



# Wylam Parish Council

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## MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF WYLAM PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON 10<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2019 AT 7 PM. IN THE INSTITUTE

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**Present:** Councillors J Joures (Chairman), A Francis, J Henderson, J Martin and C Percy

**Also present:** Marie Moore (Parish Clerk), Councillor K Quinn, M Hadden (Village Handyman) and 1 member of the public.

### 1. Apologies for absence

Apologies had been received from T Appleby, S Robinson and L Bray (Tree Warden)

### 2. Declarations of Interest from members on items on the Agenda

C Percy declared an interest in item 18ii

### 3. Questions from Members of the Public

M Hadden highlighted the following issues:

- i. The fence at Wylam Scar had been replaced.
- ii. The Library Yard was looking very neglected with leave, weeds and litter. This was the responsibility of the County Council.
- iii. Road safety was still a major concern with in the village and a meeting with the County Council was required to discuss this.
- iv. Bus Stop at the bridge corner –a resident had raised concerns about children crossing the road at this point to use the school bus and had asked whether the stop could be moved. This had already been looked at as had suggestions such as picking children up in the main car park. It was felt that the most appropriate course of action would be to ask the resident to raise this issue with the school in the first instance.
- v. Bus stop near the Black Bull – cars were regularly parked at the bus stop or in very close proximity. It was therefore suggested that ‘Bus Stop Clear’ markings should be painted onto the carriageway at this location.

### 4. Report from County Councillor K Quinn

- i. Drainage issues on the highway in the vicinity of the war memorial were being pursued.
- ii. The Co-op had raised their concerns about the traffic/road safety situation outside their store in the village. As a result K Quinn had asked N Snowden of the County Council’s Highways Team to visit and discuss the situation in more detail.
- iii. In relation to road safety more generally it was highlighted that the Parish Council had submitted its LTP priorities to the County Council with Wylam Wood Road being its priority for action. A response from the County Council, on why this had not been included in the current LTP, was still awaited and this was being pursued.
- iv. The planning application for the food business at Street Houses was due to be considered on 11<sup>th</sup> June 2019.
- v. A video survey of cyclists on the bridge had been carried out but no further information had been received.

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- vi. The new signs on the Waggonway made it clear that this was a shared use path. C Percy reported that L Bray was also trying to get Sustrans to rename the waggonway 'Hadrian's Way' to reinforce the shared use message.

**5. Minutes of the Annual Meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> May 2019 and their signature by the Chairman**  
**Resolved** that the minutes of the Annual meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> May 2019 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**6. Clerk's Report and to consider Matters arising from the Minutes**

- i. **Orchard Corner Trees** – Phase I of the work had been carried out. The Tree Surgeon was to meet with the Tree Warden later in the summer to agree the exact specification for the Phase 2 works to be carried out later in the year.
- ii. **Cycling of Wylam Bridge Footpath** – a video survey was carried out over the Bank Holiday weekend, the results of which were awaited from the County Council.
- iii. **Grass Cutting** – NCC had advised that there was no standard number of cuts for a play area and that if we were to reduce the number of cuts it would take longer and would not necessarily be any cheaper. The Clerk had visited the area found it well maintained so recommended that the current agreement was maintained this season and reviewed for 2020.

Concerns were raised about the standard of grass cutting on Engine Dene. It appeared that the grass was not cut as short and that the arisings were left in situ rather than being removed. This would be raised with the County Council.

- iv. **Hagg Bank Play Area** – a resident had reported that the Parish Council sign in the play area has been pulled from the ground. This would need to be re-concreted into the ground but another option would be to attach a new sign to the fence next to the gate. This would enable the information to be updated.
- v. **Road Safety/Local Transport Plan Priorities/Village Highway Issues** – See 4iii.
- vi. **Hedge at Forsters Gardens** – Advance Northumberland Homes had requested that the hedge was trimmed. There had been a suggestion that the height be trimmed to 5ft rather than 7ft, which the property landlord has no problem with, but this would be more expensive.

It was **Resolved** that quotations be obtained to trim the hedge to 7ft as usual and Advance Northumberland Homes be approached to ask whether they would accept the gift of the hedge in front of their property, so that they could be in control of its maintenance. The quotations would be submitted to the Council in due course but no work would be carried out until all nesting birds have fledged.

**7. Allotment Lease Renewal**

It was reported that the rental agreement for the allotment site had ended on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019. The current annual rent was £400 per year and it had been set at this level for a number of years. The Council was asked to consider whether this amount was still appropriate given the recent investment in the allotment track. It was also suggested that there should be a formal agreement in place between the Council and the Allotment Association setting out the terms of the relationship between the two organisations.

It was **Resolved** that this matter be deferred to the next meeting of the Parish Council to enable further information to be obtained on this issue.

