

Cornhill Parish Council

Minutes of a meeting held on 11th September 2014 at the Village Hall

Present: Cllrs. Mick Plunkett (Chairman), David Buckle, Marie Gillespie, Tina Ayre, County Cllr. Dougie Watkin, resident Margaret Mole, and clerk Angela Hallam-Baker. Rev. Rob Kelsey arrived later in the meeting.

Cllr. Tina Ayre was welcomed to her first meeting. She had been co-opted earlier in the year, but had been unable to attend the May and July meetings due to her absence abroad.

1. Apologies for absence were received from Cllr. Keith Bailey, Claudio Rickard, and Police Officers Dan Perry and Mark Lynn.

2. Police Report: Due to urgent Police work and consequent inability to attend the meeting, PC Dan Perry had subsequently sent his brief report in which he stated that there had been two reported crimes since the last meeting: a domestic assault, where the offender had been arrested, and the theft of a motorbike, which has not yet been recovered.

3. Parishioner's Questions:

Eric Bell wrote concerning the inactivity on the matter of installing interactive speed limit signs, and stating that there is an urgent need for them.

Cllr. Watkin said the cost of a sign is between £3,000 and £4,000, and after discussion, he agreed to donate £3,500 and asked the Parish Council to contribute £200 towards it. This was agreed, and the clerk was asked to put in the order to NCC. It was suggested that the most suitable site for the sign would be approaching the Tweed Meadows turning on the A698, but the clerk would check this with the Police and Highways Dept.

4. The minutes of the meeting held on 21st July 2014 were agreed and signed.

5. Matters arising from the minutes:

- **Tourist Information Board** – Paul Nicholl from NCC Tourist Information had looked at the board and agreed that it needs updating and replacing, particularly as it is so close to the Scottish border.
- **Armistice Day Service** – the clerk had ordered a poppy wreath to be laid at the War Memorial by and on behalf of the Parish Council.
- **Planting on roundabout** – Cllr. Plunkett had purchased and planted shrubs which would flower in the summer and also be decorative in the winter.
- **Post 16 Transport** – the clerk had heard that some of the County Councillors were to put forward a resolution for a complete review of the effect the charges would have on some families. Cllr. Watkin said a review would not take place until next year. He said that a number of pupils were not now using the school buses and that they are 10-20% empty. The majority of children whose parents could not afford to pay were being offered free transport.
- **Archiving Parish records** – since there did not appear to be much hope of lodging these at the Berwick Archives Office, Cllr. Plunkett offered to take them down to Woodhorn when this was convenient.

6. Financial Report: the clerk distributed a note of the financial transactions since the last meeting, showing a bank balance of £2,629.95.

7. Risk Assessment:

The clerk had been advised by the external auditors that it is necessary for parish councils to carry out a Risk Assessment each year. She had obtained advice from NALC as to what this requires and subsequently drawn up a list (attached hereto) which was agreed by the PC members.

8. Planning Application 14/0232/OUT:

Cllr. Dougie Watkin declared an interest and took no part in the discussion.

A public meeting had been held to obtain parishioners' views on this application for seven affordable houses for sale or rent on land adjacent to Oaklea Lodge at the end of Cornhill House drive. Only two couples attended, both from outwith the village one against and the other did not appear to register a comment.

The general comments from the Parish Council were that the houses did not appear to be affordable, and were destined to be built on a greenfield site when two infill sites are already available. For that reason there is opposition to the development. It was also pointed out that the houses look attractive and might attract tenants or buyers requiring more "up-market" homes. These comments were passed to the NCC Planning Dept.

9. Transfer of Play Area and Inspections:

The Play Area had been transferred on 28th August 2014 to the Parish Council which is now responsible for its upkeep.

As had been agreed at the last meeting, Alan Cater was to be employed to carry out the monthly and annual inspections, and that the Parish Council would pay half of the cost of his training, amounting to £290.70. This would be discussed with Carham Parish Council, which had paid for Alan's training. It was hoped that he would be able to make arrangements to inspect other play areas and that the cost of his training might be divided between them also.

