

THIRSTON PARISH COUNCIL

At the meeting of the Parish Council at URC Hall on Thursday 16 January 2014.

Present: Cllrs D Green, H Lindley, J Marshall, A Morton and J Secker.
The Parish Clerk in attendance – Mrs L Hamlin

85 Apologies for absence – Cllr Davison

86 Declarations of interest in items on the Agenda – None.

87 Public Questions (max 5 mins per person) – None

88 The minutes of the meeting 28 November 2013 were signed as a true record.

89 Matters Arising therefrom:

Overhanging trees – The property owner has cut back some of the overhanging trees at the bottom of The Peth. One bush still needs cutting back however it was thought it was not the right time of year to be undertaking the work on this bush.

90 Report by County Councillor

1. The Bridge - CC Sanderson reported that this is still on NCC's agenda however it will be a couple of years before anything can be done. NCC has asked for quotes for tidying up but they have either been too expensive or contractors have not wished to undertake the works. NCC are looking to see if works on the railings can be undertaken within the capital costs when the decking work is undertaken. This is still the only priority on CC Sanderson's LTP list.
2. The issue of the potential sale of County Hall has come as a surprise to most Councillors. This proposal has a major impact on Morpeth's Neighbourhood Plan.
3. Core Strategy – there are issues with this as Central Government states there will be an increase in population by 4.2% however NCC's stats state +10%. This raises the issue as to whether there is a need for the extra housing that NCC state is required in the Core Strategy. There are also issues with the timetable for the Core Strategy – there is still a great deal to be consulted on and these include big issues of minerals and renewable energies and the general thought is that the timetable will not be met.
4. Morpeth Bypass – this is going to a public enquiry.
5. Budget Process - £40m saving is needed this year. There has been a change to senior management at NCC which will result in management being more streamlined. One major concern is that post-16 transport support is proposed to be cut which will affect a lot of children especially those travelling from Berwick to Newcastle. The Youth Services are to suffer major cuts which are not ideal as reports of anti-social behaviour is actually going down and any cuts may impact on this.
6. Ofsted – 12 schools are in difficulty. It has been found that pupil premiums are not being paid for special children. Links between the LEA (NCC) and the schools are poor and this was identified by Ofsted. Communication needs to be improved.
7. NCC has to set the council tax level by the end of February.

91 Report back from Meetings and Representations on behalf of TPC – None

92 Potential Projects

a) Footpaths/Rights of Way –

- NCC – Definitive Map Modification Order (no 13) 2013 – there were no objections from the Parish Council on this Order. Clerk to inform NCC. Clerk
- Footpath up to the Field of Hope – The Clerk has scraped back the some of the overgrowth. The Clerk will endeavor to finish this in the next couple of weeks.
- Footpath No 18 from The Helm to West Thirston – Footpath Officer still to undertake works. Clerk
- Footpath No 11 – from the A1 by Bockenfield to Burgham Park – Footpath Officer still to undertake works. Clerk
- NCC has stated that they are looking to residents to help with maintaining pathways in terms of weed killing and overgrowth and more details will be forthcoming in the next few months.

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- It was reported that at the end of the metal fence at the Peth footpath there is a badly maintained manhole cover which appears to belong to BT. Clerk to report repairs required. Clerk
- b) **Landscaping** – The end of year clear up had taken place.

93 **Planning:**

To report on any planning decisions:

13/03053/PRUTPO – Trees around Bainbridge Lane, Eshott TPO: Fell 1 no. Beech tree (T1), crown lift 2no. Oak trees (T2) and (T3) up to 3m, lift crown of Beech tree (T4) up to 3m, and removal of lower limbs of ash tree (T5) (Amended 29.10.13) – APPROVED

13/03054/PRUTPO Mill House - TPO: Thin crown 2no. lime trees by 20% - APPROVED

13/03182/RENE 200 Solar Panels – Land North of Eshott Airfield Installation of 200 solar photovoltaic panels to generate electricity – APPROVED

13/03333/FUL - Eshott Airfield - Replace steel portal framed building – APPROVED

Tree Preservation Order 2013 (no. 11 of 2013) Northumberland County Council (land to the south and east of Northumberland Arms, The Peth, West Thirston) – CONFIRMED WITHOUT MODIFICATION

Planning applications pending:

13/03406/FUL - Westfield Ho, North High Moor - Erection of a new stable block – no objections

13/03614/FUL – Burgham Golf Club – New access road – no objections

14/00080/FELTPO – Felling of trees behind the Northumberland Arms – paperwork still to be received.

