

Cornhill Parish Council

Minutes of a meeting held on Thursday, 13th November 2014, at the Village Hall at 6.00pm

Present: Cllrs. Mick Plunkett (Chairman), David Buckle, Marie Gillespie, Tina Ayre, County Cllr. Dougie Watkin, PC Stuart Brimble (Northumbria Police), Rev. Robert Kelsey (Cornhill Church), Margaret Mole (Parishioner), Angela Hallam-Baker (Clerk).

1. Apologies for absence were received from Cllr. Keith Bailey and PC Dan Perry (Northumbria Police).

Cllr. Keith Bailey had been unable to attend Parish Council meetings for the past six months due to ill health, and had consequently been given the requisite permission by the members for his absence.

2. Resignation of Claudio Rickard:

Claudio had found it difficult to continue as a member of the Parish Council due to pressure of work and family ties. His resignation was received with regret, and thanks were expressed for his interest and input during his period of office.

3. Parishioners' Questions:

A complaint had been received from Stephanie Carrington about vehicles parking on the lower part of Knowe Head between The Cottage and the Church. It was established that these vehicles belonged to tradesmen working at The Cottage, and that this was therefore only a temporary problem, and not thought to be a danger. PC Brimble asked that any dangerous parking should be reported to the Police.

4. Police Report:

PC Brimble said there was one reported crime of theft and one minor assault in the Parish.

5. County Councillor's Report:

Cllr. Watkin reported that:

- **The Local Plan** is now available for consultation.
- **The Post 16 Transport** matter is under review.
- **The new road sign** by Cornhill Farm is ready and waiting to be erected.
- **Interactive speed limit sign** – the Parish Council confirmed it would contribute £200 towards the cost of this. Cllr. Plunkett is to meet Neil Snowdon on 21st November at 11.00am to consider where this should be located.
- **Superfast broadband** – Cllr. Buckle enquired about this and said that it had been reported in a local newspaper that it would be in Crookham by the end of December. Boxes had been put in Cornhill and Donaldsons Lodge to Tillmouth. Cllr. Watkin suggested the liaison officer should be contacted to find out when broadband would be installed in Cornhill Parish. (Name to be supplied by DW)
- It was reported to Cllr. Watkin that dumpy bags had been left on the school site, and need to be removed.

- It was mentioned that the school sign outside Tweed Meadows had not been removed, as requested. Cllr. Watkin said this would be taken down when work began on the school site.

Cllr. Watkin left the meeting at this point to attend another meeting.

6. The minutes of the meeting held on 11th September were agreed, signed, and initialled on each page, as requested by the Auditors.

7. Matters arising from the minutes:

- **Tourist Information Board** – the clerk had heard from Paul Nichol that the new tourist information point/sheet (with businesses and attractions details for the locale) is ready to be put up. A second part, with a Welcome to North Northumberland objective, is in the pipeline. Both have maps as part of the design, and should be in the display case in the near future.
- **Armistice Day Service** – a poppy wreath was laid at the War Memorial by the Chairman on behalf of the Parish Council. Four Parish Councillors and the clerk attended.
- **Planting on the roundabout** – NCC grass-cutters had strimmed some of the lavender plants to the ground. A complaint had been made about this, and it was suggested that canes should be put round all the plants to protect them.
- **Archiving Parish records** – Cllr. Plunkett had collected these from Cllr. Buckle and would take them to Woodhorn.
- **Planning Application 14/0232/OUT** – nothing further had been heard regarding the proposed housing development adjacent to Oaklea Lodge.
- **NALC subscription** – the clerk had ascertained that the variable amount of 26.1p per £1 of Band D Council Tax base (£136) would be £35.50 (0.261 x 136).
- **Cemetery gate** – the right-hand gate is sagging on the hinge, and a notice had been attached to ask people to use the left-hand gate pending repairs. Rev. Kelsey would discuss this with the churchwarden.
- **Viability of the church** – Rev. Kelsey reported that the church is struggling to pay its share to the diocese, and needs to implement some fund-raising. It is important to keep the church as a key part of the village. It was agreed that the community should be asked for its support on a regular basis, and that new residents could be sent a mail shot. It was also suggested that some fund-raising events might be held in the church. Rev. Kelsey said that a Task Group meets once a month and discusses how local people could support the church, and how the church could support the local community. He asked that anyone who is interested in giving help should get in touch with him.

8. Financial Report:

The external audit had been completed and no issues arose with the accounts. These had been agreed at the Annual Parish Meeting on 19th May 2014, and agreement confirmed following the audit.

The clerk confirmed that a risk assessment would be carried out each year, and that loose leaf pages in the minute file would now be numbered consecutively and each initialled by the person signing them, as requested.

The clerk presented a financial statement as at today's date, 13th November 2014, showing transactions since the last meeting.

9. Council Tax Support Scheme:

The Chairman had received a letter from NCC informing the PC that it intended to continue its support of vulnerable residents' council tax payments in spite of the withdrawal of a Government grant.

