

## DRAFT Minutes of Annual Parish Council Meeting of Norham Parish Council held on 21st May 2018

Those present were: George Straughen (GS), Jim Blythe (JB) John Grahamslaw (JJG), Jim Greenwood (JHG), and Sheelagh Hume (SH).

A member of the public was also present (Rev Kelsey).

### 5.18.1. To elect a Chairman

GS was proposed by JB and seconded by JHG for Chair. He was duly elected unanimously.

### 5.18.2. Chairman to sign Declaration of Acceptance of Office

GS signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

### 5.18.3. To elect a Vice Chairman

JU was proposed by JB and seconded by JJG, to become Vice Chair. He was duly elected unanimously.

### 5.18.4. To accept apologies for Absence

Apologies were accepted from JU. It was also noted that Bill McLauchlan had tendered a letter of resignation to take effect immediately, due to his plans to move out of the village. It was agreed a letter of thanks would be sent. There was therefore a vacancy on the council. VLC will follow the required procedure.

### 5.18.5. To make any Declaration of Interest

No declaration of interest was made.

### 5.18.6. To agree Minutes of previous meeting

The Minutes of the meeting held on 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2017 were confirmed as an accurate record and signed by the Chairman.

### **5.18.10 To Receive Chairman's Report** (taken out of order at Chairman's request)

The Chairman's Annual Report was accepted. Copy attached. GS was thanked for all his hard work and commitment over the last 4 years

### **5.18.7 Matters Arising from Minutes**

#### i. Proposed Joint Neighbourhood Planning in Norham and Islandshire

After a flurry of activity a few months ago we were still waiting to hear from the planning consultant.

#### ii. Play Areas (incl posts and chains)

The RoSPA inspection was due in June. Replacement seats were still to be fitted. JU and JJG will replace the seats very shortly. A chain had broken very recently whilst children were playing on the green. It has been replaced and refitted. No-one had been hurt.

The question of dog fouling on the Village Green was again discussed. The byelaws are silent on the matter. After discussion it was agreed that a sign would be put up reminding everyone that this was a children's play area. It would also be put in the newsround. In addition it was agreed that a notice would be put in the newsround asking everyone to treat the war memorial with the respect it deserves.

#### iii. Public Conveniences

The public toilets are looking well kept and clean. JB was thanked again for all his efforts.

#### iv. Leaflets for walks around Norham

VLC has emailed the clerks of other affected councils re the possibility of a Tweed way, and awaits responses. JB confirmed the path along past the Boathouse has been slightly realigned in the light of erosion/subsidence.

#### v. Mobile Mast/BT Phone box

GS and VLC recently met Cllr Lawrie (NCC) and this was one of the matters raised. An email was sent to him thereafter and copied to Anne Marie Trevelyan emphasizing the damage to local economy without a good mobile signal throughout the village.

vi. Northumberland LED street lighting/Undergrounding of cables

No recent news was reported re undergrounding. The terms of correspondence regarding the new street lights in Church lane and St Cuthbert's Square was noted. The lights were neither asked for nor wanted, but it would appear that NCC had carried out a survey and noted that the street lighting did not conform to the current British Standard. If that was the case there was very little that could be done.

vii Use of Postal Addresses

There is clearly still a problem and the issue of a new postcode may have to be looked at again. An ambulance had been seen driving around the village for about 2 hours looking for Birch Hill and had been confused by the postcode (and had no mobile signal so could not phone for advice!)

viii. Street Signs/Village Map

GS still working on this but it is clearly required.

ix New Speed signs/30mph reminders

Funding for a new speed sign had been raised with Cllr Lawrie, as a result of which GS had obtained 2 quotes which will be sent on in the hope that this will enable Cllr Lawrie to release the funds. We were also still waiting to hear from NCC re changes to the speed limit on Castle bank

x Norham First School

The school was setting in well with its new head and newly appointed teacher. Pupil numbers were also looking more optimistic.

xi Ambulance Provision

A response had been received from AMT's chief of staff, confirming that NEAS wished detail of long waits for local residents for an ambulance. After discussion it was agreed that NEAS had all the statistics so the question would be put back to them in some form. asking for an assurance that NEAS is satisfied that ambulance provision is acceptable in an emergency., .

xii Stackyard Lane

This was discussed with Cllr Lawrie, and we were waiting to hear from him as to whether there was any assistance he could provide.

xiii Norham Signs

VLC had contacted NCC to request that Norham be included in a new sign at Velvet Hall (which only refers to Horncliffe and Norham Castle) and for replacements for broken signs at Duddo Crossroads, the Norham Station junction, and the top of the hill at Grindon Gate. A response was awaited.

xiv Proposed Village Community Trust

Very positive meetings continue to be held. The next coordination group meeting will be on 4<sup>th</sup> June. JG reported that after taking advice from Tony Kirsop of NCC it had been agreed to set up a Charitable Incorporated Organization and this application was in progress. The initial trustees would be GS, JHG, VC and William Jackson.

xv Northumberland Day Picnic

Preparations for the Northumberland Day picnic in the Castle on Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> May were well in hand. A portaloos has been ordered, parking would be allowed in the bottom field. There would be a treasure trail, castle tours and childrens races. A risk assessment has been carried out. Posters have been distributed throughout the village and beyond.

xvi Data Protection Action Plan

VLC reported that she had attended a training session. Policies were in the process of being drafted and would be put before the council at the next meeting. She would also have to conduct an audit of paperwork held to ensure compliance.

