

Wylam Parish Council

MINUTES OF AN ELECTRONIC ORDINARY MEETING OF WYLAM PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON 13th JULY 2020 AT 7 PM

Present: Councillors S Duckworth (Chair), J Henderson, J Joures, J Martin, C Percy and H Waddell

Also present: Marie Moore (Parish Clerk) L Bray, J Robinson (Hexham Courant) and 1 member of the public

Questions from Members of the Public

1. J Wiseman referred to the decision at the last meeting with regard to 'tree no. 13' to the front of his property up against the boundary wall. He asked whether the inspection had taken place what the position was in relation to liability for any damage caused by the tree to the wall which he was responsible for. He confirmed that he was happy to pay for the felling of the tree if the Council was minded to approve its removal. (See item 5 below for formal discussion and decision)

1. Apologies for absence

A Francis and K Quinn

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

None declared.

3. Minutes

Resolved that the minutes of the meeting held on 8th June 2020 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

4. Minutes of the Ovingham Joint Burial Committee

Resolved that the minutes of the Ovingham Joint Burial Committee held on 19th May 2020 be received.

5. Report of the Tree Warden/Tree No 13 at Orchard Corner

Both the tree warden and councillors had inspected tree no 13, a mature ash tree, and the adjacent wall and an opinion had also been sought from a tree surgeon. Whilst the tree warden was of the view that the situation should be monitored members were generally of the view that given the condition of the tree and the potential for damage to the wall it should be removed. The removal could not however take place until the autumn when the leaves had fallen and any nesting birds had gone.

It was noted that the basal roots of some trees in the village continued to be damaged by grass cutting machines.

Resolved that

- i. Permission be granted for the tree to be removed, with the cost being met by J Wiseman, but that this work be delayed until the autumn. In the meantime J Wiseman to seek quotes

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for the work and to report back to the meeting in September on the advice received and proposed timing of the work.

- ii. Northumberland County Council be requested to modify grass cutting around trees to avoid further basal root damage.

6. **Anti-Social Behaviour**

Members discussed the current position in relation to the increased anti-social behaviour in the village during lockdown and action taken since the meeting on 29th June to discuss an action plan. The Police had indicated their intention to use Dispersal Orders when necessary and were also moving forward with a Public Spaces Protection Order for Wylam.

Northumberland County Council would be leading on this process and more information was being obtained. Additional signage to deter people from jumping off Points Bridge was being pursued by the Police.

Resolved that the current position be noted and the agreed action plan be published on the Council's Facebook page along with a supporting statement.

7. **Hagg Bank Play Area**

The Government had published guidance with regard to the re-opening of children's play areas and members were requested to consider this and determine whether the Hagg Bank play area should re-open. Guidance received from NALC and the Association of Play Industries had also been considered.

The Clerk stated that Northumberland County Council had already carried out a safety inspection and she had prepared a Covid-19 risk assessment. She also recommended that the equipment be cleaned and disinfected prior to re-opening. No further regular cleaning would be carried out but this would be highlighted in the signage erected at the site. A quote had been obtained to carry out jet washing of all equipment.

A quote was also being obtained for a replacement sign for the play area which would include the new contact details. With regard to Covid-19 signage it was suggested that this should be in the form of laminated signs and based on wording kindly offered by WCPFA.

Resolved that

- i. The play area should re-open as soon possible with appropriate signage being erected with regard to Covid-19.
- ii. The quote for the jet washing be approved and this be carried out as soon as possible.

8. **Petition re Removal of Silent Soldier at War Memorial**

The Clerk reported the receipt of a request from a resident that the Council consider whether the silent soldier at the War Memorial should be removed. She confirmed that whilst it was located on NCC land the Parish Council had facilitated its erection at this location at the request of the private individual who had purchased it.

The Royal British Legion had been contacted and it had confirmed that the intention was that they should be in place until the end of 2018. They were never intended to be permanent structures. The resident who purchased it was however very much of the view that it was a permanent structure in the village.

