

## Cornhill Parish Council

### Minutes of a meeting held on Thursday, 12<sup>th</sup> March 2015, at the Village Hall

**Present:** Cllrs. Mick Plunkett (Chairman), David Buckle, Marie Gillespie,  
Clerk: Angela Hallam-Baker.

**In attendance:** Rev. Robert Kelsey, PC Sean Amer (Northumbria Police).

The Chairman and Councillors welcomed David and Barbara Richmond, who had recently moved into Tweed Meadows.

**1. Apologies for absence** were received from Cllr. Tina Ayre and PC Dan Perry.

**2. Parishioners' Questions** - none.

**3. Police Report:**

PC Amer reported three incidents, with on-going enquiries:

- On 28<sup>th</sup> February a theft had taken place from a works van parked in the centre of Cornhill when tools were stolen. The vehicle was entered without causing damage. Similar thefts have taken place north of the Border.
- On 12<sup>th</sup> February a person in Cornhill had been found receiving stolen goods.
- A theft of 100 litres of heating oil from The Stables, Cornhill, was reported, having taken place between 5<sup>th</sup> January and 25<sup>th</sup> February.

PC Amer would lend his matrix speed sign to Donaldson's Lodge, backed up with a camera reinforcement. He would also enquire about the promised double white lines.

**3. The minutes of the meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> January 2015** were agreed and signed.

**4. Matters arising from the minutes:**

- **Superfast broadband** – this is now in Cornhill and new contracts will be required to receive this.
- **Tourist Information Board** – Paul Nichol had agreed to attend to the repairs.
- **Planting on the roundabout** – Cllr. Plunkett had put some canes around the plants, and an apology had been received from NCC for mowing the lavender.
- **Northumberland Local Heroes Award** – in spite of three requests for information from NCC, nothing further had been received.
- **Donaldson's Lodge 'phone box** – a contract had been signed for the adoption of this and it is now the property of the Parish Council. Cllr. Plunkett had put a notice on the kiosk to this effect. He had also put in a box of books for exchange, and it is understood that one of the residents intended to put in some plant seedlings for residents to take.
- **Community Consultation on Bell View Project** – the Parish Councillors had offered to distribute leaflets in the Parish advertising a soup and sandwich event in Cornhill Village Hall on Thursday, 16<sup>th</sup> April, from 12 noon to 2.00pm.
- **Barmoor Wind Farm EDF Community Fund** – a grant application had been submitted for the purchase of equipment for the Station Gardens play area.

- **Grit bin on C20 Cornhill to Campfield road** – NCC had informed that this site does not qualify for a bin, but a dump of grit had been deposited.
- **Planning application no. 14/04092/OUT** – the application to build a dwelling on an infill plot south west of The Elms on Berwick Road had been granted permission.
- **Flower tubs** – Cllr. Plunkett had inspected these and noted that they are not repairable. It was therefore agreed that the PC would offer to pay for five of the ten new tubs required at £30.00 each. Cllr. Plunkett would speak to David Pope, who was due to leave the area in the not too distant future, and enquire what arrangements were to be made for the future of Cornhill in Bloom.
- **Footpath by the roundabout** – mud had been cleared from the footpath by Claire Turley from Crossways House, and it was suggested that the clerk write and thank her for doing this.
- **Potholes and flooding on A697** – work had been done on this stretch of the road outside the entrance to The Stables.

### 5. Play Area:

Alan Cater had carried out his monthly inspection and reported action required as follows:

- Moles hills to be dealt with – PC to seek mole-catcher.
- A top beam missing from the climbing frame and painting required on some rough surfaces – Cllr. Plunkett offered to see to this.
- Goal net – Alan will remove this.
- Hole on site needs filling – Cllr. Plunkett has done this
- Abandoned cycle frame and metal work – Cllr. Plunkett has removed this.

Alan had removed litter from around the equipment. He was thanked for this and for his detailed inspection.

### 6. Financial Report:

The clerk distributed a statement of the bank account to date showing financial transactions since the last meeting and a credit balance of £1,707.34.

### 7. Planning Application No. 15/00305/LBC:

An application had been submitted to carry out repairs to listed building Heaton Castle. The PC raised no objections and was pleased to note that this ancient building is to be restored.

