



Wylam Parish Council

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF WYLAM PARISH COUNCIL
HELD ON 11th MARCH 2019 AT 7 PM. IN THE INSTITUTE**

Present: Councillors J Joures (Chairman), Mrs A Francis (Vice Chairman), Mr T Appleby, Mrs J Henderson and Mr. C. Percy,

Also present: Marie Moore (Parish Clerk), County Councillor Karen Quinn, Matthew Hadden (Village Handyman) and 1 member of the public.

1. Apologies for Absence.

Apologies had been received from Councillors S Henderson, J Martin and K Trobe and from L Bray (TreeWarden)

2. Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests in Items on the Agenda

None declared

3. Questions from members of the public.

Matthew Hadden highlighted a number of issues that he had identified in the Village that required attention as follows:

- i. Fencing at Wylam Scar on the Ovingham to Horsley Road – NCC were in the process of repairing fencing.
- ii. Whilst all streetlights had been changed over to the new white lights one column was not working. NCC were to look at this.
- iii. Poor road markings on the corner entering Hagg Bank were resulting in vehicles taking a wrong turn. Councillor Quinn had raised this with the County Council.
- iv. The flashing speed indicator sign at the War Memorial seemed to be faulty, perhaps because of the trees in the vicinity affecting its solar operation.
- v. Large puddles were appearing on the highway near the War Memorial. There was also a problem at the bottom of the bank outside the Boathouse.
- vi. Road safety hotspots – he asked whether the Road Safety Group could meet with NCC Highways to address the issues which included parking, speeding and location of bus stops. He suggested that a traffic management plan was needed.
- vii. The footpath outside River House was full of holes and water was rising up through the surface.
- viii. The footway east of the Fox and Hounds was dangerous as the surface was just rubble.
- ix. Cherry Tree Lane was in a poor state of repair. It was reported that NCC were to look at this.

Councillor Henderson stated that she was awaiting information from the County Council setting out which footpaths within the Village were to be looked at. Councillor Quinn would also be touring the Village with a County Council Officer to look at problems. Councillor Percy noted that he had seen improvement works to footpaths being carried out. He indicated we were awaiting the formal diversion of the footpath round the old pit heap away from the river at which time the NCC Rights of Way Officer would need to look at a footpath diversion sign. He would talk to the Ramblers about their Heritage Way signs.

Signed: Date:

Chairman of Meeting

It was **Resolved** that a definitive list of issues be collated and presented to the County Council.

4. Report from County Councillor Karen Quinn

Councillor Quinn reported on the following matters:

- 4.1 Road Safety – Councillor Quinn stated that at the ‘walkabout’ in November 2018 it had been agreed that Wylam Wood Road would be a priority for the Local Transport Plan but it appeared that this had not been formally communicated to the County Council.
It was **Resolved** that this matter be investigated further to clarify the situation.
- 4.2 Motorbike on the Waggonway – an incident had been reported to the Police
- 4.3 She had been supporting a local couple with a housing issue.
- 4.4 Local Plan – the consultation process ended on Wednesday 13th March 2019.
- 4.5 She had attended the event to celebrate the Queen’s Honours award to Ken John.
- 4.6 Wear a Hat Day would take place on Friday 29th March and she would be supporting this.
- 4.7 The construction of the new MUGA at the school was now complete.
- 4.8 Gentoo Wall – no further information had been received from Gentoo. However, a Planner from the County Council had indicated that he would talk to local residents.

5. Confirmation of the Minutes of the Meeting held on 11th February 2019

Resolved that the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 11th February 2019 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