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In discussing the request, the preferred option was to see it removed, particularly as the Parish Council had thought it would be temporary. However, as it was not the owner of the statue and it was on NCC land the Parish Council did not have the authority to request or the power to arrange for its removal

Resolved that the correspondent be advised that the Parish Council acknowledges its role in facilitating the erection of the statue at this location on the basis that it was temporary. Whilst the majority view was that it should be removed, given its location on NCC land and its ownership by a private individual, the Parish Council did not have the power to request or arrange the removal. The matter would therefore need to be progressed with the owner and the County Council.

9. Philip Brookes Memorial

Following a request to the Council about commemorating the contribution that Philip Brookes had made to the village, it had been proposed that the room at the museum be named after him and also that a display cabinet of some of his artefacts be housed at Wylam Institute. Further detail would be provided in due course.

Resolved that these proposals be supported wholeheartedly and an approach be made to Wylam Institute for approval with regard to the display cabinet.

10. Falcon Centre

C Percy provided an update on the current position with the plans to create community facilities within the Falcon Centre including registering it as an Asset of Community Value. Funding was required to support the pre-feasibility study and a financial request had been made to the Parish Council to meet the cost of the planned community survey.

Members were of the view that before making a decision on funding for the survey there should be a clearer idea of the overall aim of the project and where funding may come from. There should also be more focus on gaps in provision. Ideally any survey would be part of a wider engagement about community facilities in the village.

Resolved that the update be noted and a decision on funding for the survey be deferred pending receipt of further more detailed information from the Falcon Centre User Group on the project.

11. New Model Code of Conduct Consultation

The Council had been invited to respond to a consultation on a Model Member Code of Conduct produced by the Local Government Association.

In welcoming the document as a statement of principles members also asked about an easy access guide for Parish Councillors on the conduct of Council business. This was already available in the 'Good Councillors Guide' specifically for Parish Councillors.

Resolved that the new model Member Code of Conduct be noted.

12. Wylam Entrance Sign

J Marin reported that Ed and Robert Hodgson, supported by Tom and Joe's Nursery had very kindly offered to replace the Wylam entrance sign at Holeyn Hall crossroads free of charge as

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a gift to the village. In doing so they had saved the Parish Council a significant amount of money.

In recognition of this members discussed the purchase of gifts for those who had given their time and materials so generously.

Resolved that the thanks of the Parish Council and the village be extended to those involved and an appropriate give be purchased as a small token of appreciation.

13. The Globe

The Clerk reported that Azure Charitable Enterprises, who printed the Globe for the Parish Council, had unfortunately ceased trading. She had therefore obtained quotes from other printers who had been recommended.

In response from a question from S Duckworth about whether the Council should still publish a paper copy of the newsletter it was stated that the many elderly members of the community really liked newsletter in that format and often relied on it as a source of local information.

Resolved that

- i. The quote from Robson Print to produce future editions of the Globe be accepted
- ii. Arrangements be made to go ahead with the next edition as soon as possible with the focus being on the Council and Community's response to Covid-19.

14. Finance

Resolved that

- i. The Annual Governance and Accountability Statement for 2019-20 be approved
- ii. The Accounting Statement and Explanation of Variances for 2019-20 be approved
- iii. The payments detailed in appendix E be approved
- iv. The financial reports to June 2020 be received
- v. The bank reconciliations for June 2020 be received.
- vi. The quotes received from Tyne Valley Woodlands Consultancy for autumn maintenance, Hagg Bank Play Area and Forster Gardens Hedge be approved.

15. Planning Applications and Decisions

Resolved that

- i. The applications and decisions set out in the report be noted.
- ii. No comments be submitted in relation to planning ref 20/01805/FUL and 20/01605/FUL

16. Correspondence

Resolved that the correspondence received since the last meeting be noted and actioned where appropriate.

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).

17. Riverside Footpath

The Clerk reported on the outcome of a site meeting that she and C Percy had attended along with T Martin, S Brunskill, K Quinn and County Council Officers.

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Resolved that the Council seek a further legal opinion on the matter via its insurer.

18. 3-4 Laburnum Terrace

J Joures provided an update on the current position with regard to the re marketing of the property. The closing date for bids was now 31st July after which an early decision would need to be made by the Council on the preferred purchaser.

