

**MINUTES OF MEETING OF CRASTER PARISH COUNCIL**  
**Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> June 2017 - 7:15pm in the Craster Memorial Hall**

**Councillors Present**

**Chair:** Bryn Owen, Vice Chair, Martin Smith

**Parish Council members:** Elizabeth Pearson, Margaret Brooks, Henry Cummins, Ann Fettis, Mark Green

**In Attendance:** Wendy Pattison (NCC Councillor), 1 member of the public

**Acting Clerk:** Pamela Owen

**Questions from the public - None.**

**2278 Declaration of interests**

Cllr Green declared an interest with respect to planning application 17/00881/COU

Cllr Cummins declared an interest with respect to car parking and specifically item 2297

**2279 Apologies for absence**

Apologies received from Cllr Punton

**2280 Confirmation of the Minutes for the Meeting of 18<sup>th</sup> May 2017**

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

Proposer: Cllr Smith                      Seconder: Cllr Fettis                      Unanimous

**2281 Matters arising from the minutes not covered elsewhere on the agenda**

Cllr Cummins raised the matter of the incorporation of the seven principles of public life into the standing orders reported in item 2060. While we had been advised by the Northumberland Association of Local Councils (NALC) that these are incorporated in the standing orders he considered they were not explicit. It was agreed that all councillors would review the standing orders and this matter would be considered at the next meeting.

**2282 Parish Council vacancy**

It was agreed that notices would be posted on the Parish notice boards indicating that there are two vacancies on the Parish Council.

**2283 Parish Council Clerk/HR update**

Cllr Fettis reported that she had received a confidential letter of resignation from Ruth Younger to the Parish Council and the public left the meeting while it was read out.

It was unanimously agreed that Geoff Newcombe be offered the post of temporary clerk on the same conditions as before until such time as the permanent position could be filled.

Proposer: Cllr Pearson      Seconder: Cllr Brooks

It was agreed that a letter of thanks be sent to Ruth for her service as clerk.

It was agreed that Cllr Fettis would place notices on the Parish Notice Boards advertising the vacancy with a closing date for applications of 31<sup>st</sup> July 2017 and that the vacancy should be advertised through NALC.

The need to sort out the accounts and have them audited was discussed and it was agreed this would be done by the temporary clerk.

**2284 County Councillor's update**

A report from CCllr Pattison was issued with the papers for the meeting and is on the Parish Council website. It was verbally reported by the CCllr that the Petitions Committee would be considering the Craster petition at its meeting on the 21<sup>st</sup> June and that she and the portfolio holder had been invited to attend.

**2285 Report on gutters, drainage & pavements**

Cllr Brooks reported on a site visit to Craster by Mitch Young of Northumberland County Council (NCC), accompanied by CCllr Pattison. The condition of the grass-crete by the church was examined and concern noted about the large hole at the western edge. This could be filled with chippings as a temporary measure and it was agreed that this should be done as there is a safety issue with the hole. The space between the grass-crete and the wall has become overgrown and it would probably be best if this could be tarmaced. The kerbs on the footpath from the bottom of Tower Bank to the village were examined and it was noted that there are pieces missing. Cllr Brooks is trying to find replacements which could be fitted by NCC.

The Council decided that Cllr Brooks is to follow up these points with Mitch Young.

Cllr Brooks reported that there is ivy on the wall on Tower Bank and that this is causing an obstruction to road users and it was agreed she should approach Mr Curry, the farmer of the land, to see if it could be cleared. The hedge and trees to the west of the Arch on the north side are encroaching onto the road and Cllr Owen agreed to approach the Cottage Inn to see if these could be cut back.

**2286 Planning Matters**

- a. **17/00875/FUL - Land North East Of Dunstan Hall Dunstan Village Dunstan Northumberland - Construction of new dwelling house.**

The NCC web site shows that a decision has been made, but the report could not be accessed as the NCC Website is down, so this will be held over to the next meeting.

- b. **17/00881/COU - Former Methodist Chapel Row Craster NE66 3TU - Demolition of existing pigeon shed, erection of single storey double garage with garden store, associated landscaping works & change of use of allotment land to residential curtilage.** This application has been approved.

**2287 Parish Meeting**

It was considered that the annual Parish Meeting held on 24<sup>th</sup> May was well attended with a comfortable atmosphere which was helped by a non-councillor being in the chair. There was general agreement that the new practice of holding the annual Parish Meeting separate from the Annual Parish Council Meeting should be continued and that there should be at least two other Parish Meets in the year.

**2288 Petition on a Fair Deal for Craster and its visitors**

The NCC Officers' report for the Petition Committee had been circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting. It was considered that it was a positive response which should lead to some improvements in the present position. It was agreed that a response to the report should be sent to the Petition Committee members prior to the meeting. This response should be moderate, not passionate and should clarify that the request made in the petition was not for the Parish Council to retain the levy as indicated in the report, but that the money be spent by the County Council on Craster related projects. The meeting considered that this is in line with the current policy as defined in the report: it is asking for an extension of the existing principle, not a new principle. Cllr Owen is to prepare a draft response and circulate it to all Councillors. A press release may be sent after the meeting, but not before.

