

Minutes of Annual Parish Council Meeting of Norham Parish Council held on 23rd May 2016

Those present were: George Straughen (GS), John Urwin (JU), John Grahamslaw (JJG), Jim Greenwood (JHG), and Bill McLauchlan (BMcL)

A number of members of the public were also present.

5.16.1. To elect a Chairman

George Straughen was proposed by JHG and seconded by BMcL to become Chairman and he was duly elected unanimously.

5.16.2. Chairman to sign Declaration of Acceptance of Office

GS signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

5.16.3. To elect a Vice Chairman

John Urwin was proposed by GS and seconded by JHG, to become Vice Chairman, and he was duly elected unanimously.

5.16.4. To accept apologies for Absence

Apologies were accepted from Jim Blythe and Sheelagh Hume.

5.16.5. To make any Declaration of Interest

No declaration of interest was made.

5.16.6. To agree Minutes of previous meeting

The Minutes of the meeting held on 21st March 2016 were confirmed as an accurate record and signed by the Chairman.

5.16.8 To Receive Chairman's Report (taken out of order at Chairman's request)

The Chairman's Annual Report was accepted. George Straughen was thanked for all his hard work and commitment over the last year.

At this stage the Chairman invited members of the public in attendance to speak.

James Tomlinson presented his ideas to support the raising of the profile of the village. It was recognised that they were in accordance with the list of improvements mentioned in the Chairman's report, which had previously been agreed should be used as a framework for Parish Council action. It was recognized there was a dearth of information available for visitors. There was lengthy discussion of the various options and problems, including the difficulties with parking, and the creation of a car park (with the cost and planning implications), necessary improvement of footpaths (with the possible help of NCC Footpaths Officer). All parties would consider matters further.

James Gibson raised the terms of the leaflet he had been asked to design. See below under 5.16.7 (ii). The Rev Kelsey supported the moves, and reiterated that the church building was one of those sites of interest to visitors both as a church and as a venue for community use.

5.16.7 Matters Arising from Minutes

i. Proposed Joint Neighbourhood Planning in Norham and Islandshire

- a) Parish councillor to go on steering group
 - b) Consider draft terms of reference
 - c) Consider any questions for questionnaire

After discussion GS volunteered to join the steering group.

ii. Leaflets for Walks around Norham

After lengthy discussion it was agreed that in the first instance leaflets advertising the village itself would be prepared, for distribution in the main outwith the village. Consideration would also be given to other leaflets addressing walks round the village and places of historical interest, finances allowing. It was agreed that all such leaflets could be put on the community website too, available as downloads.

iii. Playground inspection

JU confirmed he continued with the weekly inspections. The matter raised by Alan Cater re Ubbanford play area would be dealt with within the next 7 days. VLC confirmed an annual inspection by RoSPA was scheduled for some time in June (date unknown)

iv. Electronic speed sign

Progress is being made. The cost and location had been agreed. Cllr Watkin had agreed to fund the supply and erection of the post on which the sign would be situated. It was hoped that the sign would be up within the next 6 weeks.

v. Seat Location Plan

This was in hand. It was agreed that Jim Blythe would be provided with a large-scale map on which to mark the actual location of the items for which the parish council was responsible, and also draw up a schedule of their current condition.

vi. Public Conveniences

It was confirmed that the agreed financial support from NCC had been received. Jim Blythe had agreed to decorate the public conveniences inside and out, and it was agreed that the cost of the paint would be provided. Sheila Penman continues to do an excellent job. All new toilet and paper towel holders were now in place.

vii. Mobile Mast

VLC confirmed that she had been told the latest petition had garnered 155 signatures, though duplicates from the first petition had to be checked. VLC was awaiting information as to what the planned next step was. Thanks were tendered to all those involved in encouraging signing of the petition. It remains to be seen what affect it will have.

viii. Northumberland LED Street Lighting

GS confirmed he had attended a meeting in Alnwick to find out more. After discussion it was agreed that the key to being able to have cables buried would be the cost. It was agreed SEPN would be asked for an estimate for putting the cables in Castle Street underground. This would be the first step to further decision making. One suggestion was a sponsored dig-namely the community would dig the channels required for the cables, and raise money for a good cause simultaneously. It was also suggested that it would be useful to have the desire to bury the cables noted in the new draft Joint Neighborhood Plan as soon as possible.

ix. Parish Council Website

JU and VLC had met with Alexander Dalgety and agreed that VLC will be trained how to post parish council items onto the community website. VLC confirmed that there should be no cost involved. .

x. Provision of Ambulance Service

The terms of correspondence between Norham and Islandshire Parish Council (NIPC) and NEAS was noted. After discussion it was agreed that the ambulance provision was entirely unacceptable. It was agreed that Cllr Watkin be asked to take back the

expressions of frustration to NCC, and support would continue to be provided to NIPC in their efforts to achieve improvements in the service.

xi. Side Road Castle Street

After discussion it was agreed that matters would be left as they are meantime.

xii. Damaged Notice board

This had been repaired. GS would consider possible solutions to this ongoing problem.

xiii. General Correspondence

None.

