

WIDDRINGTON STATION & STOBWOOD PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD AT THE COMMUNITY CENTRE ON MONDAY 14TH October 2019 COMMENCING AT 6.30. P.M.

In attendance were Councillors Mrs S Willoughby (Chair), K Batson, D Baron, G Tate.
Aaron Carrier

R A Smith (Parish Clerk).
Police Constable Andrea Teasdale

One member of the Public

1. To receive apologies for absence

NCC Cllr David Towns

2.To receive declarations of interest

Cllr Batson declared a non-pecuniary interest in regard to any matters relating to the Stobswood Welfare.

3.To receive questions and comments from members of the public (time limited to 20 minutes in total)

a) Police Constable Andrea Teasdale reported on the issue of Poachers. Northumbria Police had mounted a week of action with some success but resources currently do not allow for such action to be taken often. Reports of difficult situations arising on the Mile Road involving unruly children. Hopefully the Guy Fawkes Fireworks period does not cause problems. Cllr Mrs Willoughby explained the success of the Parish Council providing a public display in recent years which has been well attended and hopefully reduces the number of firework parties in the parish. P C Teasdale was thanked for her attendance and she left the meeting.

b) The member of the public in attendance considered that the Parish Council should be seen to encouraging schemes to assist with the problems arising from climate change. Cllr Mrs Willoughby stated that there may be an opportunity for finance to be made available from the North Steads Sisters Wind Farm Community Fund for schemes such as tree planting and areas suggested were at the top of the Mile Road and the Community Park at Widdrington Station. There may also be finance available from the Northumberland County Council Local Members Community Budget Schemes.

4. Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on the 9th September, 2019 for approval and adoption.

Cllr Batson proposed to approve and adopt the minutes. The proposal was seconded by Cllr Mrs Willoughby and carried.

5. Matters arising on the Minutes

(Minute 10 page 8) Cllr Mrs Willoughby reported that there were no problems reported in regard to the recent visit by the Slaters Fun Fair to the Community Park. As in previous years a donation of £300.00 had been received towards the cost of community events. She therefore proposed that the donation is utilised towards the cost of the Fireworks Display to be held on Sunday 3rd November, 2019; The proposal was seconded by Cllr Batson and carried.

(Minute 3b) Cllr Mrs Willoughby confirmed that a meeting was held with representatives of Karbon Homes on the 19th September, 2019 which some residents attended from the Grange Court Area. Both the Housing Estates Officers Ms Elliott and Mr Hodgson Maintenance Officer had only recently taken up their employment posts. Discussion in regard to the number of cuts included within the contract for the grass cutting etc., which in mid-summer should be at least every two weeks and from March to October 16 cuts are allowed for. The residents confirmed that since March only 6 cuts to date. The areas of concern were viewed especially the problems caused by weeds and vegetation not cut back and general mess of grass not picked up especially when not cut regularly. A triangular corner area at Mary Street where hedging, vegetation and a tree caused visibility problems for drivers who have problems seeing children and other pedestrians in the area. Karbon Homes agreed to carry out work to improve safety on the corner and remove the hedge and vegetation.

6. Co-option to fill one of the vacancies of a representative for the Widdrington Station Ward of the Parish Council.

Following consideration of his application at the Parish Council Meeting held on the 9th September, 2019 and the resolution that Arron Carrier was to be Co-opted to the Parish Council at the October meeting Mr Carrier was introduced to the Council and signed the Declaration of the Office of Parish Councillor which was witnessed and signed by the Parish Clerk.

7.Reports from Outside Bodies

Northumberland Town & Parish Councils Conference at County Hall on Thursday 3rd October, 2019

Cllr Mrs Willoughby attended the Conference accompanied by the Clerk. The Conference was opened by NCC Cllr Wendy Pattison, Chair of the Town and Parish Council Liaison Group. NCC Cllr Glen Sanderson stood in for the NCC Cllr Peter Jackson, Leader of the Council to give a summary of the County Council's maintenance programme and the vision for the future to improve facilities and services under the County Council's Statutory responsibilities.

Cllr Mrs Willoughby stated that Cllr Sanderson referred to the problems of 'Fly Tipping' in the County and it may be appropriate for there to be an Amnesty weekend occasionally for the sighting of skips in parish areas for the collection of Builders Rubbish etc.,

Rob Murfin the Director of Planning referred to using Planning for Positive Outcomes. He particularly referred to Section 106 Agreements and favoured taking Local Area Community Benefit requirements and formulating a County wide cumulative approach to details of Agreements. He was willing to attend meetings of Parish Council's to discuss Planning Matters in more detail. Cllr Alex Wallace Chair of Northumberland Association of Local Councils gave the concluding remarks. The Clerk stated that the revised Joint Charter between Northumberland County Council and the Town and Parish Councils of Northumberland was available. NALC welcomes the updated Charter illustrating the continued partnership between the Councils with each responsible for providing local services to the residents of Northumberland.

8. Correspondance Received

a) Community Action Northumberland

A letter had been received stating that over many years CAN have greatly appreciated the support that many local community groups have given them. Although they currently receive grants from DEFRA and charitable sources, support from local community bodies (including councils) is vital in enabling them to continue the work in providing advice and support to communities across Northumberland and acting as a critical 'rural voice'. A donation to assist with funding CAN and assist them to continue their work which complements the services of the Northumberland Association of Local Councils was requested. It was agreed to continue supporting CAN with the Annual Subscription but not to give a separate donation on this occasion.

b) The Landmark Trust

Letter received from the Trust which is a buildings preservation charity and for the last six years they have been running a scheme called "50 for Free" which offers 50 free stays in their building to those who need it most. They are currently looking to expand their outreach to local charities and not for profit organisations and a request for a poster to be displayed in the Community Centre was granted.

c) Alzheimer's Society

Letter of thanks received from the Society in regard to the £250.00 which was recently donated following the decorative cup cakes sale and the £50.00 donation from the Widdrington Spiritualist Congregation. A copy of the letter would be displayed on the Notice Board in the Community Centre Hall.