6. Clerk’s Report

- 6.1 Signs re Cyclists on Wylam Bridge – NCC had advised that they intended to carry out a video survey of the issues before they took any action and had asked the Parish Council to identify if there was a particular day/time when the problem was at its worst. Suggestions had been provided to the County Council but they had also been advised that even a small number of infringements could cause danger to pedestrians. The Clerk had suggested similar markings to those painted on the footway at Ovingham Bridge but this had been discounted by the County Council. Further information from them on this issue was awaited.
- 6.2 Speed Sign on Station Road – NCC had advised that because this was an old style sign it would need to be replaced rather than repaired and the cost of doing so would be in the region of £5,000. It had been suggested that the Parish Council would need to meet this cost so it was intended to approach the County Council on this in the context of the wider road safety issues in the Village.
- 6.3 Orchard Corner Trees – cost information was still awaited from one of the contractors which had been requested as a matter of urgency. Gentoo had been asked whether two quotes rather than three would be acceptable and a response was awaited. Given the difficulty in securing a further quote it was **Resolved** that Gentoo be asked whether they would accept one quote. It was noted that the tree planting would now need to take place in the Autumn.
- 6.4 Waggonway Signage Update – NCC had advised that the signs had been delivered and they would advise when they would be installed. Both signs preferred by the Parish Council would be erected in an attempt to reinforce the message to users of the Waggonway.
- 6.5 Request for Dog Bin on Public Footpath off Holeyn Hall Road – a resident had contacted NCC Rights of Way Officer to ask whether a bin could be provided given that new gates to the public footpaths had recently been installed. He had suggested that the matter be raised with the Parish Council in the first instance. It was **Resolved** that Councillor Henderson would inspect the area to look at the suggestion and report back.
- 6.6 Celebrating Points Bridge – the offer letter and grant terms and conditions had been prepared. These would be issued to Coachroad Productions and would need to be signed

Signed: Date:

Chairman of Meeting

and returned before the first payment could be released. Members were also provided with an update on the project.

- 6.7 Use of Plastic on Village Noticeboards – a resident had asked the Parish Council to discuss this issue, suggesting that the use of laminated notices should be discouraged in favour of reusable pockets. It was noted that many notices were semi-permanent and laminated versions were therefore more durable. Plastic pockets were also not always reusable if weather conditions were particularly inclement. Increasingly people were using social media to promote events and services and this was to be encouraged. As all of the noticeboards in the Village were open to the elements rather than lockable cabinets it was **Resolved** that the resident be approached for further suggestions as to how the use of plastic could be minimised.
- 6.8 Vehicle Emissions at Wylam Level Crossing – NCC had advised that it had no plans to introduce anti-idling signs at level crossing points. The request was however added to the list of directory requests for further consideration.
- 6.9 Falcon Terrace/Waggon way footpath – NCC had advised that this footpath had been closed due to a large void being discovered which it was believed was due to a collapsed section of culvert. Further investigations were to be carried out prior to a full repair.

7. Risk/Internal Controls Assessment

As part of the Council's Strategic Management Policy members were required to review the Risk and Internal Controls Assessment document. It was noted that the Council's Asset Register also needed to be updated.

It was **Resolved** that:

- i. The document be approved and a further review be carried out in March 2020.
- ii. The Asset Register be discussed at the next meeting.

8. Road Safety Consultation with Residents

Councillor Appleby reported that since the 'door knocking', that had generated a number of responses and comments, both he and Councillor Trobe were trying to set up a further meeting with the Road Safety Group to discuss options in more detail before approaching the County Council. It was further suggested that the Council's stall at the Village Fair could be used to carry out further consultation on this issue.

9. Riverside Footpath

It was reported that that the County Council's Rights of Way Officer had advised that the Council had no further plans to do anything with the riverside footpath and it had not taken forward any proposal to formally close the right of way. He was aware that the path continued to be used despite efforts to secure the entrance and this was likely to remain the case.

It was noted that the road access to Tom and Joe's Nursery appeared to be in danger of collapsing.

It was Resolved that:

- i. The land registry documents be reviewed to determine the extent of the Parish Council's ownership,
- ii. Councillor Percy to look at responsibilities in relation to the Right of Way.
- iii. The County Council be asked to clarify legal responsibilities on this issue and also why they do not intend to formally divert the right of way.
- iv. The matter be discussed in more detail at the next meeting when more information is available.