#### xvii Self Assessment Capability Tool

VLC had carried out the exercise and the parish council had performed well in the assessment.

#### xviii Seats

One of the seats had been removed from Pedwell Way and was currently being refurbished with a view to its being put at the east end of Castle Street

#### 5.18.8 Pre Planning Consultation re Smart Meter Mast

A pre planning application for a 12.5m smart meter mast has been received. The paper plans were examined. GS had spoken to the company involved who had sent more photos including those of the cabinets that must be positioned near the mast. After discussion it was agreed this was as it stands an unattractive proposition. It would be confirmed that it was likely that the application as proposed would be opposed but that that parish council would be willing to discuss other alternatives.

#### 5.18.9 Review Clerks Salary

VLC left the room. After discussion and consideration of NALC National Salary Award Briefing it was agreed to increase the clerk's hourly rate to £10.107 from 1<sup>st</sup> May 2018.

### **Finance**

#### 5.18.11 To review Payments and Receipts since last meeting

Payments from the current account had been made for Norton Anti Virus (£49.99); to the Clerk for salary (£425.90 for the period from 1<sup>st</sup> November 2017 to 1<sup>st</sup> May 2018); to Clerk for office materials (£19.75) and to Sheila Penman (£100). The first portion of precept of £2250 had been received. From the castle account a payment of £63 had been made as reimbursement for the cost of posters for the Norham Castle Picnic.

#### 5.18.12. To look at Bank balances in Current and Deposit Accounts

As at 21<sup>st</sup> May the balance in the Current Account was £10242.55, and Deposit Account £1247.37.

#### 5.18.13 To confirm Donations and Grants

It was agreed to proceed to pay out the various donations and grants as agreed at the parish council meeting on 27<sup>th</sup> November 2017 namely maintenance payment to Churchyard upkeep £150, to Newsround £120, To Village Hall £200; donations To Great North Air Ambulance £50, to Poppy Appeal £30 (for wreath), to CAB (or similar organisation that helps those in Berwick) £50.

#### 5.18.14 Annual Governance and Accountability Return for 2017/2018

- i. To consider and agree any actions arising from the report of the internal auditor  
The internal audit report was received and considered. There are no actions required.
- ii. To approve the Annual Governance Statement  
Considered and approved.
- iii. To approve the draft annual accounts for 2017/2018  
Considered and approved.
- iv. To approve the Accounting Statement and Explanation of Variances

- Considered and approved.
- v. To confirm and approve the Certification of Exemption  
Considered approved and signed accordingly.
  - vi. To complete agree and sign relevant Annual Return sections  
Completed agreed and signed accordingly.
  - vii To accept Bank Reconciliation  
Considered and accepted.

5.17.13 To renew insurance policy

Four quotes for new insurance were considered and after discussion it was agreed to proceed with the 3 year agreement with Inspire, through Came and Co.

5.17.14 To accept Standing Orders

It was agreed to accept the existing Standing Orders without alteration.

5.17.15 To look at Planning Application decisions

Application for Masons Arms 16 West Street granted.

Application for 23 West Street granted

5.17.16 To look at state of Roads and Pavements

Roads are improving slowly though there is a problem near the entrance to Galagate where the road really needs resurfacing. It was agreed to put a notice in newsround asking people to use the NCC pothole reporting system.

5.17.18 General Correspondence

Greaves West and Ayre had sent updated letter of engagement to reflect new Data protection regulations.

**Any Other Business (For Information Only)**

D Gibson would be asked to start path clearing programmed for the year. Fishers Walk has been mowed by Rob Kelsey rather than having been strimmed/poisoned and was looking good. JB/JU will also take turns. There had been 2 complaints of cars travelling in excess of 45mph outside the school. As a result a police car was in evidence recently watching the speed camera. It may become necessary to ask for mobile speed checks. It was noted that the bus timetables in the bus shelter were out of date. New ones will be obtained. It was also noted with regret that Neil Robertson who had been Chair of the Parish Council for some years, and who had been instrumental in bringing the castle back into the parish of Norham, had died. A letter of sympathy would be sent.

**Date of Next Meeting**

**Monday 23rd July 2018 at 7.30pm in Norham Village Hall.**