**8. Action from Annual Village Meeting**

Members were invited to express their views on the outcome of the Annual Village Meeting (AVM) and in particular what could be done to increase attendance and widen participation from all

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sections of the community. There was general agreement that the format of the meeting should be more pro-active with a different format.

The local resident at the meeting had also attended the AVM and was asked for her views on the meeting. She stated that she had only started attending because of reduced family commitments and understood that time pressure on many people meant that there was a big gap in representation.

It was **Resolved** that further work be carried out to look at examples of good practice particularly in relation to alternative pro-active formats and increasing participation from all sections of the community.

#### 9. Preparation for Summer Fair

The Council had booked a stall at the Fair on 22<sup>nd</sup> June. It was suggested that this should be used to promote the work of the Council and provide an opportunity for local people to 'meet' the Council and find out more about its work. A banner had been ordered and a map of our area with photographs highlighting achievements would be prepared. Information on local walks would be available with a view to reinvigorating interest.

#### 10. Managing the Council's Work, including Representatives on Outside Bodies

As a result of attendance at the last meeting it had been agreed to defer the appointment of Parish Council representatives on outside bodies to this meeting. It had also been agreed to defer the appointment of a Vice Chair.

J Joures stressed the need for Members, individually and collectively to carefully consider how they could take the work of the Council forward in a more focussed and structured way, recognising the high level of commitment required to do so. This approach should see Councillors involved in issues that were of particular interest and those to which they could add most value. It was however acknowledged that there were issues that, whilst not of particular interest, would need to be covered and also issues that would require all Councillors to be involved in e.g. financial management.

A number of work areas had been highlighted and it was suggested that a lead Councillor and a supporting Councillor be appointed for each of these to ensure they could monitor activity and ensure work was up to date.

J Joures indicated that S Robinson had informed him of her intention to resign from the Council but that she was willing to maintain an involvement in heritage projects. It was thought that former Council Chairman T Martin may also be interested in certain aspects of the Council's work.

With regard to representatives on outside bodies it was stressed that this role was to provide a link between that organisation and the Parish Council rather than carrying out a role for the outside body.

It was **Resolved** that:

- i. The following areas of responsibility be agreed:

Work Area	Lead Councillor	Contributing Councillors
Council Finances	J Joures	A Francis
Council Propriety and Processes	J Joures	A Francis

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Council accountability to the village (eg annual meeting)	J Jours	A Francis
Support and Management of Clerk	J Jours	A Francis
Support and Management of Handyman	J Martin	
Relationship with Institute	J Martin	
Relationship with Playing Field Association	J Jours	
Management of grant to Wylam Winter Tales	C Percy	
Overall grant making policy	J Jours	
Disposal of Post Office	J Jours	
Owner of Council Assets	J Martin	
Management of Nature Reserve	J Henderson	C Percy/L Bray
Issues relating to rights of way, the waggonway and natural environment, including trees on Parish Council land	C Percy	
Litter/ bins/ annual litter pick	J Henderson	J Martin
Management of museum and existing heritage offering/ relationship with National Trust	C Percy	T Appleby
Future development of heritage offering	C Percy	
Documenting Points Bridge and other potential projects	J Jours	S Robinson
Council's position on planning applications	C Percy	J Jours
Road Safety	T Appleby	
Condition of Roads/ footpaths	J Martin	
Representative on OJBC	J Jours	A Francis
Production of the Globe	J Jours	J Martin/M Moore
PC Website	J Henderson	J Jours
PC on social media	J Henderson	J Martin
Relationship with Reece Foundation	J Jours	

ii. Councillor A Francis be elected as Vice Chair, proposed by T Appleby, seconded by J Martin

#### 11. Parish Councillor Vacancy (Attached C)

Following the resignation of Councillor K Trobe the County Council had provided information on the process to be followed regarding the vacancy. Given the further resignation of S Robinson there would be two vacancies to fill.

It was **Resolved** that:

- i. This matter be considered at the next meeting
- ii. A small article be included in the next edition of the Globe on this issue

#### 12. Financial Matters

After considering the financial information submitted it was **Resolved** that:

- i. The financial reports to 31<sup>st</sup> May 2019 be approved
- ii. The following schedules of payments to be approved:

##### General Community Account Payments Schedule

Inv. Date	Payee	Details of Supply	Amount
17/05/19	Newsquest Media Group	AVM Notice	135.60
25/05/19	M Hadden	Work Footwear	37.99

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24/05/19	Todd and Cue	Insurance 3-4 Laburnum Tce	601.82
22/05/19	St Oswin's Church Hall	AVM Hall Hire	45.00

#### Post Office General Account

Inv. Date	Payee	Details of Supply	Amount
4/06/19	Coachroad Productions	Celebrating Points Bridge Stage 2	10,000

- iii. The quotation from Tyne Valley Woodlands for strimming at the Nature Reserve be approved.
- iv. The transfer of £10,000 from the Post Office Saver Account to the Parish Council Current Account in respect of the Stage 2 Invoice from Coach Road Productions be approved.