Signed: Date:

Chairman of Meeting

10. Northumberland Local Plan – Publication of Draft

Councillor Percy had prepared a report, on the Publication Draft of the Local Plan, in which he set out in detail his recommended responses on behalf of the Parish Council as follows:

Table 4.2 Settlement Hierarchy – No further action
 Policy STP1 Spatial Strategy – Continue to support
 Policy STP5 Health and Wellbeing – Not now a policy but take no further action
 Policy STP7 Design Principles – Continue to support
 Policy STP8 Green Belt Strategy – Continue to support
 Policy TRA4 Rail Transport – No further action
 Policy ENV1 Impact on Environment – Continue to support
 Policy ENV3 Landscape – Continue to support
 Policy ENV10 Protecting Heritage Assets – Continue to support
 Policy WAT5 Coastal Erosion – Object due to lack of mention of river bank erosion
 Policy INF2 Community Services – No further action
 Policy INF3 Local Shops and Pubs – No further action

He indicated that there was no change to the stance that the Council took when it was last consulted back in 2018.

It was **Resolved** that the report be noted, the suggested responses be approved and Councillor Percy be authorised to submit a formal response to the Consultation on behalf of the Parish Council.

11. Village Litter Pick

The event was to take place on Saturday 23rd March at 10am. A skip had been ordered plus equipment from NCC. Members were also asked to review the Event Risk Assessment and Health and Safety guidelines.

The Clerk would confirm the attendance of local groups at the event and would also liaise with Matthew Hadden and Tom Martin re the collection of larger items. Payment would be made to the various groups involved based on the numbers participating as had happened last year.

It was **Resolved** that the report be noted and the Risk Assessment and Healthy and Safety Guidelines be approved.

12. Grass Cutting

Members were asked to review quotes that had been received from NCC to carry out grass cutting at Hagg Bank Play Area and Engine Dene.

After noting that the play area was cut more frequently despite being less visible and perhaps less well used it was **Resolved** that:

- i. The quotes submitted by the County Council be noted
- ii. A review of the budget for grass cutting be carried out and the matter be discussed in more detail at the next meeting.

Signed: Date:

Chairman of Meeting

13. Wylam Haughs Nature Reserve

Members discussed the need to develop a future management plan for this site. A Community Nature Reserve Group had existed in the past and it was agreed that there was a need to revive this. It was suggested that Liz Bray would be happy to support this work.

It was resolved that:

- i. The issue be placed on the agenda for the annual village meeting in May
- ii. The Globe and social media be used to ask for volunteers to get involved.
- iii. An approach be made to Tom Martin to see if he is still interested in being involved,
- iv. The matter be discussed at the next meeting.

14. Public Toilet Opening Times

The allotment Association had asked about the possibility of extending the opening hours of the toilets to accommodate members who were attending their allotments particularly in the evenings.

The toilets were currently opened by the County Council between the hours of 7am and 4pm. This was because the timing locks kept getting vandalised and would therefore not be replaced. The possibility of developing a 'village rota' to open and close the toilets had been suggested but this had come to nothing.

It was **Resolved** that the Allotment Association should be asked to approach WCPFA who hold the key to the toilets to discuss the best way forward. This could include getting a key cut for the Association

15. Summer Litter Issues

It had been agreed that this matter would be discussed at the meeting to enable a plan of action to be formulated to pre-empt issues that may be experienced over the summer months.

It was **Resolved** that an approach be made to Matthew Hadden to ask if he was prepared to work some extra hours to address the particular litter hotspots over the summer.

16. Social Media – Councillor Profiles

Members acknowledged that there was a need to increase the Council's social media presence. To support this Councillor Henderson had prepared some questions which members could use to update their profiles.

It was **Resolved** that these should be re-circulated and the profiles produced as soon as possible.

17. Globe Delivery

Delivery of the latest edition of the Globe had recently been completed but there were a number of issues both with the number of copies produced and the duplication of delivery rounds.

There were also more general concerns about the lack of a clear plan for the production of each issue which should include identifying Parish Council issues for publication at specific times as well as deadlines and delivery arrangements. It was also felt that the production of four issues per year was a huge commitment both in terms of cost and time.

It was **Resolved** that:

Signed: Date:

Chairman of Meeting

- i. A meeting of the Communications Sub Group be called to discuss this matter in more detail, and
- ii. The matter be placed on the agenda for the Annual Village Meeting.

