

**DRAFT**

## **Cornhill Parish Council**

### **Minutes of a meeting held on Thursday, 10<sup>th</sup> September 2015, In the Village Hall at 6.00pm**

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

**In attendance:** Parishioners: David and Barbara Richmond.

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

**2. Police Report:**

PC Lynn reported three crimes:

- the theft of two oak tubs containing plants from Donaldsons Lodge
- cars broken into at Flodden, Etal and Alnwick – white transit van with small roof rack spotted at the scene
- machinery stolen from outbuildings in Wooler – offenders in white transit van arrested
- Grey squirrel trap damaged at Cornhill Farm – offender(s) undetected.
- remains of a fire and empty aerosol cans on the railway line at Cornhill to be investigated.

**3. Parishioners' Questions:**

- **Parish Council minutes on the village notice board** – a request was received that the pages be spread out in order that the minutes can be read without removing them from the casing. It was pointed out by the clerk that space is short and there are generally notices affecting the community which need also to be pinned up. However, she would juggle these around in order to make room for the minutes. It was agreed that a copy would be placed in the church.

**4. Minutes of the meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> July 2015** were agreed and signed.

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

- **Neighbourhood Plan** – The Chairman had attended a meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> July where he learnt that a Plan would take four years from start to finish and would involve large expense and heavy community input. It was agreed that this would be too much for a small community, but an informal discussion might be useful for future applications or suggestions. It was pointed out that Cornhill's Parish Plan produced in 2006 had resulted in the production of the Community Website and the Internet Cafe.

Cllr. Buckle stated that a parish council's responsibilities and powers are very limited in determining future planning, with many constraints. An example of this was the community's failed attempt to save the school, in spite of opinions having been expressed at a public meeting. Plans had subsequently been earmarked by NCC for social housing on the site.

- **Interactive speed sign** – this had been ordered and a post erected outside Tweed Meadows, and was due to be installed within the next few days. It had been hoped that the school sign would have been removed at the same time as the post was erected. It was noted that there is still a school sign in St. Helen's Gardens. Cllr. Watkin to be asked to put pressure on to NCC to remove both these signs.
- **Planters in Station Gardens** – letters from the Chairman and clerk had been sent to Mr. Tait, as agreed, thanking him for putting in the plants. It was suggested that Cornhill-in-Bloom would be asked if they would add planting in Station Gardens to their project which they carried out in the rest of the village, but Mr. Tait had said that he and the neighbours would prefer to undertake the planting themselves.
- **Seat in Station Gardens** – this has been delivered and quotes are being obtained for a concrete raft. It had been agreed that this should be situated in the play area, mainly for the benefit of mothers with small children, but also for the residents of the bungalows across the road. Depending on the cost of the concrete raft, a second seat might be considered nearer to the bungalows.
- **Grass cutting on the play area** – Peter Logan was congratulated by residents on how well the grassed area is being kept.
- **Pedestrians in Road warning signs on B6350** – the clerk had contacted Margaret Robinson at NCC advising her that these signs had been agreed some time ago, and Cllr. Watkin would be asked to put pressure on to have them installed without delay.
- **Double white lines in Donaldsons Lodge** – these had also apparently been agreed, and Cllr. Watkin would be asked to chase this up.
- **Local Heroes Award** – this had finally been presented to Lynda at the Village Shop and her certificate displayed in the shop window.

It was agreed that Tony Adams, who had been secretary of Tillmouth Village Hall for 25 years and is responsible for updating the Hall, should be nominated for the Award.

**Grass cutting** – the Chairman continued to ask for the roadside footpath at Donaldsons Lodge to be made accessible for pedestrians, particularly for the disabled residents. This entailed dropped kerbs between the 30mph signs, clearing the undergrowth from the path and cutting the overhanging hedges. The Chairman had cleared the path and cut the hedges in the past due to inaction by NCC.

- **Brambles** on the north side of the B6350 need pruning – the Chairman would look at these to ascertain whether they are the responsibility of NCC or the landowner.
- Giant hogweed** along the Mindrum road also needs to be removed.
- **Footpath along the south side of the Tweed by Coldstream Bridge** – the Chairman had attempted to have the gate unlocked to provide access to walkers, but was informed that a statutory declaration made by the landowner in 2003 showed that she had no intention of allowing a public right of way along this path. Although the path has been used by walkers for well over the required 20 year period, there is no documented evidence of this. However, permission has now been given for Cornhill walkers to use the path, provided it is accessed from the other side of the road and

under the bridge. It was agreed that this information should be published in the Newsletter and on the website. In order to retain this permission, the path would need to be kept clear of litter, and walkers would be asked to clear up after their dogs. The Chairman would ask if the PC could put up notices to this effect.

