

MINUTES OF MEETING OF CRASTER PARISH COUNCIL
Thursday 19th October 2017

Councillors Present

Chair: Bryn Owen, Vice Chair: Martin Smith

Parish Council members: Elizabeth Pearson, Henry Cummins, Mark Green, Alan Punton

In Attendance: NCC Councillor Wendy Pattison; 1 member of the public.

Acting Clerk: Geoff Newcombe

2361 Declaration of interests

Cllr Cummins withdrew his standing declaration on car parking issues as he no longer has a direct interest.

2362 Apologies for absence

Received from Cllrs. Rosie Robson, Ann Fettis & Margaret Brooks

2363 Confirmation of the Minutes for the Meeting of 21st September 2017

The minutes were unanimously accepted as an accurate record of the meeting

Proposer: Cllr Martin Smith

Seconder: Cllr Mark Green

Unanimous

2364 Matters Arising

- Overhanging trees adjacent to the "Cottage" and the "Archway" – letter received from NCC Highways saying that if no action they will take enforcement action.
- Christmas tree Purchase – Hobberlaw Plants quoted £150 for supply and delivery of a 15/16Ft. Christmas tree and it was proposed that an order should be placed.
Proposer: Cllr Bryn Owen
Seconder: Cllr Martin Smith
Unanimous
- Remembrance Sunday – wreath purchase; has been provided through alternative source.

2365 Financial matters

a. **Bank Balance** – £21,334.33 on 13th October 2017

b. **Received since 21/09/2017**

Nil

c. **Spent since 21/09/2017**

Clerk wages & expenses (Aug 2017: £299.78 - £3.44 correction for PAYE) - £296.34

PAYE (Aug 2017) £69.20

d. **Cheques required**

Clerk wages & expenses (Sep 2017) - £189.46

PAYE (Sep 2017) £52.00

e. **Notice of Conclusion of Audit**

It was proposed that the conclusion of the external Auditor be accepted for the 2016/17 financial year.

Proposer: Cllr Martin Smith

Seconder: Cllr Bryn Owen

Unanimous

2366 Leader Grant

Update on present position and future actions – report attached.

It is proposed that the Parish Council approves the expenditure of the funds necessary to complete the project defined as the Craster Trail. In making this resolution the Council understands that the total project cost is in the region of £12,000, but that VAT, a grant of 80% from Leader and contributions from businesses will be received on completion of the project. The total net cost to the Council is not to exceed £2,000 without further approval.

Proposer: Cllr Henry Cummins

Seconder: Cllr Martin Smith

Unanimous

2367 County Councillor's update – report attached

NCC Cllr Pattison produced a letter that invited a review of traffic signage; the letter was left for perusal.

2368 Parish Council Clerk/HR Issues

Consider a recommendation on the appointment of a Permanent Clerk.

It was proposed that Adam Shanley be appointed as Parish Clerk on the understanding that no mileage expenses claims would be made by him.

Proposer: Cllr Alan Punton

Seconder: Cllr Henry Cummins

Unanimous

Adam will be asked to attend the next Parish Meeting on 1st November 2017 to meet the public.

2369 EJBC (Embleton Joint Burial Committee)

Sadly the Administrator and Maintenance Contractor Martin Smith passed away earlier this month. Temporary arrangements for administration are being undertaken by the Clerk. In the longer term a new maintenance contractor will need to be appointed.

Renovation of Cemetery House for affordable housing. Still awaiting confirmation form NCC of grant award.

2370 Affordable Housing in Craster - Report attached

The Government launched an initiative in July to make grant available for local councils, including Parish Councils, to re-establish affordable housing in locations where holiday homes have replaced residences.

It is proposed that the Parish Council investigates the feasibility of taking such an initiative and presents a paper on the findings to the Parish Meeting on 1st November.

Proposer: Cllr Martin Smith

Seconder: Cllr Henry Cummins

Unanimous

It was suggested that other Parish Meeting Agenda items should be; Traffic Scheme, New Clerk, Cemetery Issues (Friends).