A site meeting was also to take place with BT Openreach with regard to the telecoms cabinet to the front of the property.

Resolved that the report be noted and an Extra-Ordinary meeting of the Council be held on 10th August to discuss the bids for the Post Office

19. To consider minor items & items for the agenda of a future meeting

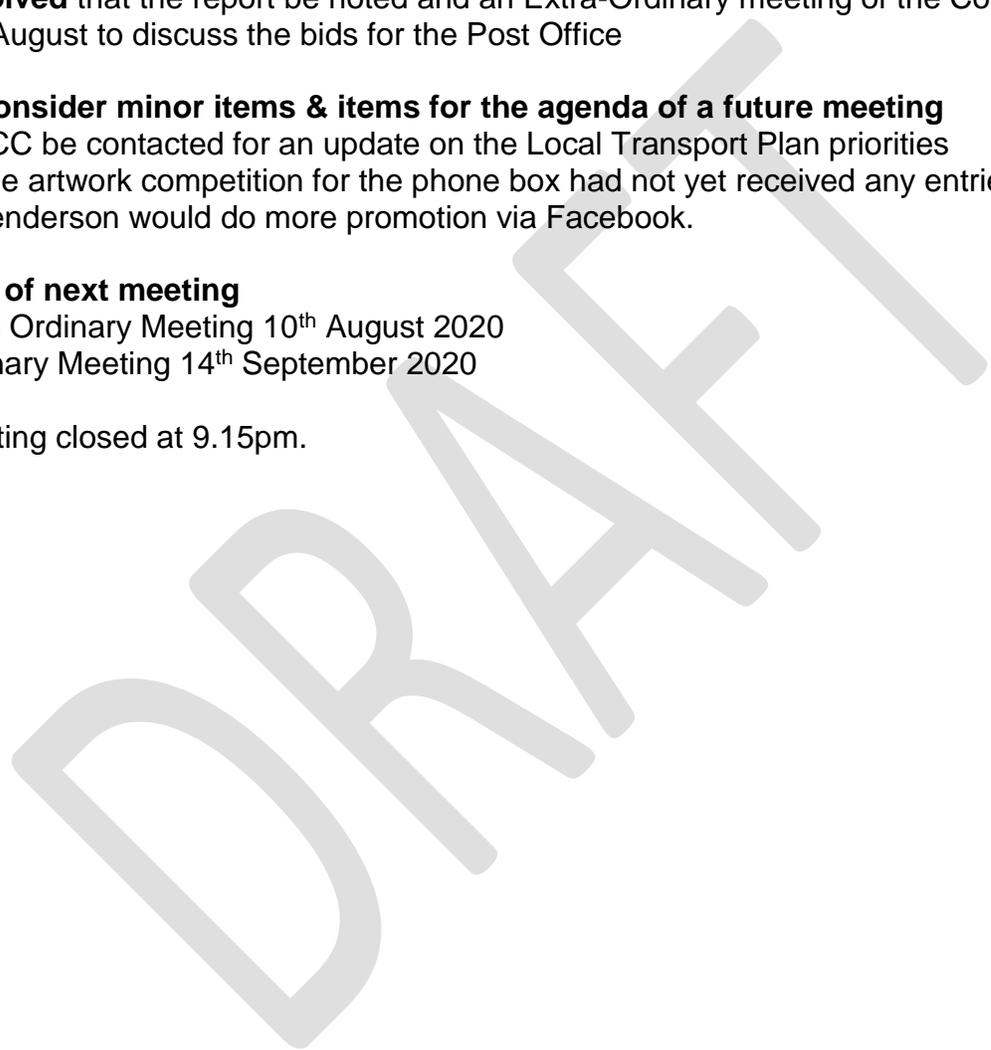
- i. NCC be contacted for an update on the Local Transport Plan priorities
- ii. The artwork competition for the phone box had not yet received any entries so J Henderson would do more promotion via Facebook.

20. Date of next meeting

Extra Ordinary Meeting 10th August 2020

Ordinary Meeting 14th September 2020

The meeting closed at 9.15pm.



Signed: Date:

Chairman of Meeting