



Minutes of (Virtual) Meeting held on Monday 28 January 2021 via Microsoft Teams

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

1. Introduction and Welcome.

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. Apologies for Absence.

Councillor J. Benson.

3. Declarations of Interest.

None received.

4. Public Questions.

None received.

5. Minutes of the previous meeting held on Monday 28 September 2020.

5.1 These were read and approved.

5.2 The Clerk was authorised to sign the approved version of the minutes on behalf of the Chair in light of the current restrictions.

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 The overgrown ivy/planting blocking the footpath in Towhouse has still not been attended to. Clerk and Cllr Sharp to take this up again with the County Council.

7.2 The footpaths from Broadacres to Bardon Mill are still in poor condition. Clerk and Cllr Sharp to take this up again with the County.

7.3 The bottle banks outside Redburn Park (and on the road out of Bardon Mill) are often full. They will now be emptied twice a week and the County Council are looking to provide additional bins.

8. Maintenance Programme.

8.1 Village Greens and Grassed Areas. Many of the greens are in very poor condition as a result of vehicles being driven over them in the very wet and wintry conditions. Clerk to arrange for the Cemetery Team to level and re-seed in early spring.

8.2 It was discussed that the village green at Towhouse had been badly damaged by delivery vehicles and taxis attempting to drive across the green, into the narrow access, and then having to turn around when they could not get through. Agreed the Clerk to look at signage to state 'No Through Road' which would hopefully stop any future issues.

8.3 General maintenance. No further matters were raised.

9. Planning Applications.

9.1 Outline Planning Application for Residential Use on Land South of Bastle House, Towhouse. This is a resubmitted application which the Parish Council had objected to previously. It was agreed that the resubmission did not address any of the original concerns and a similar objection be made.

10. Highway Matters.

10.1 A69 Issues. The Clerk had circulated a summary of the recent meeting with Highways England, Roadlink, local MP, and the County Council and advised that there were further speed and noise surveys to be carried out soon. The Chair was optimistic that improvements would be forthcoming as both the County Council and MP were fully supportive of the requests. There is a further meeting of all parties to be held in May and the Clerk would provide further updates to Members as information becomes available.



10.2 General Highways Issues.

10.2.1 Local Roads (north of A69). The Clerk advised he is still awaiting details of the County Council's proposed improvement programme to Park Lane, Well Bank etc and to the Huntercreek junction.

10.2.2 Extension of A69 Barrier. Highways England have been asked to look at providing additional barriers east of Starbucks to protect the properties nearby.

10.2.3 Road Gritting. The Clerk has asked the County Council for details of the gritting programme as Park Lane seems to have been missed recently.

10.2.4 The road from Henshaw Church to Melkridge is to be closed week commencing 1 February for a few days for resurfacing/repairs.

11. Redburn Park.

11.1 The Clerk advised that inspections were continuing but improvement works were on hold until the Spring and/or improved weather.

11.2 The recent wet spell of weather has caused part of the play area to become waterlogged and this could have been made worse by problems/blockages with the drainage. This was being inspected and assessed with any works to be done in the drier weather so as not to cause damage to the waterlogged ground.

12. Bardon Mill & Henshaw Village Hall.

12.1 The hall remains closed as a result of COVID-19. Activities, classes and events are scheduled for later in 2021 and would be assessed in line with COVID-19 guidelines and restrictions.

13. Northumberland National Park.

13.1 The Parish Council has been attempting to have brown tourism signs installed on the Military Road at the Sill junction to advise of the availability of local services in Bardon Mill/Henshaw. The County Council have refused this request and efforts are being made to have this decision reversed. There are comparable signs for Haltwhistle services on the Military Road near Greenhead. The Clerk and Cllr Sharp to contact the County Highways Officer for this to be looked at again.

13.2 The Sill remains closed as a result of COVID-19 restrictions.

14. Henshaw School.

14.1 The school is only open for children of essential workers at the present time.

15. Report by Clerk on Financial Matters.

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

- Current Account £2,255.48
- Easement Account £5,361.92

15.2 Payments approved between meetings :

- Haltwhistle & District Joint Burial Committee (Redburn Park) £224.20
- Wages £6381.92
- HMRC £159.80
- Expenses £52.38
- PPH Hire & Supplies (for Redburn Park) £55.38
- Northumberland County Council (Redburn Park Signage) £38.40

15.3 Payments to Credit:

- Field Rent £190.00.

15.4 Budgets.

- The Clerks report on budgets was considered and approved.

15.5 Precept. A report had been circulated by the Clerk regarding the precept for 2021/22 and the anticipated spend. As a result of the costs of managing Redburn Park and the maintenance costs of the Village Greens it was considered that unfortunately there would have to be an increase in the precept. The precept still remains low compared to other Parish Council in the area. Following lengthy discussion it was agreed that the precept be increased from £10,000 to £12,000.



16. Members Issues.

16.1 Rail Services. It was reported that the improvements that were supposed to be carried out at the Bardon Mill Station were not going ahead. Members expressed disappointment with this and asked if the Clerk (and the Clerk of Bardon Mill Parish Council) would write to the Rail Authority for an explanation. It was also raised that the poor service and transport links were adversely affecting tourism and the local economy and that Bardon Mill was promised better links with the National Park and the Sill. Again this be raised with the National Park Authority (but deferred until such time as the current restrictions and closures were lifted).

17. Northumberland County Council Councillor Update.

17.1 Councillor Sharp had provided an update earlier in the meeting and would follow up any issues as soon as possible.

18. General Matters and Correspondence since last meeting.

18.1 The Clerk advised that the Elections for 2021 were still planned for May but would provide updates as soon as information became available.

19. Any other relevant business.

No additional items were raised.

20. Date and time of next meeting to be Monday 22 February 2021 at 7.00pm. It was agreed that this would again be a virtual meeting as it appears unlikely restrictions would be eased to allow physical meetings until at least March or April.

Approved at the Virtual Meeting held on 22 February 2021

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