

DRAFT**Cornhill Parish Council****Minutes of a meeting held on Thursday, 10th March 2016,
at the Village Hall and 6.00pm**

Present: Cllrs. Mick Plunkett, David Buckle, Marie Gillespie, Karen Stewart, Tina Ayre and Barbara Richmond, Revd. Rob Kelsey.
Parishioner: David Richmond in attendance
Parish Clerk: Angela Hallam-Baker

1. Apologies for absence were received from County Cllr. Dougie Watkin and PC Dan Perry (Northumbria Police).

2. Police Report:

PC Perry had sent a report of a burglary to a shed in an isolated area between 14th and 15th February. He also warned of suspicious fish sellers operating in the area, and warned residents to be vigilant and where possible obtain relevant registration marks of vehicles. One of the councillors reported having had a visit from sellers in a transit van marked "Scottish Coast Fresh Fish". It was not known whether this was legitimate, but the clerk would report it to the Police.

3. Parishioners' Questions:

- Overhanging trees outside Sunnyside, Donaldsons Lodge – lower branches are touching parked vehicles and will require pruning when the blossom has finished. Cllr. Plunkett offered to have a look at these.

4. Co-option of Mrs. Barbara Richmond:

Mrs. Richmond had attended a number of PC meetings and had agreed to be co-opted as a member. Cllr. Plunkett proposed and Cllr. Gillespie seconded her co-option, and this was unanimously agreed.

5. The minutes of the meeting held on 14th January 2016 were agreed and signed.

6. Matters arising from the minutes:

- **Hand-held speed gun** - still no response from the Police about this.
- **Pedestrians in road sign** and requested double white lines in Donaldsons Lodge – Cllr. Plunkett had arranged to meet Neil Snowdon (NCC) on site on 21st March to discuss these ongoing matters. It was noted that there had been several accidents, including two fatalities, on this stretch of road before the 30mph speed limit was imposed.
- **Litter pick** – arranged for 7th December 2015 had had to be postponed due to bad weather. NCC had recently cleared litter from Cornhill to Coldstream Bridge and had said they did this from time to time. They did not have answer when asked for a schedule of their timetable. It was agreed that the PC and any volunteers from

the Parish would clear the litter from Cornhill to Donaldsons Lodge on Monday, 18th April, meeting at the Village Shop at 9.30pm.

- **County Highway U2** – it was noted that the fences across the route and the padlocks on the gates had been removed by the farmer.

7. Financial Report:

The clerk distributed a statement of account since the last meeting showing a credit balance of £2,674.98.

Asset Register – purchases since March 2015 were added. These included the interactive speed sign (£3,202.98) and garden seat for Play Area (£164.09). The old phone box at Donaldsons Lodge was also added at its purchase price of £1.00. The land at the Play Area which was donated by NCC and could not be sold was listed as nil value. These additions were approved by the members. It was not known who owns the old concrete bus shelter, but it was suggested that it could have been installed by a bus company some time ago.

Risk Assessment – the documented list of relevant items was approved.

8. Tourist Information:

Paul Nichol (NCC Tourism & Visitor Economy Manager) had visited Cornhill and discussed the existing tourist information board. He agreed that this needs replacing and that it is not in a good location next to the recycling bins. It was therefore decided to replace the board and place the new one on the wall adjacent to the Village Shop (permission was given by the Village Shop). NCC would also fund or partly fund a new Parish Council board and site this alongside the TI board.

The question was discussed of the location of the recycling bins between the Collingwood Arms and the Village Shop. There did not appear to be anywhere else in the village for these, and the only solution appeared to be to erect a fence at either end, which would not prejudice the uplifting process.

It was noted that the old concrete bus shelter is in need of tidying up, and it was agreed that a coat of paint and a couple of flower tubs would improve its appearance.

9. Play Area:

This has been closed for the time being due to the equipment needing considerable repairs. The contractor who had been asked to provide a quotation was no longer interested in carrying out the work, and there was currently no one to carry out the inspections.

Cllr. Gillespie reported that five young children had recently moved in Station Cottages, and it was agreed that the local community would be asked to suggest use for the area which could accommodate the children and the elderly population.

10. Churchyard improvements:

These had been discussed during Paul Nichol's visit and he had agreed that the placing of a bench would be a good idea. However, Rob Kelsey was more inclined towards having a feasibility study carried out with a view to improving the churchyard's amenity and attractiveness. He said that a grant of up to £500 could probably be obtained from the Diocese Partners in Community Action, but they would be likely to ask for input from the Parish Council. The members agreed to this and suggested a sum of £250.00.

It was hoped that funding of a feasibility study could be obtained via a grant, and Cllr. Buckle offered to look into producing an application, possibly to Awards for All.

