

DRAFT**Cornhill Parish Council****Minutes of a meeting held on Thursday, 9th March 2017, at 6.00pm
in the Village Hall**

Present: Cllrs. Mick Plunkett (Chair), David Buckle, Barbara Richmond, Tina Ayre, Marie Gillespie, clerk Angela Hallam-Baker.

In attendance: David Richmond, Tom Forrester (Chief of Staff to Berwick MP Anne-Marie Trevelyan).

1. Apologies for absence were received from County Cllr. Dougie Watkin and Revd. Rob Kelsey.

2. Police Report: none.

3. Questions from parishioners: none.

4. The minutes of the meeting held on 12th January 2017 were agreed and signed.

5. Matters arising from the minutes:

Item 5 (i) Pavements – some of the moss had been cleared and the edges of grassed areas trimmed.

Item 5 (vi) Footpaths in Donaldsons Lodge – most had been cleared, just one or two remaining.

Cornhill School site – a request had been made to remove the out of date sale board at the entrance to St. Helen's Gardens. This had not yet been done, but a new sale board without a closing date had appeared on the school gates.

It was explained to Mr. Forrester that the Parish Council had a preference for the site to be used for social housing (suggest elderly people's bungalows and perhaps young families). These could be built on the school footprint, leaving the grassed area as an amenity space. As agreed, the Chair had written to NCC (John Marshall), and a copy of his reply would be put on the notice board. It was noted that NCC currently has no money for social housing in this area, and no decisions would be made until after the May elections.

Item 9 – Churchyard improvements – Rob had reported that Pippa Coles did not want paying for her help. She is still interested, but has been very busy and will get back to Rob in due course.

It was reported that the wall opposite the village shop supporting the churchyard is ballooning and could be in danger of collapsing. The clerk would inform NCC and ask for an inspection to be made.

6. Financial Report:

The clerk circulated a note of the account to date, showing a credit balance of £2,932.28. She submitted her half-year honorarium from 1st October 2016 to 31st March 2017, amounting to £300.00 plus out of pocket expenses (stationery, postage, mileage, internet) amounting to £52.18. This was agreed by the Chair, and would be paid out in time to

appear in the end of year accounts. Since, her honorarium had not been reviewed since 2014, the Councillors agreed to discuss this.

Asset Register – this was updated and agreed, to include new purchases during the year bringing the total asset value to £32,850.17.

7. Riverside path:

Mick reported that, when walking along the path, he had again been accosted by Brendan Lough, the boatman, and told he should not be there. He told Mr. Lough that permission had been granted by the agent, Neal Thompson, to which response he was told that the permission would soon be rescinded. This was followed by a letter from Neal Thompson in which he wrote that the conditions imposed had not been adhered to, and that an ever increasing number of incidents had occurred contrary to their agreement. Mick had seen no signs of this, but under the circumstances had no alternative but to inform walkers that the consent issued in 2015 is withdrawn until further notice.

It was also noted that the locked wicket gate had been removed, apparently stolen, and this had been reported to the Police.

Many people had been walking along this path for decades with no problem, although a similar confrontation had taken place in 1999 between the same boatman and the late Charles Renton. This was resolved by the land owner, and people continued to use the path.

Mick asked local MP, Anne-Marie Trevelyan, to intervene. She wrote to the agent and received a reply contradicting both the fact that the path had been walked for decades, and the fact that there was no sign of anyone contravening the conditions laid down.

Mick said that with the trout fishing season just three weeks away, Cornhill trout anglers will also be denied access to the water that they are legally entitled to fish as members of the Coldstream and District Angling Association, and he understands that they are taking this up with the riparian owner.

After much discussion, it was agreed that another meeting should be arranged between Mick, Neal Thompson and the Angling Association to try to settle this dispute, and failing this, direct contact would be made with the landowner.

8. Village Plan:

A meeting had been convened for Wednesday, 5th April, at 5.30pm in the Village Hall, to which representatives of village organisations were to be invited to discuss how they could co-operate together to enhance the life of Cornhill. The Parish Council would offer its support, and Barbara agreed to lead the discussion.

9. Play Area repairs:

After a long wait to hear back from Caledonia Play, a communication was finally received advising that they would start the work on the double swing on Thursday, 16th March.

10. Christmas lights:

A request had been received by the Parish Council to install some Christmas lights. It was pointed out that the questionnaire circulated throughout the village on the question of new LED lighting, produced only 11 out of 134 people wanting to install these. Since one new pole would cost £350.00, the PC could not justify spending this. It was suggested that

people may be willing to put up their own lights outside their houses, which could either be plugged into the mains or powered by solar screens.
It was agreed that this would be an ideal subject for discussion at the Village Plan meeting.