#### 13. Draft Asset Register

A draft Asset Register has been prepared although some information was still to be added regarding purchase and replacement costs. The document provided the basis for an inspection of these assets.

It was **Resolved** that

- i. The Clerk would inspect the assets as a way of familiarising herself with the items held by the Council and would report back on any action required,
- ii. An inventory of items held within the Museum be prepared by C Percy and T Appleby.

#### 14. Riverside Footpath

Members of the Parish Council met with Officers of Northumberland County Council on 14th May 2019. The notes of this meeting had been circulated to Members on 21<sup>st</sup> May 2019.

It was **Resolved** that J Joures would prepare a note on this matter to be communicated to T Martin and Mr Brunskill as affected parties.

#### 15. Grants and Donations Policy

At its last meeting the Council approved the recommendations set out in this report but agreed that the process for inviting and considering grant applications should be considered at this meeting.

It was **Resolved** that 3 key contacts: J Joures (WCPFA), J Martin (Wylam Institute) and C Percy (Wylam Winter Tales) be authorised to work with these organisations to frame their grant applications for 1919/20 around the Council's agreed aims and objectives.

#### 16. Summer Edition of the Globe

It was **Resolved** that the J Martin would forward items submitted via Facebook to the Clerk for inclusion in the Summer edition.

#### 17. To review correspondence received

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

#### 18. Planning Applications

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

- i. A formal request to speak, at the Local Area Council – Tyndale, on 11<sup>th</sup> June 2019 had been submitted on behalf of the Parish Council, in relation to the following application:

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- ii. **17/04497 FUL** Demolition of existing allotment shed and erection of allotment workshop, greenhouse and yurt for agricultural food production on land South West of Street Houses, Wylam.
- iii. **19/01565/FUL** – Proposed single storey rear extension, 10 Stephenson Tce, Wylam. Comments by 25<sup>th</sup> June 2019
- iv. **19/01760/FUL** – Proposed sun lounge and WC extension, 18 Algernon Tce, Wylam. Comments by 1<sup>st</sup> July 2019.

**19. To receive reports from Parish Council representatives on Advisory Groups and External Bodies**

It was noted that J Martin and A Francis had attended the Essity Community Forum the minutes of which would be circulated in due course.

**20. Confidential Item (Sensitive Information) 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).**

Members considered and discussed the report by A Creighton, Surveyor on Phase 1 work and were invited to give their views on the preferred way forward. In doing so the general consensus was that whilst the ideal situation would be to dispose of the asset in its current condition for retail the most realistic proposition was that it would go for residential use. Councillors were also mindful of spending too much money at this stage and felt that only essential expenditure should be incurred.

It was therefore **Resolved** that:

- i. Option 3 – i.e. dispose of the asset in its current condition be progressed as the Council's preferred option
- ii. Royal Mail and BT be informed of the Council's intention to sell so that arrangements can be made for the post box and BT equipment to be moved
- iii. A set of CAD drawings be prepared showing existing and development options and the quote obtained for this work be approved.
- iv. Pre-planning advice be obtained.
- v. A 'soft-strip' of the building be carried out to enable it to be better presented to prospective buyers
- vi. The ivy be removed from the external walls of the building with a further quote being obtained for this work. The Clerk be authorised to accept a lower quote.
- vii. A rates appeal should not be submitted.
- viii. No further work be carried out at this stage with regard to the restrictive covenant
- ix. Further advice be obtained in relation to the retrospective building control and whether it is required.
- x. No further action be taken with regard to an asbestos survey at this stage.
- xi. The Clerk to seek guidance in relation to disposing of Council property to ensure that this is done correctly and in accordance with the Council's financial regulations.
- xii. The Council should agree the criteria by which it intends to make decisions on achieving best value for the property.
- xiii. Arrangements be made to market the property as soon as possible.
- xiv. Arrangements be made to appoint a solicitor to act on the Council's behalf. Quotes be obtained from appropriate legal firms.
- xv. A Creighton be appointed to progress Phase 2 of the work required to dispose of the property.
- xvi. The Council should agree who has delegated powers to act in this matter given the likely need for quick decisions on certain matters.

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- xvii. The Council should agree a press release to be issued on this matter to make local people aware of its plans. J Joures would contact those who had already expressed an interest. C Percy would inform the neighbours of the property of the Council’s decision.

**21. Minor items & items for the Agenda of a future meeting**

- i. It was agreed to contact Wylam nurseries to find out when the hanging baskets would be provided.
- ii. Suggested dates for the mental health awareness event in the village were agreed.

**22. Date of next meeting**

Monday 15<sup>th</sup> July 2019

The meeting closed at 10.15pm

Signed: ..... Date: .....  
 Chairman of Meeting