10. Play Area – inspection and repairs required:

Alan Cater had carried out a monthly inspection of the play area and submitted a report in which he reported the condition of three of the units as “poor”. The climbing frame requires some new timbers, the cradle swing has been damaged and needs replacing, and the goal net is holed and would need replacing if this is thought necessary. The basket ball post requires maintenance.

Also reported is a foot trap hole 420cm from the pavement which needs to be filled, and it is legally required that a sign with contact phone number be placed notifying the public that the park belongs to the PC. Alan said he could provide this last item.

11. Grass and hedge cutting:

Cllr. Plunkett said that NCC had promised to scrape the vegetation from the path through Donaldsons Lodge, but nothing had yet been done. It was agreed that Peter Logan should be asked if he could undertake this job and at what cost. The hedges along this stretch have been cut back by Cllr. Plunkett and the landowners.

It was suggested that the Parish Council might take over the grass cutting from NCC, but that this would require an increase in the precept, and would require a public meeting to ask the public their views on this.

12. Report on Glendale Neighbourhood Plan meeting held o 13th October 2014:

Cllr. Buckle reported that this meeting had been well attended by parishes in the Glendale area. The Plan, which would be shared by the parishes, would give them the opportunity to designate the building of houses. The cost of the Plan would be £30-50,000, and the cost to each parish would be based on population. Since Wooler is the largest parish, it would take charge, but at its recent meeting, the Parish Council came to no conclusion as to whether they would take it up. It was mentioned that the Glendale Group of Parish Councils fell apart when it came to cost, the main objector being Wooler PC. To arrive at a decision, a referendum would be required – 2,000 in Wooler, and 3,000 in the other small parishes. It was suggested that the scheme would be ideal for urban parishes, but not for rural ones, and it was agreed that before the matter was discussed further by Cornhill Parish, it would be necessary to wait for Wooler PC's decision.

13. Report on Joint NCC/Town & Parish Councils meeting on 16th October 2014:

Cllr. Plunkett, reported that the main gripe was that NCC does not reply to emails. Cllr. Plunkett had attended the meeting specifically to speak to Terry Garnick. He learnt that his job had been taken over by Bob Hodgson, who asked for time to settle into his post.

14. Review of Public Rights of Way:

Cllr. Plunkett had sent information to Alex Bell regarding local paths, his only worry being the U2 County Highway. He hoped that this would appear on the definitive map and be afforded protection. He confirmed that many of the footpaths are walked regularly by residents, particularly the four Cornhill Walks.

15. Cornhill Community Website:

It was agreed that the community should be asked to contribute to the website to keep it alive. Contributions may be sent to the clerk who would pass them on to Alan Cater. Rev. Kelsey agreed to get in touch with Alan direct with matters regarding Church information. Cllr. Buckle requested that Alan be asked how many hits are recorded for each particular item, how many people visit and how long each person stays on the website, a service which can be provided by Google. This information could then be presented to the PC at the January meeting.

16. Donaldson's Lodge 'phone box:

Adoption had been agreed by BT, but it apparently required planning permission by the County Council. The clerk was struggling to hear back from the Chief Planning Officer, and would try to speak to him.

17. Northumberland Local Heroes Awards:

The PC had nominated Cornhill Village Shop for an award, and it is hoped they would be successful.

18. Bell View Project:

This is a charity which supports older people by providing a range of services and activities throughout the area, such as trips to hospitals and shopping. Cllr. Plunkett went to the community consultation event in Etal Village Hall on 11th November, but said the turnout was disappointing. Representative, Jane Field, has agreed to arrange a similar event in Cornhill, and Cllrs. Plunkett, Buckle and Gillespie agreed to distribute leaflets advertising this.

19. Correspondence:

- **Great North Air Ambulance** request for a donation - £30.00 agreed.
- **Northumbria Citizens Advice Bureau** request for a donation - £20.00 agreed.
- **Glendale Gateway Trust** – email announcing substantial grants to help fund affordable housing scheme.
- **Northumberland & Newcastle Society/Campaign to Protect Rural England** – letter giving facts and concerns regarding commercial wind turbine development in Northumberland and related threats to the County's landscapes and communities.

20. Any other business:

- **The next North Area meeting** will be held on Monday, 9th February 2015, at the William Elder Building, Berwick.
- **Core Strategy Consultation** – wait for documents to see if there is any item requiring comment.
- **Barmoor Wind Farm EDF Community Fund** – Parishes within a 5km radius and 10km radius are entitled to apply for funding from a total of £60,000 per annum. Cornhill is within a 10km radius so could make an application for capital-based funding. It was suggested that, if the PC is to obtain land adjacent to the school, it could apply for funding for play equipment. The clerk would make enquiries about obtaining possession of the land.
- **Ann Wood** – it was agreed that the clerk would write to Ann on behalf of the PC and the community to thank her for cleaning the bus shelters at Donaldsons Lodge.
- **Damage to two wicket gates** on the footpath on the railway line – Cllr. Gillespie reported that hooks and chains had been removed and replaced by twine. It was not

known whether these had been removed by the farmer, but since it is a public footpath, the matter would be reported to Phil Bradley.

21. Parishioners' questions on agenda items: none.

22. Date of next meeting: Thursday, 8th January 2015, at 6.00pm in the Village Hall.

Signed.....

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