10. Local Transport Plan Programme 2015-16:

The following requests are already shown on the plan:

- 150m footpath extension from Millbrae to The Old Mill, B6350 (retain)
- Pedestrian crossing, Main Street (Cllr. Watkin advised against this)
- "Pedestrians in road" warning signs prior to bridge and junction with A698, as there are no footpaths on B6350 Wark to Cornhill road (retain)
- Cornhill village nameplate to be changed to Cornhill-on-Tweed (remove)

To be added:

- Resurfacing of A697/A698 all through Cornhill village
- Double white lines through Donaldson's Lodge A698
- Replace Donaldson's Lodge missing nameplate sign south of DL village

11. Grass cutting:

Cllr. Plunkett stated that he has had extensive correspondence with Terry Garnick (NCC) regarding the state of the footpath from Cornhill through Donaldson's Lodge. NCC has agreed to spray the section of the path in DL between the 30mph signs, and where there is a viable path between Cornhill and DL they will spray to create a wider path. They also may be able to push back the edges to create a wider path where this is necessary.

It was understood that Terry Garnick would be present at the joint NCC/PC meeting on 16th October, and this matter would be followed up then.

One householder had cut back his hedge, which was encroaching on the footway in Donaldson's Lodge. Cllr. Plunkett had cut back other areas of overhanging hedges so that the residents of Donaldson's Lodge could use the path. This would also enable NCC to spray the path prior to clearing it of accumulated debris.

The clerk would remind farmer, Ken Lindsay, to prune the hedge between Cornhill and Coldstream Bridge.

It was agreed that extra grass cuts in the parish might be necessary in the Spring depending on the weather, and this would be monitored.

There were complaints that the weeds around the cherry trees in DL had been sprayed with weedkiller which had got into the bark and caused damage to the trees. To avoid this in future, tar bands would have to be put round the bases of the trees.

12. Northumberland Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment:

A notice had been received from NCC regarding a consultation on draft site assessments which have been prepared as part of the update to the NSHLAA. A plan of Cornhill showed sites marked for: deliverable within 0-5 years, uncertain, and discounted. This was inspected by the PC, and it was agreed that these marked sites appeared to be satisfactory, and that no new and additional information is required.

13. Future meetings:

Monday, 13th October – Glendale area Neighbourhood Planning meeting – 7.15pm at the Cheviot Centre, Wooler.

Thursday, 16th October – Joint NCC/Town & Parish Councils meeting – 6.00pm at the Guild Hall, Berwick.

Saturday, 18th October – NALC AGM – 10.30am at Morpeth.

A letter received from NALC stated it was to increase its membership subscription involving a fixed amount common to all councils and a variable amount based on the parish size. It was not clear how much this variable amount of 26.1 per £1 of Band D Council Tax base would be, and the clerk was asked to request a calculation.

14. Any other business:

- **Review of the definitive map and statement of public rights of way** - details had been received from NCC of existing footpaths and byways open to all traffic with amendments, and requested any relevant facts or evidence. Several additions were mentioned to Footpath 17, and BOATs (byways open to all traffic) 18, 19, 20 and 21. Some of these included parts of the published Cornhill Walks. It was noted that the “only possible landowners/occupiers” had been consulted. Most of these rights of way are known to Cllr. Plunkett, and he agreed to make any relevant comments to NCC.
- **Cornhill Community Website** – Alan Cater had provided some figures for hits, showing that at the beginning of June the Community page had been visited 484 times, and the Council page 589 times. The other pages were running at about 300

hits average per page. These appeared to be similar to the hits received on the previous website.

Alan had set up analytic programme to give an accurate overview of how the website is being visited, but this would take some time to give a meaningful report.

- **Cemetery gate** – it had been reported that the gates are hanging on only the top hinge and dragging on the ground. The clerk had reported this to the Churchwarden.
- **East Moneylaws wind turbine application appeal** – it was reported that this had been turned down by the Secretary of State.
- **St. Helen’s Church, Cornhill** – it was noted that the grass in the cemetery is cut voluntarily by Dick Mitchell, and the grass in the closed churchyard is cut fortnightly by NCC, which also carries out annual checks on the gravestones.
Rev. Rob Kelsey said the space at the back of the church is available for PC leaflets and a notice board above can be used for pinning notices. He also said that arrangements were being made for a drop-off point for the food bank.
- **Village Hall key** – the clerk had requested a key to the Village Hall. This had been granted by the VH Committee and the key handed over.
- **Road sign in the middle of the village** – the Village Shop had reported tourists asking directions to Berwick, Wooler, Morpeth, etc., and requested that the road sign which blew down in a storm seventeen months ago be replaced.

Congratulations were expressed to the Village Shop girls for their continuing fund-raising efforts for the MacMillan Nurses.

Thanks were expressed to the Donaldson’s Lodge residents for looking after and re-planting the oak tubs.

15. Parishioners’ Questions on agenda items: none.

16. Date of next meeting: Thursday, 13th November 2014, at 6.00pm at the Village Hall.

Signed.....

Date.....