2371 Planning Matters

None

2372 Training and Conferences

- Town and Parish Council Conference; 5th October 2017 @ County Hall, Morpeth – Delegate report

Here is some information on the training and conference meetings Cllr Rosie Robson attended:-

The 4th annual Parish/County meet on October 5th was affected by "Operation Reiver", (terrorist threat practice), so a few of the speakers weren't available and others stepped in on alternative topics. A lot of information and pride in NCC's excellent recycling record; one of the best in the country. Talk of trying to improve the communication between PC's and County; as the present method of form filling style email was criticised as often not being replied too quickly.

School transport

It was raised as "elitist" by Hexham PC. "Only wealthier parents could afford the transport costs for older children and therefore allowing them a wider choice of better schools". Stephen Ricketts outlined the discrepancies experienced by parishes who had a lot of houses that received Council tax benefits and the differences not being passed on to parishes. Parking problems were raised by Seahouses and it was decided that problems would be addressed at private meetings and that a future meeting was lined up with Craster.

The training session with Stephen Rickett was very helpful. It was well attended by both highly experienced councillors and newbies. He talked through responsibilities and legalities and gave examples of other Parish practices. There were helpful question and answer sessions on many topics, and employment, contracts and pensions for clerks and councillors was a pertinent problem raised by quite a few. The one thing he told us that was a near useless endeavour, was trying to change a Parish boundary! He recommends these sessions be attended at least once a year by all councillors.

- Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) – Delegate report

The best meeting by far was the AONB. It outlined the amazing work done along this coast up to Berwick. They have launched a Coastal Care project out of their new hub in Seahouses where volunteers and experts regularly meet. We were given a talk by a research Prof. from RSPB about the changes affecting migrating birds to our area. A special talk was given by the AONB's archaeologist. She told us about "Rock Man", a body found in a burial chist by a local farmer while ploughing. It was found with artefacts and has gone off to the Midlands for forensic examination.

2373 Craster Community Trust (CCT)

- CCT website and new e-mail system

Front page wording required

Nothing to report – await appointment of permanent clerk

- Position on notice boards
- PC representative Report on the activities of the Trust

Cllr Elizabeth Pearson reported that CCT want to have their own exclusive notice board; they suggest that returned grant could be used to fund notice board. However CPC Standing Orders and Financial Rules require three quotes be obtained for items of expenditure over £500. The remains of the Bark Potts is behind the war memorial and could be restored. The HMRC sign in the harbour also needs renewal.

Suggested positions for CPC notice boards could be Chapel Row, Dunstan & Whin Hill if purchased.

2374 Correspondence received

Circulated by e-mail; and

- Letters from Fyona and Michael Robson – Clerk to inform Mr & Mrs Robson that NCC is reviewing parking and that their letter would be passed on to them if they agree.
- Dangerous crossroads e-mail – Clerk to inform complainants that this is a highways issue and that their information would be passed on to NCC Highways them if they agree.
- Street Lighting Project Update – complaint received re lack of repairs response. NCC Cllr Pattison informed meeting that NCC Cllr Glen Sanderson has now taken up this issue.

2375 National Trust/English Heritage Parking

Cllr Owen is still awaiting a reply to request for an appointment.

2376 Councillor Portfolio

To be considered at a future meeting.

2377 Parish Council Administration

- Proposed change to SO's to agree end time for meetings/new ways working to clear agenda items in shortened timescale - To be considered at a future meeting.
- PC Policy Checklist – await appointment of permanent clerk

2378 Information Share

Parish Meeting will be on 1st November 2017

2379 Items for Next Agenda

- Planning - 17/03658/FUL; Land South East Of Lifeboat House Haven Hill Craster Northumberland; Change of use of buildings formerly used as garage/storage, office and small washroom to 2 new homes with external car parking and amenity space. Response to be coordinated at Parish Meeting to meet response deadline of 7th November.
- Planning - 17/03789/NONMAT | Non Material Amendment (Garage roof to be amended from pitched roof to flat roof, up and over doors revised to be timber hinged doors and 5 bar timber gate and posts added to driveway) on approved planning application 17/00881/COU | The Chapel Row Craster Alnwick Northumberland NE66 3TU

2380 Date and Time of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Council is to be held at 7.15pm on 16th November 2017.

Craster Trail Implementation

Background

The Craster Trail Leader grant essentially combines two projects that have been addressed by the Parish Council over the past few years: the creation of a new footpath down the Tower Bank and the introduction of new tourist signage in the village.

