

**MEETING OF CRASTER PARISH COUNCIL**  
**Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> April 2018 – 7.00pm in the Craster Memorial Hall**

**Agenda**

The Parish Council may, by resolution under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960; S1, exclude the public from a meeting (whether during the whole or part of the proceedings) whenever publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted or for other special reasons stated in the resolution and arising from the nature of that business or of the proceedings; and where such a resolution is passed, this Act shall not require the meeting to be open to the public during proceedings to which the resolution applies.

THE MEETING WILL OPEN WITH PUBLIC QUESTIONS

**2361 Declaration of interests**

**2362 Apologies for absence**

**2363 Confirmation of the Minutes for the Meeting of 21<sup>st</sup> March 2018**

**2364 Matters Arising**

Financials – Council received transparency fund of £1,859.45 on 8<sup>th</sup> March.

**2365 Presentation by NCC Conservation Officer** – Councillors are asked to consider the information provided by the Officer and take a formal vote on whether or not the Council wish to pursue creating a Conservation Area for Craster.

**2366 Financial matters**

a. **Bank Balance** – £17,510.99 at 10/03/2018

b. **Received since 21/03/2018**

£39.00 received from NCC due to Cemetery double charging.

c. **Spent since 21/03/2018**

Clerk wages & expenses (Feb-March 2018) - £216.00

PAYE (Feb-March 2018) £54.00

KW Purvis - £2,862.00 – payment made as part of LEADER project

d. **Cheques required**

Clerk wages & expenses (March-April 2018) - £240.00

PAYE (March-April 2018) £60.00

NCC - £177.71 – payment of Parish Council

Insurance for 2017-2018

**2367 County Councillor's report - circulated** Questions to the CC

**2368 CCT Playground equipment** – verbal update from Clerk on payment of playground equipment for CCT project.

**2369 EJBC (Embleton Joint Burial Committee)** Verbal update to be provided from EJBC representative.

**2370 Planning Matters**

**18/00520/FUL** | Erection of two dwelling houses with underground garages. | Land To North Of Heugh View

Dunstan Village Dunstan Northumberland – Current position.

- 2371 Northumberland County Council notice of road closure** – update on road closure in Craster and future NCC advertising of such works.
- 2372 Registering of Village Assets** – report by Cllr Ann Fettis on the listing of village assets.
- 2373 Noticeboards – Risk management** – report from Cllr Bryn Owen on managing keys and access to noticeboards.
- 2374 LEADER Grant update** – verbal update from Clerk on ongoing works and submission of LEADER grant claim form.
- 2375 Litter bins** – report from Cllr Martin Smith on the condition of the bins in the Parish and the cost for renewal.
- 2376 Advertising of casual vacancies** – report from Clerk on the current status of the casual vacancies and any interested applications to date.
- 2377 Transparency Fund update** – update on Transparency Fund application and Facebook page for CPC.
- 2378 Craster Community Trust** – report from Cllr Ann Fettis on CCT and change of Hall charge policy.
- 2379 Adoption of Equality and Diversity policy** – report from Cllr Rosie Robson. The Council are asked to consider whether to adopt the provided equality and diversity policy.
- 2380 Tendor for the cutting of the grass verges** – query received from current provider of grass cutting services. Cllr Martin Smith to provide an update on this.
- 2381 Signs for the Parish – verbal report from Cllr Martin Smith to be provided.**
- 2382 Correspondence received**  
Correspondence received from NCC over cemetery double charging issue. Amount of £39.00 has been repaid to the Parish Council.  
Correspondence received from local resident who lives just opposite the Jolly Fisherman about water coming on to his property. NCC looking into this for the resident.  
Correspondence received from Ms Judy Hargreaves thanking the Parish Council for all of their hard work on the Craster Trail project.
- 2383 Parish Council Administration** – update from Parish Clerk on new General Data Protection Regulations.
- 2384 Agenda Items for Annual meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> May** – Councillors are asked to consider which items they'd like to see on the Agenda of the Full Annual Parish meeting on May 9<sup>th</sup>.
- 2385 Items for Next Agenda**
- 2386 Date and Time of Next Meeting**  
The next meeting of the Council is to be held at 7.00pm on 17th May 2018.

**Open to Public & Press**

**MINUTES OF MEETING OF CRASTER PARISH COUNCIL**  
**Wednesday 21st March 2018**

**Councillors Present Chair:**

Ann Fettis

**Parish Council members:** Margaret Brooks, Elizabeth Pearson, Martin Smith, Henry Cummins and Rosie Robson. **In Attendance:** 14 members of the public

**Clerk:** Adam Shanley

In opening the meeting, the Clerk advised members of the public that this meeting was an adjourned meeting from the meeting which was due to take place on Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> March but which was subsequently cancelled owing to a power cut across the Parish. The Clerk did advise that, whilst the meeting was an adjourned meeting, the Parish Council would be following the same Agenda as for the 15<sup>th</sup> March meeting.

**Questions from members of the public:** one question was raised by a member of the public about the leaflet drop which the Parish Council organises to each house in the Parish to notify them of the date and time of the Parish Council meetings. Unfortunately, the member of the public did not receive the most recent leaflet where other residents did. The Parishioner asked why this was the case. Cllr Ann Fettis apologised to the member of the public that his property had been missed but did state that the leaflet drop was over and above the statutory requirements of the Parish Council to advertise meetings and this was something which the Parish Council did as an extra push to engage with the public and encourage attendance at meetings. Cllr Fettis did advise that more care would be taken in future should another leaflet drop take place to ensure all residents received notification.