Cllr. Plunkett offered to contact Edinburgh and Newcastle Universities Schools of Art and find out whether students could undertake the landscaping as a project.

Whereas the Parish Council is willing to help in any way it can, it was agreed that the project should remain a Church initiative.

11. Ongoing requests for road improvements and repairs:

In addition to the improvements discussed earlier in the agenda, the ongoing problem of potholes was brought up. Cllr.Plunkett agreed to photograph the worst ones and locate them on a map to be submitted to Neil Howie at NCC. He would include the footpath on the Berwick road opposite Rickerbys which is rutted and muddy.

12. Planning applications:

- **16/00072/PREAPP** – proposed extension of existing river bank erosion defences on River Tweed. As a pre-application, this was not apparent on the NCC website, but it was assumed it referred to the river encroaching on the bank beside the Wark road in Carham Parish.
- **15/04221/FUL** – construction of silage clamp at New Heaton farm. The PC had no objections to this.
- **16/00101/PREAPP** – proposed new dwelling on land at Quarry Cottage. Cllr. Plunkett had taken photographs of the site which contained the ruins of a stone cottage beside the old railway line. It was noted that the access would be difficult, and that there were no utilities. As this was a pre-application, there were no detailed plans available.

13. LED street lighting project:

A letter was received from NCC with information that street lighting is being modernised across Northumberland. Nearly 17,000 lampposts will be replaced and all street lights will be fitted with new LED lights. This is due to be carried out between 29th June and 30th August 2017 in the Berwick and surrounding rural areas.

Cllr. Plunkett had produced a map of the village on which he had marked dark areas and lampposts which need replacing, and suggested that the community should be asked whether they need extra lighting, coloured posts, dimmed lighting during the night, etc. He agreed to produce a questionnaire from which answers would be collated and forwarded to the Locality Officer.

It was noted that the Locality Team will be organising meetings for rural parishes to take place in late May, where street lighting will be a key theme, and parishes will be invited to send a representative.

14. Cornhill Community Website:

It was agreed that Alan Cater should go ahead with producing a page for St. Helen's Church. The website requires some updated input, and contributions were requested.

15. County Councillor's Report: none due to Cllr. Watkin's absence.

16. Correspondence:

- **Provisional local government funding** – a letter signed by 14 county councils including Northumberland had been sent to the Prime Minister pointing out that, in

spite of extra government funding, rural areas will not be allotted as much finance per head of population as urban areas.

An accompanying note from the Leader of NCC stated that, although the Council will receive an extra £3.15m over the next two years, this does not change the overall financial position, due to £58m which will have to be cut from the budget over the next four years. Consequently, council tax will have to be raised for local residents by 16% over the next four years and they will receive less in services.

- **Future external audit arrangements** – new arrangements are to be put forward for smaller authorities with neither income nor expenditure exceeding £25,000 with effect from 2017/18. These authorities are being asked whether they require Smaller Authorities Audit Appointments Ltd. to make the arrangements, or whether they wish to opt out and appoint their own auditors. It was agreed to opt in, as it is unlikely any audit fee will be charged.
- **David Francis** – since David Francis is due to retire from CAN and NALC at the end of March, parishes have been invited to donate towards a retirement gift. A further communication stated that donations were not to be funded by PC money.
- **Neighbourhood Plan** – a letter had been received from Berwick MP, Anne-Marie Trevelyan, requesting an update on a Neighbourhood Plan for Cornhill. Since this parish does not have a Plan, no information was submitted.
- **HM Queen Elizabeth 11 90th Birthday Commemorative Medal** – a free sample of the medal had been sent to the PC with an order form for a minimum of 50 @ £1.99 each. These are intended mainly for schools, so not of interest to Cornhill. It was agreed that the sample medal should be presented to Nancy Clark as the oldest resident who had served on the W.I. and Village Hall Committee.
- **Area North meeting** to be held on Monday, 14th March 2016 at 6.00pm at East Ord Village Hall. Cllr. Plunkett had attended the last meeting where the main complaint was that emails to NCC were not being answered. It had been advised that copies should be sent to Kevin Bartlett.
- **Cornhill War Memorial** – a letter had been received from Historic England informing the PC that the War Memorial is being considered for addition to the List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest as part of the response to the centenary of the First World War. Information had been requested for any comments about the architectural or historic interest of the memorial, including confirmation that the monument is the property of the Parish Council. Cllr. Plunkett agreed to take a photograph which could be submitted, and the clerk would enquire whether Eric Grounds could provide any information.

17. Parishioners' questions: none.

18. Any other business: none.

19. Date of next meeting: **Thursday, 12th May 2016.** The Annual Parish Meeting will be held on the same date.

Signed.....

Date.....