11. Dog fouling:

The clerk had received a report of dog fouling on the school field and in one of the unfenced gardens in Tweed View. She had reported this to the NCC Animal Welfare Officer, who had visited the site and put up notices informing dog owners that a heavy fine would be imposed if they failed to pick up after their dogs. She had also put a NO DOGS notice on the school gate, which could be removed if the PC saw fit to do so. Tina, who lives near to the field, felt that this was over the top because this green space is the only safe place within the village to exercise dogs off the lead, and that the majority of dog owners do pick up. It was agreed that the NO DOGS sign should be removed, and the area would be monitored for anyone disobeying the law.

12. County and Parish Council Elections – Thursday, 4th May 2017:

All existing parish councillors who wish to stand again are obliged to re-apply. Apart from these members, there are two other spaces on the Parish Council. The following notice has been issued by Northumberland County Council for advance information:

County and Parish Council Elections May 4th 2017

A timetable has been established for those wishing to stand for election to the Parish Council. On March 20th a Notice of Election will be published and this opens the nomination period which will run until 4th April. Blank nomination forms will be made available electronically and paper copies will be available for collection from County Hall and from a number of Information Centres across the County. The purpose of this form is to convince the Returning Officer that a person should be allowed to stand for election.

Completed nomination forms need to be returned by hand, though not necessarily by the candidate. Electronic submission is not allowed under legislation. It will be necessary to book appointments to return the form and at that time it will be checked to ensure it is correctly completed. Each form will take about ten minutes to process unless there are major irregularities.

There will be a number of offices across the County at which the service will be available. Details have not yet been released as to the location of these offices. Further information regarding the election will be issued in February by Northumberland County Council and persons wishing to stand for election are urged to watch local notice boards for information.

13. Planning:

Pre-Application Ref: 16/00101/PREAPP – Proposed new (replacement) house at Quarry Cottage, Nr. Donaldsons Lodge, TD12 4XN.

Concern has been expressed by the farmers at Cramond Hill that a drainage pipe has been installed into their field without permission, and that a red brick wall has been built which is not in keeping with the rest of the building. The Parish Council has not received a full application, and these matters will be dealt with by the Planning Officer.

Application Ref: 16/04099/FUL – Proposed erection of 11 holiday home lodges off Green Lane, Cornhill-on-Tweed.

There had been no further communication with reference to this application.

Application Ref: 16/03969/FUL – Permission has been granted for the extension of existing river bank erosion defences on land south of Fishing Hut, Cornhill-on-Tweed.

14. County Councillor's Report: none.

15. Boundary Changes:

Tom Forrester explained that the Boundary Commission had been asked to produce a plan to reduce the number of Central Government Members of Parliament from 650 to 600, and that constituencies should each have the same number of electors. The Boundary Commission does not work on the type of constituencies and communities – just on numbers. Northumberland MPs would be reduced from four seats to three.

The Commission's initial proposal is to remove Rothbury and Longhorsley from the Berwick-upon-Tweed constituency and attach them to Hexham, and move Ashington into the Berwick seat. Since these two regions are so diverse – Berwick being rural, and Ashington urban, it was suggested that Berwick, Alnwick and Morpeth together would be more workable.

Individual comments from members of the public will be taken into account by the Boundary Commission which may be emailed via its website: www.bce2018.org.uk by 27th March 2017 deadline.

16. Any other business:

- **Village notice board** – the Tourist Information board outside the Village Shop is letting in water and making the notices untidy and difficult to read. Mick has reported this to Paul Nichol, Tourism Officer.
- **Manholes on the A698 at Donaldsons Lodge** – most of these have been covered, but a few remain open.
- **Steps up to the old railway line footpath** – these are made of earth and are sagging. The clerk has reported this to NCC, but will also contact the footpaths officer.
- **Horse Chestnut tree outside Croft Cottages** – this needs pruning. The clerk will report it to the NCC tree officer.
- **Tree growing into the hedge by Croft Cottages** – Mick offered to have a look at this and prune it back.
- **PC meeting dates May 2017 – March 2018** – it was agreed that the second Thursday of alternate months at 6.00pm at the Village Hall should be retained. The clerk would book these dates.
- **Cornhill Summer Fair** – this is to be hosted by William and Stephanie Carrington in the Old Vicarage garden on Saturday and Sunday, 8th and 9th July 2017.
- **Litter pick** – this was arranged for Monday, 3rd April, to clear litter between Donaldsons Lodge and Twizell Bridge. Volunteers were asked to meet at Twizell Bridge at 9.30am.

17. Date of next meeting: Thursday, 11th May 2017. 6.00pm Annual Parish Meeting, followed by monthly meeting at approximately 6.30pm.