18. Correspondence

It was **Resolved** that the correspondence submitted since the last meeting for information only, be noted.

19. Planning Applications

It was **Resolved** that the following be noted:

- a. Planning applications considered by Parish Council since last meeting – None.
- b. Planning applications approved by NCC since the last meeting - None.
- c. Planning Applications withdrawn since last meeting - None.
- d. Planning Applications refused permission by NCC since last meeting – Proposed Balcony above existing single storey extension at 45 Woodcroft Road.

Reference was made to the planning application for a property off Ovingham Road that the Parish Council had strongly commented on. Members were concerned that no further communication had been received on this.

20. Financial Matters

After considering the information submitted It was **Resolved** that

- a. The financial reports to 28/02/19 be received
- b. The following schedule of payments be approved and the cheques duly signed.

General Community Account Payments Schedule

Inv. Date	Payee	Details of Supply	Amount
28/02/19	Azure Printing & Design (Paid by J Joures)	Globe Spring 2019	298.00
25/02/19	JRB Enterprises	Poop Scoop Bags	192.12
17/11/18	Rialtas Business Solutions	Annual Software Support	142.80
15/02/19	NCC	Payroll Costs	4490.79
5/03/19	ID Computers	Computer Repair	115.00
7/3/19	Biffa Waste	Skip Hire	275.00

- c. The transfer of £1,017.60 from the Post Office current account to the Parish Council current account be approved.
- d. The quote received from Geoff Sloan Landscaping for tree work on land South of Hedley Meadows be noted.

21. Reports from Parish Council Representatives

It was **Resolved** that the following reports be received

- a. Wylam Railway Museum & Heritage Group – Councillor Percy was to talk to the Land of Oak and Iron project. He also reported that the Tyne Valley Community Rail Partnership had asked if a guided walk around the Village including the museum could be arranged for 22nd March. There was also to be a visit to the museum by people with learning disabilities. Finally, it was reported that items were still being received from the estate of Peter Brooks.

Signed: Date:

Chairman of Meeting

- b. Wylam Community Playing Field Association – A meeting had been held with the Police about the anti-social behaviour being experienced however they did not feel that a curfew would work. The best deterrents would be CCTV and lighting.

A new organisation called Wellness at Wylam would also be hosting a stall at the Village Fair and any organisation providing wellbeing activities could make use of it.

It was **Resolved** that the Parish Council should have a stall at the Village Fair organised by WCPFA and that this should be discussed further at the next meeting.

- c. Ovingham Joint Burial Committee – the Committee met on 19th February. The key areas of discussion were outlined. The minutes would be available in due course.
d. Village Tree Warden – nothing to add to previous reports.

22. Confidential Item: 3-4 Laburnum Terrace

The Council passed a resolution excluding the press and public from the meeting in accordance with Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted (sensitive information)

The Chairman reported that a meeting had been held to discuss future options regarding the property and updated the Council on the issues discussed.

Discussions had also been held with a professional surveyor who had indicated his willingness to support the Council in the process of identifying the best way forward for the building. A costed proposal for this work was circulated to Members. This would ensure that the Council was in possession of the full facts regarding the future options for the building before any decisions were made.

It was **Resolved** that:

- i. The proposal for services to the Council in relation to the former Post Office be approved in principle subject to confirmation that this was in accordance with the Council's Financial Regulations.
- ii. A special meeting be arranged to review the findings of the report and consider recommendations.

23. Minor Items and Items for Future Agenda

- a. Crowded trains – this issue had improved due to new rolling stock.
- b. Silent Soldiers – contact would be made with the Institute and St Oswin's Church to see if they were prepared to 'host' one of the soldiers.
- c. There was no comprehensive list of community groups in the Village. Councillor Percy agreed to look at this.

24. Dates of Future Meetings

It was Resolved that future meetings of the Parish Council be held at 7pm at Wylam Institute on the following dates:

Monday 8th April 2019
Monday 13th May 2019 (Annual Meeting)

The meeting closed at 9.45pm

Signed: Date:

Chairman of Meeting