**2289 Tourist Information Centre**

CCllr Pattison is to obtain the present position with respect to the Craster TIC. The Parish Council appreciates that the new administration still has to develop policies in this regard.

**2290 Update on Local Transport Plan Priorities 2016 / 2017**

CCllr Pattison is to obtain the present position with respect to the LTPs.

CCllr Pattison informed the meeting that the NCC Traffic Officers considered it inappropriate for there to be a 30 mph limit on the Bogue Road as it was in a rural, not urban, situation. She offered to ask Neil Snowdon, an NCC Officer, to attend the next Parish Council meeting to discuss the proposal for new speed limits. The Parish Council accepted this offer and asked that the draft proposal should be provided a week before the meeting so the whole community could be consulted.

**2291 Constant standing water at the bottom of the pasture field**

Cllr Cummins reported that stepping stones have been placed at the area of poor drainage and he has agreed to monitor the success of this solution.

**2292 EJBC (Embleton Joint Burial Committee)**

Nothing to report

**2293 Craster Community Trust (CCT)**

- **Return cheque update**

The supplier of the proposed shed has been contacted and asked for a refund by the CCT. When this is received it will be passed to the Parish Council by the CCT.

- **CCT website and new e-mail system**

Nothing to report

- **PC representative**

Cllr Peason, who is a trustee of the CCT, agreed to report back on the activities of the Trust the next meeting for and that at this point no representative Parish Council would be appointed to the Trust.

**2294 AONB (Northumberland Coastal Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty)**

Nothing to report

**2295 Fixed asset maintenance**

Nothing to report

**2296 Tourist Amenities and Grant Funding**

- **Leader Grant Application**

It was reported that the Leader Grant Application to create a Craster Trail had been approved for progression to the second stage.

This involved obtaining three quotations for each element of the project and submitting them with recommendations as to which suppliers are to be used. John Gallon and Michael Craster who worked on the initial stage with Cllr Owen have agreed to help with the second phase which has to be submitted by the end of July. Cllr Green agreed to join the Task Force to look at the legal aspects of the agreements with the landowners and the Environmental Agency.

CCllr Pattison congratulated the Parish Council on its submission and indicated that few applications are approved and that a strong case must have been made.

**2297 Car Parking**

Cllr Cummins left the meeting while the Council considered a written request from him for a dispensation to talk about the car park he is operating on the Turn Field. It was unanimously agreed that the Council would allow Cllr Cummins to address the meeting and answer questions, but not to participate in any debate or vote on any matter relating to car parking.

Proposer Cllr Smith                      Seconder Cllr Fettis

Cllr Cummins returned to the meeting and outlined his business plan for the car park. The plan was issued with the Agenda for this meeting. He indicated that he was not intending to keep any records of the days on which the car park operated and did not intend to restrict its activities to 28 days.

Cllr Smith asked about the use of the car park on Life Boat Day and the day of the Church Fete and Cllr Cummins advised that if the car park was manned by volunteers on those days then the respective organisations could retain all of the proceeds.

Cllr Smith expressed concerns about insurance if the 28 days were exceeded, and Cllr Cummins indicated that he considered he was

adequately covered.

Cllr Brooks asked about the duration of the concession and Cllr Cummins indicated it was until October of this year only.

Cllr Pearson expressed concerns about the safety of the entrance being on a bend with heavy traffic.

Cllr Smith pointed out that Cllr Cummins' plans did not seem to comply with the "Seven Principles of Public Life".

Cllr Cummins and the public left the meeting and after much discussion the Council decided to inform Cllr Cummins that it had noted and recorded his plans, but it expected him, as a Parish Councillor, to ensure he complied with the law.

Proposed Cllr Smith Seconded Cllr Fettis

Cllr Cummins returned to the meeting and was informed of this decision.

**2298 Transparency Fund**

**a. Parish Council Website**

John Gallon, the previous Vice Chair, has agreed to continue to maintain the Parish Council Website until it can be handed over to the clerk. The meeting expressed their thanks for this.

**b. Purchase of Scanner using Transparency Grant**

Nothing to report

**c. Internet Connection in the Memorial Hall**

Nothing to report

**2299 Financial matters.**

**a. Current Account Balance**

**b. Spent & Received**

**c. Clerk/HMRC wages & expenses**

**d. Cheques required**

In the absence of a clerk there was nothing to report and it was decided to leave these matters over until the temporary clerk could deal with them.

**2300 Correspondence received**

In the absence of the clerk there was nothing to report.

**2301 Items for Next Agenda**

None were proposed.

**2302 Information Share**

Cllr Cummins advised that the AGM of the CCT was to be held on 13<sup>th</sup> July and the Council had been asked to make a presentation on the work of the council.

Cllr Owen advised that he had informed the CCT that he would make the presentation.

**2303 Date and Time of Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Council is to be held at 7.15pm on 20<sup>th</sup> July 2017.

Open to Public & Press