9. Planning Applications

Planning Application Ref No 17/04618/OUT – Outline Planning Permission for up to 167 residential dwellings with associated infrastructure and areas of public open space (with all matters reserved except access)

Land South of Grange Court, Grange Road, Widdrington Estate Applicant Eddie Peat Harworth Estates.

Letter received from NCC Planning advising the County Council have refused permission.

10. Northumberland County Council – Northumberland Local Plan

Consultation on Scoping Documents for the Affordable Housing and Planning Obligations to prepare supplementary planning documents. Details were included with the Agenda.

The NCC had prepared two scoping documents for each of the proposals that set out initial views in regard to the scoping documents for the Affordable Housing and Planning Obligations and feedback is sought by 5.00 pm on the 6th November, 2019. Details of how to view the documents online were given and comments forms were available.

11. Parish Council Events

a) Halloween Disco at the Community Centre Saturday 26th October, 2019 3.00 pm to 5.00 pm

Cllr Mrs Willoughby confirmed that as usual admission is free of charge. Some Refreshments would also be available free of charge.

b) Guy Fawkes Public Fireworks Display Sunday 3rd November, 2019 at the Stobswood Welfare Ground commencing at 7.30 pm. The Clerk confirmed that the Fireworks had been ordered from Jordans Fireworks. The various emergency organisations had been advised of the arrangements for the display.

12. Community Park – Consideration of fitness equipment and disabled access to enable inclusive play facilities.

Support was expressed for the provision of play equipment for all and in particular the need to accommodate the needs of less able users. Suppliers of Play equipment for Play areas can equip Play areas as appropriate. Cllr Mrs Willoughby proposed that quotations are obtained for consideration; the proposal was seconded by Cllr Batson.

A sum of £5,000.00 towards the cost may be available for the NCC Local Councillors Community Budget Fund.

13. Finance

i) Parish Clerk's financial statement – monthly update – Bank of Ireland Account as at 30.09.2019 £45,259.05 reconciled with Bank Account statement for September, 2019 from Bank of Ireland plus NCC Precept half yearly payment £23,945.00 to be added to Bank Account Balance = £69,204.05 includes Receipt of Annual Rent £536.68 from the Stobswood Allotment Association for 2019/20.

ii) Payments for Approval: -

Parish Clerk's September Salary £785.68 (5 weeks)

Parish Clerk's September Expenses £50.77 (Working from Home Allowance £10.00, Home Internet & Telephone £8.00, Postage £18.30, 4 Drawer File Cabinet£14.47)

A Henderson Parish Handy Person, September Invoice £527.48 (includes £270.00 for additional work and materials)

Ken Arries Seasonal Parish Grounds Maintenance Worker September Payment £628.46 (includes Motor Fuel Expenses £87.96)

Viking £65.02 Toner for Printer.

Fish Electrical Services Ltd £403.20 Annual Service of suspension lifting equipment for Community Centre Hoist.

Washeteria £32.00 Laundry of Table Linens delivered 20.09.19

HMRC £615.70 Quarterly Payment PAYE July, August, September, 2019.

In addition, a payment of £1,649.96 was made to Jordans Fireworks in regard to the Fireworks Display to be held on Sunday 03.11.2019.

Cllr Mrs Willoughby proposed approval of the payments; the proposal was seconded by Cllr Baron.

iii) Quarterly Statement Budget against Spending as at 30.09.2019

The Clerk presented a report showing the Council's expenditure for the period 01.04 to 30.09.2019. The total Budget for the year was £53,720 and £26,767 had been spent. The report would be displayed on the Parish Council Notice Boards and Website.

iv) Completion of Annual Audit – Limited assurance review for the year ended 31st March, 2019.

The Clerk reported that the Notice of Conclusion of the Audit dated 30th September, 2019 had been received from PKF Littlejohn Accountants. Copies would be displayed on the Parish Council Notice Boards for the required period.

v) To determine the Budget for 2020-2021 and set the Northumberland County Council Precept.

The Clerk reported that the Finance Working Group of the Council met on the 10th October, 2019. The meeting was attended by Cllrs D Baron and K Batson. Cllr Mrs Willoughby tendered her apologies for absence. Notes of the meeting were circulated. Many of the Budget Heads remain the same or with increases ie., Running Costs of the Community Park and Community Centre together with Community Events. The total budget proposed was £58,870 which is an increase of £5,150 on the current year's budget. The 2019/20 precept payment levied on the Northumberland County Council amounted to £47,890. In view of the expected expenditure for 2020-21 **it was recommended that a precept amount of £50,284.50 is levied on the Northumberland County Council for 2020-2021 an increase of nearly 5% on the precept for 2019/2020. Expenditure during the year in excess of the precept will be met by the Council's Bank Account Reserves.**

Cllr Mrs Willoughby proposed that the recommendations of the Finance Working Group are approved; Cllr Tate seconded the proposal which was carried.

14. To consider any urgent business which shall be limited to circumstances in which the Council's responsibilities cannot be met or the Council's interests are likely to be prejudiced, if the business is deferred to the next available meeting.

15. To be held in closed session

Councillors resolved that members of the public and press are excluded from the remainder of the meeting which is to be held in closed session due to the confidential nature of the business to be discussed.

Staff Matter

The meeting closed at 8.50 p.m.

Signed Date.....