94 **Services:**

NCC – new telephone numbers have been issued by NCC for contacting them as opposed to using the 0845 number. The one for Thirston is 01670 627000. The Clerk will enter this into the next edition of The Bridge for residents to be aware of this new local charge number. Clerk

95 **Requested Agenda Items –**

Budget for Precept – the Budget was agreed and the precept amount is to remain at £6,500 as per the previous two years. Clerk to submit the relevant paperwork to NCC. Clerk

Pig Muck on the Road to Eshott – A complaint has been received about pig muck on the road to Eshott which was rather unpleasant for the driver of the vehicle whose car smelt rather unpleasant. The Clerk reported this to NCC as it is the responsibility of the farmer to ensure this is cleaned up. NCC has stated they will pursue this however as the farm vehicle was in the process of moving the pig muck he had to be given the time to clean it up.

Council Tax charges on mobile homes – Mr Barnes, Revenue and Benefits Manager of NCC has stated the following. The last update provided was to the Communities and Place Overview Scrutiny Committee in February 2013. At that point a review of the County by the Community Protection Officers from Public Health was being carried out as they were the best placed and had powers to enter private sites. The West, Central and South East of the County had been completed and only one site had been identified as having residents living on the site. This information seemed to contradict anecdotal information therefore we needed to look for fresh ideas as to how to move this forward. In the meantime any information received that showed someone having their main residence in a caravan or holiday chalet was reported to the Valuation Office so that the property could be banded for council tax purposes and a bill then issued. There have been a number of caravans brought into the council tax list since then. As a result of recent IT developments across the council using GIS intelligence it has been possible to enable comparison between council tax data and electoral roll information that will more easily identify further cases where potentially caravans and chalets are being used as a main residence and they are not on the council tax database. This action is planned in the near future when the electoral information from the latest canvass is finalised. In addition, the possibility of data matching against credit information is also being considered. NCC admits that this is a difficult and time consuming area to investigate and administer. Clerk to ascertain if Council Tax charges apply to people who only live on the caravan parks 11 months of the year. Clerk

Recycling Bins for West Thirston – There has been an issue of fly tipping around the green bins rubbish bins at West Thirston. This is not an isolated incident and there has been a spate of

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flytipping from Tritlington to Alnwick. NCC is aware of the situation and has cleared up the mess and also located some addresses. They are pursuing whether action can be taken against the tippers as there are no notices stating household rubbish cannot be left here. Also one gentleman was caught in the act of flytipping and his details have been reported to NCC for follow up. NCC has identified one person from Felton and one from Mitford who have been dumping their rubbish. The Clerk has put up notices on the bins stating these are not for household refuse. Clerk to ascertain the rules on refuse collection at caravan parks. Item to be put on the agenda for April meeting to see if the green bin situation has improved and whether the bins should be removed.

Clerk

96 Correspondence

NCC – Working with Town and Parish Councils – letter to Chairman and the Clerk updating them on the recent developments following meetings of the Parish Liaison Working Group. The three key outcomes are 1) establishing arrangements to strengthen communication between NCC and Town and Parish Councils 2) Review the Local Council Charter 3) update on asset transfer process. The Clerk reported that at a recent Clerks Meeting the Parish Liaison contact from NCC was present and he stated that in the forthcoming year there will be an increased number of meetings with Parish Council but preferably within Cluster Groups. More information to come from NCC on this latest initiative.

Emails from Mr Wilcock's in relation to the trees adjacent to the Northumberland Arms –

These emails have been circulated to the Councillors and sent to NCC. Mr Wilcock stated that if there are any issues of trees falling and causing damage to property from his land then he will hold the Parish Council responsible as he believes the tree works he was trying to undertake were stopped due to Parish Council intervention. The Clerk responded stating that the works were stopped due to uncertainty about which tree was covered by the TPO and following this uncertainty NCC placed a blanket TPO on the area, therefore the Parish Council are not liable.

Copy of letter from Highways to Forestry Commission in relation to tree felling along the A1

– Highways has confirmed that of the 600 oak trees planted to commemorate the Queen's coronation in 1953 some 180 have to be removed due to disease and the risk they pose to road users from collapse. Highways Agency propose to plant up the existing hedge in the gaps that exist behind each tree which would help mitigate against the loss of the trees and improve the overall appearance of the fragmented hedgerow.

NALC – Royal Garden Party nomination form – This invitation is for the Chairman only and the Chairman has already been lucky enough to attend this party via NALC.

Clerks and Councils Direct & CAN News – to circulate

97 Finance

(a) Financial Summary was reviewed with no issues. The Current Account Balance is £89.81, Deposit Account Balance £6,816.71.

(b) Payments - The following list was put before members and was approved:

Payments this meeting:		
000648	L Hamlin	242.96
000649	PAYE	57.60
000650	Felton URC Hall	105.00
000651	NALC Training	5.00
000652	Felton Parish Council	31.52

(c) Receipts – None

98 Urgent Items – There is a large pot hole that has appeared opposite The Cottage at The Helm. Clerk to report to NCC.

Clerk

99 Items for next agenda

Litter Pick

Chairman closed the meeting 9.10 pm

Meeting Dates: 27/02/14, 10/04/14, 15/05/14, 03/07/14, 14/08/14, 18/09/14, 30/10/14, 11/12/14

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