 etc.

xiii Stackyard Lane

Nothing to report

9.22.6 Illuminated Sheep

VC reported that discussions had been had as regards this project to celebrate the return of the Lindisfarne Gospels to Newcastle. In brief it was proposed that the single sheep would come to Norham on around 5th November, would be displayed outside the church, and the village hall, and hopefully also the school. There were some potential events to be organised including a sheep related church service on 6th November and a sheep related social event in the hall on either 18th or 19th November. The finale would be on 30th November perhaps with a photo opportunity at the Castle,

9.22.7 Speeding

See discussion above.

9.22.8 Flooding

Discussion re flooding by the bridge. In the main it seems to have been resolved. Some drainage works required under the bridge - suggested that NCC would supply the required rigid plastic pipe.

FINANCE

9.22.9 To confirm completion of Audit

VLC reported that the audit had been completed

9.22.10 To consider opt out of SAAA central external auditor appointment arrangements

After discussion agreed not to opt out

9.22.11 To review Payments and Receipts

Payments from Current Account since last meeting

26 July Donation to Norham Environment Group £250
2 Aug Payment to Ian Simpson re village noticeboard £650
10 Aug Payment to S Broadbent re WCs£150
30 Aug Payment to S Broadbent re WCs £245.83
30 Aug Payment to PKF Littlejohn re audit fee £240
6 Sept Payment to Osprey Design re Village Map £900
18 Sept Payment to D Gibson re path works £2040

Payments into Business Account since last meeting
None

Receipts into Current Account since last meeting
10 Aug from NCC re WCs £2000
6 Sept from HMRC re VAT reclaim £377.73
6 Sept from NCC re Precept 2 £2750

Receipts into Business Account since last meeting
5 Sept interest 23p

9.22.12 To look at Bank balances in Current and Deposit Accounts
Current Account £13396.75
Business Account £743.56

9.22.13 To look at Planning Application decisions
Re Bridge Farm: Granted

Re 13 West Street: Granted (after application amended to state stonework on front elevation to remain)

9.22.14 To look at state of Roads and Pavements

Agreed that a list would be made up for walk through with Graeme Bucknall

Also Noted trees next to Bow Well in need of pollarding. Agreed AM would contact NCC Tree Officer. DW requested damaged safety barrier at Grindon crossroads be mentioned even although not in the parish. AM also asked that during the intended walk through the potholes on the lane behind St Cuthbert's Square be raised. Also pointed out that it would be useful if a road sweeper could sweep debris from flooding by the bridge to ensure drains do not get blocked again.

9.22.15 General Correspondence

A Thank you card had been received from Norham in Bloom in respect of the £250 donation.

Any Other Business (For information only)

A query was raised as to whether the landowner could be asked about the condition of the wood at Norham Station junction.

It was also noted that at the meeting with Rob Murfin, Director of Planning, in August he had said that he would send on slides. VLC will chase these as they had not been received

Date of next meeting: 21 November

Norham Development Trust Ltd Report to NPC

26th September 2022

We were successful in our application for grant funding from Berwick Community Trust and have now received £10000 from them.

Our meeting with the landowners on Wednesday 27th July went very well and we are seeking to move towards signing Heads of Terms with them.

We applied to Community Energy South (CES) to be one of up to 5 pilot projects to receive support for Community Energy in the North East and Yorkshire. We have been selected as one of the projects and the package of support offered covers :-

- A detailed assessment of your project/organisation needs and a bespoke support action plan that they will facilitate.
- Training sessions and guidance covering key issues from within our organisation and the wider pilot organisations.
- Matching our organisation with key partners and business models within the community energy sector that aim to support us to implement our projects. They will facilitate working relationships between us.

We have kept our consultants fully appraised of this and they are delighted. I have my first one to one meeting with CES tomorrow.

- I was also invited you to join a regional Steering Group that will support the development of a regional hub for community energy in the NEY region. The aim of the Steering Group is to guide the development of an organization that will be able to provide opportunities for networking, sharing best practice, project support & mentoring and leveraging funds for community energy. I readily accepted and we have our first meeting on Tuesday.

We have made application to Scottish Power Energy Network for a Grid Connection and expect to hear about this by Christmas.

We have made application for further funding to North East & Yorkshire Net Zero Energy Hub and will this week submit a funding application to the Community Chest fund of NCC.

On Saturday 24th September we gave a presentation to the Berwick 'Great Big Green Week' event which was well supported and gave us further encouragement.

Jim Greenwood

25th September 2022