The new footpath will be to the south of the road and will start to the east of the coastguard station and go down the field to the burn. A footbridge will be constructed across the burn and the footpath will go through the woods to the road. This footpath was originally a LTP in 2015 and to assist the NCC permissions were obtained from Lord Howick and the Greys, the landowners concerned, and when NCC took no action it was proposed in March 2017 that the Parish Council should seek a Leader Grant and take responsibility for the creation of the new footpath.

The need for signage in the village has been discussed for several years. Local businesses have been approached and have agreed to help with the funding of these signs and to remove their own unofficial ones once the new signs are in place. The proposal is that there will be one finger post at the harbour indicating the direction of the castle, Jolly Fisherman, Shoreline Café, Play Park, Gallery, Smokehouse and Restaurant and one by the car park indicating the Castle and Radar Station, Dunstan, the Cottage Inn, Stableyard Tearooms and the harbour. There will also be a large display case by the entrance to the car park with a map of the parish indicating local businesses and tourist locations with short descriptions of each.

Leader Grant

The Leader Grant applied for by the Parish Council was for 80% of the cost of the project. The Parish Council agreed to fund the remaining 20%, though as indicated above it is expected that local businesses will make contributions to the costs. Based on the submission the total cost of the project, excluding VAT which the Parish Council will have to pay and then reclaim, is £9373.00 and the Parish council contribution is £1874.00. The grant system does not allow the applicant to include any contingencies so any extra costs which arise will have to be covered by the Parish Council, but the contributions from the businesses will off-set this.

Applying for the grant has not committed the Parish Council to proceed with the project and before that can happen there needs to be a formal resolution passed by Council to commit to spend the funds. The grant application did require the council to submit three quotations for each element of the project and this has been done, and hence placing orders for the selected suppliers at this stage is in accordance with Standing Orders.

The Leader Grant process requires the applicant to place the orders and pay for the work and then reclaim that proportion of the cost covered by the grant. With the VAT the Parish Council will be required to spend £11,250, plus any contingencies, before it can reclaim the grant and the VAT and collect contributions from the businesses. The reserves held by the Council will allow this to happen.

Proposal

The Parish Council approves the expenditure of the funds necessary to complete the project defined as the Craster Trail. In making this resolution the Council understands that the total project cost is in the region of £12,000, but that VAT, a grant of 80% from Leader and contributions from businesses will be received on completion of the project. The total net cost to the Council is not to exceed £2,000 without further approval.

DRAFT

COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORT

County Councillor Wendy Pattison

wendy.pattison@northumberland.gov.uk – Tel. 07779 983072

Craster Parish

9 Parish Council meetings - The September meeting was extremely successful and everyone will meet again next year on **Friday March 9th 2018**. Mr Bob Hodgson, NCC Area Manager for Neighbourhood Services will attend this meeting and he will be able to look at any issues Parish Councils may have regarding Refuse, Litter Bins, Hedges, Grass Cutting etc.

Friends of Spitalford Cemetery – On a recent visit to Embleton Village, a resident at Turnstone Gardens suggested the formation of a group of like-minded people who want the very best for Spitalford and would look after the cemetery to ensure it was kept neat and tidy. This would enable enhancement and improvement of the cemetery for the future and assist relatives and friends visiting the graves of loved ones to be comforted by a respectful and peaceful environment. Embleton Joint Burial Committee are discussing this suggestion. Grants are available from the Heritage Lottery Fund re Parks for People funding which helps to conserve the heritage that makes both historic parks and cemeteries special. And this gives local people a say in how they are managed in the future. Projects improve people's wellbeing and knowledge of their area, and make communities better places to live, work and visit.

<https://www.hlf.org.uk/looking-funding/our-grant-programmes/parks...>

Churchcare has announced that Grants are available for fabric repair for Grade 1 and 2 Churches <http://www.churchcare.co.uk/churches/funding-and-grants/our-grants/fabric-repairs>

Craster Mobile signal or lack of!! – I am quite certain the Parish Council will have tried many times to negotiate and try to receive a signal in the village for all mobile phone users. However, I have been requested by a resident to look at this and I will let everyone know how I get on. It must be extremely frustrating for everyone and this matter does needs resolving.