- **Tillmouth Village Hall car park** – the damage had been repaired and new gravel had been spread on the surface.
- **Coldstream Energy Switch** – the clerk had been informed that 80 registrations had been made to date and it was hoped that the number would reach at least 100 in the next few weeks. There were problems regarding changing fuel suppliers in some of the Housing Association properties in Donaldsons Lodge and Station Cottages.
- **PC Insurance** – the clerk had spent the last two months trying to get Cornhill PC on to the NCC Parish Councils Insurance Scheme, but lack of co-operation had led to no progress having been made before the renewal date. Consequently, she had renewed on a three-year contract with Came & Company at a premium of around £80.00 less than last year.

#### **6. Financial Report:**

The clerk distributed a statement of the transactions since the July meeting which showed a bank balance of £1,756.16.

A letter from Community Action Northumberland had been received requesting financial support, and it was agreed to make a donation of £35.00.

#### **7. Playground Inspections:**

Inspection reports for July and August had been received from Alan Cater, and his remarks noted. He had stated that he has been looking into the possibility of undertaking groundwork, pest control and general repairs, but that the cost of licensing, registration, insurances, etc. are prohibitive. However, he is prepared to undertake non-specialist maintenance and repairs which will cover putting up the signage and maintaining/replacing equipment parts. The PC considered that more major repairs might be carried out by a local tradesman.

In view of the size of the play area and the few items of equipment, it was agreed that Alan should be asked if he would carry out his inspections quarterly rather than monthly.

#### **8. Changes to Cornhill Post Office:**

Finalised plans to change the opening hours beginning at 1.00pm on 23<sup>rd</sup> September are as follows:

- Monday – Friday: 06.30 - 17.30
- Saturday 06.30 - 17.00
- Sunday 06.30 - 14.00

Lynda will lose her Post Office salary, but all the shop assistants will be given free training in all aspects of post office work.

The PC extended thanks to Lynda for her consideration for the community for agreeing to the changes.

**9. Cornhill Village Hall AGM:**

The Chairman attended the AGM on 7<sup>th</sup> September at the invitation of the Village Hall Committee. He learnt that the committee desperately needed some new members and their bookings are down, putting the future of the Hall at risk.

**10. County Councillor's Report:** none, due to absence of Cllr. Watkin.

**11. Correspondence:**

- **Pay as you throw** – from 14<sup>th</sup> September the County Council is to introduce charges for the disposal of DIY waste such as rubble, plasterboard and soil. Details of the charges are documented in a leaflet posted on the notice boards and in the church. For further details see the NCC website: [www.northumberland.gov.uk/waste](http://www.northumberland.gov.uk/waste) or phone 0345 600 6400.
- **NALC AGM** - Saturday, 17<sup>th</sup> October, at 10.30am in Storey Park Community Centre, St. Mary's Field, Morpeth, NE61 2QF.

**12. Any other business:**

- **Litter pick** – it was agreed that members of the PC and the clerk would clear the litter from the A698 Cornhill through Donaldsons Lodge on Monday, 28<sup>th</sup> September, meeting at 9.30am at the Village Shop. Mr. David Richmond also kindly volunteered to help.
- **Parking in Knowe Head** – there is concern at the number of cars being parked outside Nos 1-4, and a request had been put forward to make the grassed area outside the church wall into a car park. The PC disagreed with this, and it was pointed out that there is plenty of parking space behind the Village Hall only a short distance from the houses. However, it occurred to the Chairman that the Hall committee may have reservations about this, particularly at times of heavy use. The PC felt that parking is a matter for the residents to sort out between themselves.
- **Refugee families** – the Chairman referred to a letter to the local paper from the Berwick MP. In the letter she stated that the Government wished to work together with councils to find practical solutions to welcome and house these refugee families. The Chairman expressed the wish that the Parish Council would do what it could to help any refugees coming to the area. The PC agreed, but it was pointed out that this is a matter for the Government to sort out and that it would liaise with county councils.

**13. Date of next meeting: Thursday, 12<sup>th</sup> November 2015, 6.00pm at the Village Hall.**

Signed.....

Date.....