### 8. Review of the Planning Service:

It was noted in a letter dated 5<sup>th</sup> February 2015 that NCC is currently undertaking a fundamental review of the planning service. This is aimed at improving the way in which applications are dealt with. One of the recommendations in the Deloitte report, and supported by NCC, is to remove the automatic trigger that results in applications being taken to committee. Cornhill PC had written to the Director of Planning strongly objecting to this action which would diminish the limited powers that a parish currently has in regard to planning applications. Following receipt of the original letter, over 100 other town and parish councils had written lengthy letters of objection.

A two-week consultation period had been given for town and parish councils to consider this, and many of these, including Cornhill, had objected to such a short period of time.

A full County Council meeting is to take place on 1<sup>st</sup> April, at 3.00pm at County Hall, and all town and parish councils which responded to the planning review were urged to send a representative to the meeting. Cllr. Plunkett agreed to attend this.

Town and parish councils were also asked to lobby their own county councillors for their support. The vote that is taken in the full Council meeting will be a named vote and communities will therefore be able to see whether their county councillor supports them, or whether this is political, which it is believed should have no place in planning.

### **9. Review of supported rural bus services:**

NCC is currently consulting on the future of subsidised bus services in Northumberland, and rural services may be under threat. Cllr. Plunkett had written to Kirsten Francis at County Hall pointing out how important these services are in this rural area, particularly for members of the ageing population who have no private transport, and also for young people to access after school activities. It is hoped that County Cllr. Watkin will also push forward the case for retaining these important links.

### **10. Grass cutting:**

The clerk reported that NCC would not agree to a rebate on council tax if the parish were to conduct its own grass-cutting, and it was therefore agreed to maintain the status quo.

Cllr. Plunkett was in touch with Bob Hodgson of NCC and would report any complaints to him about the state of the grass.

**11. Donaldsons Lodge** - Cllr. Plunkett had reported the missing fingerboard at the south-west edge of Donaldsons Lodge and that the stile at the north-east end of the village required repairs. He stated that both these jobs had been done.

### **12. Website:**

Cllr. Plunkett had contacted the people who had links on the Cornhill website to ask them to reciprocate by including a link on their websites, but he had had no response.

Alan Cater was thanked for posting images of Cornhill and district and for including more information about Tillmouth Village Hall. The website is looking good, and Alan was thanked for all the work he is doing. However, it does need more input from local people – local visits in December amounted to only 6% of the total.

It was noted that the last few Newsletters had not been sent to Alan. The clerk would get in touch with Lynda Waite again to find out whether there is a problem with her sending these electronically.

There was still no news back from the Fourum newsletter as to whether they would allow it to be put on the Cornhill website.

### **13. Correspondence:**

**Tourist leaflets** – Cllr. Plunkett was informed by Paul Nichol that he could pick up tourism leaflets at the Alnwick Tourism Fair on 18<sup>th</sup> March. It is noted subsequent to this meeting that this has been done, and the leaflets are in the church.

**14. County Councillor's Report:** Cllr. Watkin absent, so no report.

### **15. Any other business:**

- **Tour of Britain** - Cllr. Buckle reported that Stage 4 of the Tour of Britain cycle race would pass through Cornhill on Wednesday, 9<sup>th</sup> September, on its way from Coldstream to Wooler. (the full route can be accessed on its website). It was suggested that the Village Shop might like to provide refreshments and the PC hand out copies of the Tweed Horizons cycle maps. The clerk would make enquiries to

James Fell (Heritage & Events Development Manager at NCC), and if the cyclists wished to stop in Cornhill, she would mention it to the Village Shop.

- **Traffic** – three items requested and still not done by NCC Highways:
  - Pedestrians on Road sign for Wark road
  - Donaldsons Lodge village sign not in evidence
  - Double white lines for Donaldsons Lodge

The clerk would send a reminder.

- **Triangle of rough land behind Tweed Meadows** – David Richmond had cleared rubbish from this area. It was not known to whom it belongs, and the clerk would try to find out. In the meantime, it was suggested that the next litter pick in April could include this.
- **Parish Council vacancies** – the two residents who had expressed an interest in being co-opted on to the PC did not attend the meeting. The clerk would find out if they are still interested. Since David Richmond, and his wife, had taken the trouble to attend the meeting, he was asked whether he might be interested. He agreed to think about it.

**16. Parishioners' Questions:** none.

**17. Date of next meeting: Thursday, 14<sup>th</sup> May 2015, at 6.00pm (Annual Parish Meeting followed by May meeting.**

Signed.....

Date.....