Finance

5.16.9. To review Payments and Receipts since last meeting

Payments had been made for Norton Anti Virus (£24.99); to the Clerk for salary (£400.50 for the period from 1st November 2015 to 30th April 2016); to Clerk for office materials (£8) and to Sheila Penman (£100). The first portion of precept of £1675, and £2000 being the agreed contribution from NCC towards maintenance of the public conveniences had been received.

5.16.10. To look at Bank balances in Current and Deposit Accounts

As at 23rd May the balance in the Current Account was £8804.21, and Deposit Account £1309.01

5.16.11 To confirm Donations and Grants including CAN

It was agreed that a Donation of £50.00 should be given to Great North Air Ambulance and £100.00 to Norham Newsround, both under LGA 1972 s.137, a £150 Grant to Norham and Duddo Parochial Church Council for Graveyard maintenance under LGA 1972 s.215, and a Grant of £200 to Norham Village Hall Committee, under Local Provision Act 1976 s.19. This includes the cost of hiring the Village hall for Council meetings. A Donation of £50 would be given to CAN and of £20 to CAB, and in due course a donation would be made to the British Legion for the Armistice Day poppy wreath from the Parish Council (last year £27). In addition it was agreed to pay NALC subscription of £120.09.

5.16.12 To complete agree sign relevant Annual Return sections and accept Bank

Reconciliation

The final Bank Reconciliation 2015-2016 and Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Return and Statement of Accounts, had been previously circulated. The final Bank Reconciliation was examined and unanimously approved.

Thereafter Section 1 of the Annual Return, the Annual Governance Statement was carried out by the Council as follows: □1. We have put in place arrangements for effective financial management during the year, and for the preparation of the accounting statements, and have prepared our accounting statements in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations - YES; □2. We have maintained an adequate system of internal control, including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness, and have made proper arrangements and accepted responsibility for safeguarding the public money and resources in its charge -YES; 3. We took all reasonable steps to assure ourselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and proper practices that could have a significant financial effect on the ability of this smaller authority to conduct its business or on its finances, and has only done what it has the legal power to do and has complied with proper practices - YES; □4. We have provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors' rights in accordance with the requirements of the

Accounts and Audit Regulations, and during the year gave all persons interested the opportunity to inspect and ask questions about this authority's accounts - YES; 5. We carried out an assessment of the risks facing this smaller authority and took appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required, and considered the financial and other risks it faces and have dealt with them properly –YES.

The Risk Assessment had been carried out on Monday 28th September 2015 under Minutes 9.15.7. and Internal Control on Monday 23rd November 2015 under Minutes 11.15.8.

We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the accounting records and control systems and arranged for a competent person, independent of the financial controls and procedures, to give an objective view on whether internal controls meet the needs of this smaller authority- YES; 7. We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit, and responded to matters brought to its attention in internal and external audit – YES; 8. We considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year-end have a financial impact on this smaller authority and, where appropriate have included them in the accounting statements, and disclosed everything it should have about its business activities during the year including events taking place after the year end if relevant – YES; There is an update of expenditure and income at each meeting. A complaints procedure is in place. 9. Trust Funds (including charitable)-in our capacity as the sole managing trustee we discharged our accountability responsibilities for the funds/assets, including financial reporting and, if required, independent examination and audit - N/A. The council is not sole managing trustee of any Trust Funds.

The Annual Governance statement was approved by the council, signed and dated by the Chairman and Clerk and recorded as Minute reference 5.16.12.

Having looked at the figures in Section 2 of the Annual Return, it was resolved to adopt this without amendment and authorise the Chairman and RFO to sign this. The Chairman and RFO signed and dated the appropriate boxes and the Minute reference was recorded, as 5.16.12.

The Internal Auditor had previously completed Section 4 of the Annual Return.

5.6.13 To renew insurance policy

It was confirmed that this year's premium as part of the existing 3-year deal is £361.55.

5.6 14 To accept Standing Orders

It was agreed to accept the existing Standing Orders without alteration

5.16.15 To look at Planning Application decisions

None since the last meeting.

5.16.16 To look at state of Roads and Pavements

JU indicated that the NCC pothole reporting system was having no effect at present. He would re report all matters discussed at the last meeting and would also repeat the report re the paving stones outside the Mace shop. BMcL indicated that the back lane behind the Masons Arms was in need of attention, and that a pothole had recently formed in Church Lane just outside the cottage. In addition the bad state of the haunch of the road by Morris Hall was discussed.

Any Other Business (For Information Only)

JJG requested that the removal of cannonballs from the castle be put on the agenda for the next meeting. JHG reported that the Running Club would hold the Castle Bank Challenge on 30th June. BMcL reported that the previous complaint by a resident re a

Leylandii hedge in Ubbanford had not yet been resolved. It was also suggested that Jack and Eva Potts be thanked by the council for all the effort they had put in to planting along the edge of Church Lane. A notice to this effect would be placed in the Newsround. GS raised a complaint that the trimmed daffodils had not been raked up round the green.

Date of Next Meeting

Monday 25th July 2016 at 7.30pm in Norham Village Hall.