Post 16 Home to School Transport – I am a member of the Committee discussing Post 16 Home to School Transport which is chaired by County Councillor Glen Sanderson. Discussions are going well and I will report back to the Parish Council once a final decision has been made.

Construction and building sites – This work can cause problems to local residents.

Permitted hours of work will normally be:

- **Monday to Friday - 0800 - 18.00**
- **Saturday 0800 - 1300**
- **Sundays & Bank Holidays - No Working**

If a company wishes to work outside of these hours (on a Construction Site) they will normally be required to submit an application for prior consent.

NOISE

Noise from construction sites is controlled by the Control of Pollution Act (COPA) 1974. Construction companies and contractors are required to take all reasonable steps to control noise and to demonstrate that they are applying 'Best Practicable Means'.

DUST

Dust from construction sites is controlled by the Environmental Protection Act (EPA) and can often be minimised by:

- carefully siting transport routes
- providing hard-surfaced roadways
- imposing speed limits on site
- damping stockpiles of materials and roadways with water
- keeping roadways clear
- adjusting working methods e.g. to minimise demolition or crushing dust
- storing fine material under cover.

It is important to note that the environmental legislation controlling dust is for the protection of human health and the environment in general. If dust only affects your property or possessions, Environmental Health will not be able to help.

If a company wishes to work outside of these hours (on a Construction Site) they will normally be required to submit an application for prior consent.

BURNING

It is an offence under Section II of the Clean Air Act 1993 to burn anything on an industrial or trade premises which is likely to cause dark smoke. A person found guilty under this section can be liable to a fine on summary conviction not exceeding £20,000. In addition, under the Environmental Protection Act 1990, Part III, nuisance legislation applies where a nuisance is defined as something which unreasonably interferes with someone else's enjoyment of their home or garden. If we confirm that a nuisance does exist, we are able to serve a legal document called an Abatement Notice on the person responsible, requiring that the nuisance is stopped. If the Abatement Notice is ignored, then any further nuisance will be an offence which, on conviction in the magistrate's Court, could result in fines of up to £20,000 and £2,000 per day for each day the offence continues. The Environment Agency also have powers to deal with the burning of waste on trade premises. Under Part II of the Environmental Protection Act 1990, you have a duty of care concerning the disposal of trade waste. Section 33 of this Act states that a person shall not dispose of controlled waste in a manner likely to cause pollution of the environment or harm to human health. The maximum penalty under this section is £20,000. Any burning of waste is therefore an offence under this legislation.

Exemptions from the Environment Agency powers relate to the burning of wood, bark and plant material at the site of production provided fires do not cause persistent problems to neighbours. These fires still have to be registered with the [Environment Agency](#) and it is an

offence not to do so. Action can still be taken by the Council under the Clean Air Act or Nuisance legislation.

Officers to contact if any concerns are –

Enforcement officer Liz.OBrien@northumberland.gov.uk

Environment officer rosemary.ayre@northumberland.gov.uk

A1 dualling – Highways England have announced the route(s) they have chosen, enabling the project to move on to the planning phase, and the works to remain on schedule.



They have declared that their Green route option will be the preferred route between Morpeth and Felton, and the Orange route option will be the preferred route between Alnwick and Ellingham. For Morpeth to Felton, this involves constructing a new stretch of dualled carriageway to the west, and for the section between Alnwick and Ellingham, the existing road will be widened. In both cases the choices represented the favourite option among local residents who took part in the extensive consultation events. The next step is for Highways England to complete the design, survey and environmental impact work ahead of submitting their application for a Development Consent Order to the Planning Inspectorate in 2018.

Affordable Housing in Craster

The Right to Buy legislation of the 1980's resulted in many of the affordable houses in Craster moving into the private sector. They are no longer available to local families as residences and this has made it difficult for young people to stay in the Parish.

To address this situation the Government launched an initiative in July to make grant available for local councils, including Parish Councils, to re-establish affordable housing in locations where holiday homes have replaced residences. Clearly Craster falls into this category.

This is the initiative which is being explored by the EJBC to obtain a grant to renovate the Cemetery House and make it available at an affordable rent to a local family. Any shortfall in funding will be raised by a government loan to be repaid over an agreed period at interest rates of around 1%. The interest rate is fixed for the duration of the loan.

This same government initiative could be used by Craster Parish Council to bring back houses, lost to the private sector by the Right to Buy, into the affordable housing market.

Currently there is a 3 bedroomed house in Heugh Wynd on the market for £200,000. It is understood that a sale was agreed but fell through because of a clause in the deeds preventing it being used as a holiday house. If the Parish Council were to purchase this house they would be eligible for a grant towards the cost of up to £50,000. The remaining funds could be borrowed from the Public Works Loan Board on the basis indicated above.

I would like to suggest that the Parish Council investigates the feasibility of taking such an initiative and presents a paper on the findings to the Parish Meeting on 1st November. This paper would set out the cost involved, analyse the risks and identify the benefits. If the model works for this house then it could be used as other houses come onto the market.

Bryn Owen
Chair Craster parish Council
12/10/17

To The Parish Council,

Further to the Parish Council meeting I attended in August I would like to put in writing the points I raised at the meeting regarding the car park.

The area between the outer and inner car park has a rock face on either side yet Northumberland County Council has made no attempt to mesh the face to protect the public who enter and exit the car park by foot.

Northumberland County Council although finding reserves to lower kerbs on footpaths in the parish to assist parents with push chairs and disabled members of the public has made NO EFFORT to make a footpath in and out of the carpark.

There is no priority for vehicles going in or coming out on this single lane entry. There is no sign to state the public coming along the Lonnen from the overflow car park will be crossing at a blind exit. Money has been spent on relaying and remarking the inner carpark to raise even more revenue yet nothing was spent on the safety of using this facility.

As an owner of land within the car park area I believe I am more aware of these issues than councillors. I am requesting the Parish Council raise these safety issues with Northumberland County Council and have the visitors experience improved when they visit Craster.

Yours Sincerely,
Michael Robson.

To the Parish Council,

As the car park and transport topics are on the agenda for the September meeting I am writing to strongly urge the Parish Council to take this opportunity to make finding an alternative coach parking facility a priority.

Given that no alternative coach parking facility has been provided since the decision not to allow coaches to use the car park we are increasingly experiencing coaches been driven into the village resulting in irresponsible and unsafe parking putting the safety of both pedestrians and road users at risk.

With no designated safe drop off / pick up point the safety of the coach passengers is put at risk when they are dropped off on the road on the way into the village or as happened on Saturday 26th August a coach stopped at the harbour dip opposite the Lifeboat House blocking the road to traffic and pedestrians. It then moved to West End and parked on double yellow lines restricting traffic to single lane at a dangerous point on the road while the passengers wandered around the village.

Recently three coaches on a school trip parked for the duration of their stay in the entrance to the car park, even though there are double yellow lines (photo enclosed) causing a hazard to both drivers and pedestrians using the car park or the road traffic passing by.

More coaches are driving along Heugh Road which is narrow and parking in South Acres.

Mini buses park in the gateway entrance to the overflow carpark on the bend, even though there are double yellow lines there, restricting the bend at that part of the road to single file traffic.

While the income from coaches may not have been great I would say that public safety MUST come first.

I do not consider that enforcement of the illegal coach parking is the solution as Craster for many many years has attracted coach tours and school/university field trips and will continue to do so therefore appropriate parking for coaches should be a priority for the safety of both those who live in and those who visit the village.

Yours Sincerely,
Fyona Robson.



DR

RECEIPTS and PAYMENTS ACCOUNT		Craster PC 2017/18	
Craster Parish Council - Financial Position @ 13th October 2017			
RECEIPTS			This Year
		Precept	£ 3,000.00
		Bank/VAT	£ 11,115.50
		Refunds	£ 550.00
		Misc	£ 38.39
		TOTAL RECEIPTS	£ 14,703.89
PAYMENTS			This Year
		Salary	£ 1,201.87
		HMRC	£ 290.40
		Grants/ Donations	£ 956.34
		Travel	£ 60.30
		Postage Etc	£ 6.77
		Burial Cmttee	£ -
		Admin	£ 262.98
		Misc	£ 320.10
		VAT	£ 192.41
		Bank	£ -
		TOTAL PAYMENTS	£ 3,291.17
		Increase/Decrease in Funds	£ 11,412.72
9,921.61		Funds at start of the year	9,921.61
		Funds at end of the year	£ 21,334.33