Another query was raised by the same member of the public about another leaflet that had been delivered to one part of the Parish but not to his household again. The Parishioner acknowledged that the Clerk had written to his wife advising that this was actually something organised by County Councillor Wendy Pattison and was in fact nothing to do with the County Council. The Parishioner also asked if the Parish Council could look urgently at the state of the bins in the Parish, advising that his wife had carried out an audit of the condition of the bins and had passed this on to the Parish Council. The Chair advised that this issue was very much on the Council's radar and was an item under discussion for this meeting. Cllr Martin Smith had carried out an audit into the condition of the bins and the bus shelters and would be looking at costs for repairing these and would report back to the Council on this.

Another query was raised from another member of the public in relation to planning application 18/00520/FUL, asking if the Council would be reconsidering their response to the application given the material change made to the original application. The Clerk advised that he would check the status of this application as had not received notification of a material change to the application. The Clerk advised that if no material change had been made to the application, the Council would not be able to amend their response.

**2361 Declaration of interests**

None declared

### **2362 Apologies for absence**

Apologies were received from Cllrs Bryn Owen and Mark Green as well as County Councillor Wendy Pattison.

### **2363 Confirmation of the Minutes for the Meeting of 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2018**

The Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2018 were unanimously accepted as an accurate record by all Councillors present, however a member of the public asked for an amendment to the Minutes in relation to discussions which took place around planning application 18/00520/FUL at the February meeting. The Clerk asked for the member of the public to write to him with the requested amends and promised that this would be reflected in the Minutes.

### **2364 Matters Arising**

The Clerk did advise that the Chair was obligated to sign her acceptance of office form following her election as Chair at the February meeting. This Cllr Fettis did at the meeting. The Clerk also advised that he had received further clarification from NCC following February's meeting in relation to the cost of a potential by-election to the Parish. NCC had confirmed that should both vacancies be contested at an election, the cost to the Parish Council would be approximately £2,000.

### **2365 Presentation by Mr Gordon Allan re: Being Active Matters.**

The Chair did advise that although the meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> February had to be adjourned, the Council did hear a presentation from Mr Gordon Allan about the new Being Active Matters scheme he was leading on. The purpose of the scheme is to improve mental health wellbeing and Craster is one of the target areas for the scheme. Cllr Ann Fettis thanked Mr Allan for attending the meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> March and said that he gave a very interesting presentation and the cause was very worthwhile indeed.

### **2366 Advertising of Casual Vacancies**

The Clerk provided an update to the Council on the advertising of the two casual vacancies which have come about on the Parish Council. To date, no 10 electors had written to the elections office at NCC requesting a by-election in the Parish for the vacancies and therefore the Council was asked to consider co-opting an interested member of the Parish. The Clerk advised that the Council would advertise the two vacancies and any interested parties would need to write directly to the Clerk within 21 days of the notices appearing. If more members of the public came forward to stand for the Parish Council than there were vacancies, the Clerk advised that the Council would therefore be obligated to elect their preferred members to the Parish Council themselves.

### **2367 Financial Matters**

a. **Bank Balance** – £17,510.99 at 10/03/2018

b. **Received since** 18/01/2018

None

c. **Spent since** 22/02/2018

Clerk wages & expenses (Jan-Feb 2018) - £240.00

PAYE (Jan-Feb 2018) £60.00

Craster Community Trust - £40.00 for the hire of the hall

d. Cheques required

Clerk wages & expenses (Feb-March 2018) - £216.00

PAYE (Feb-March 2018) £54.00

KW Purvis - £2,862.00 – amount due for works on LEADER project.

### **2368 County Councillor report**

The Clerk advised that this report had been circulated to members of the Parish Council ahead of the meeting and any queries relating to the report should be directed to County Councillor Wendy Pattison in her absence.

### **2369 Feedback from County Councillor Pattison's Joint Parish Chair meeting on 9th March**

Cllr Ann Fettis, who attended the meeting as Chair, along with Cllr Bryn Owen, provided a written report to the Council on this meeting. This was the second meeting of Wendy's 9 Parishes held at Thrunton Trout Fishery and was an informal get together of Parish chairs to provide an opportunity to network and share issues / ideas and good practice.

Graham Bucknall, NCC Head of Highways and Bob Hodgson Head of Neighbourhood Services also attended and both provided an overview of their respective responsibilities and areas of expertise. Graham provided some hard copy info regarding Highway Maintenance, area maps etc..Cllr Fettis advised that this provides a useful overview of services within Graham's area and helpful info regarding how to report potholes and areas of the highway which need attention. Good to be used as reference document. Cllr Fettis advised that this was a lively and interactive discussion which she personally found really useful and interesting and both were very honest and open in their responses leaving no doubt it's a daily struggle to meet the demand of keeping our Highways and services up to standard (or not if resources don't allow).

Cllr Fettis advised that the rest of the evening was spent chatting about issues in the 9 Parishes and sharing experiences on various subjects from how we coped with the recent bad weather to planning concerns and ended with a lively debate on the advantages and disadvantages of a Parish Council Facebook page.

### **2370 Erection of a Communication Mast by Arquiva**

Cllr Ann Fettis advised that Arquiva, a British telecommunications company which provides infrastructure and broadcast transmission facilities in the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland, had submitted an application to erect a communication mast as part of a national Government rollout of smart meters.

Cllr Fettis advised that she had spoken to Damian Hosker who is the named contact for this application and asked if the mast could be used for mobile phones as well as Smart Meters. He advised this was not possible as this roll out is specifically for meters.

Report on the planning portal details the various other sites considered to position the mast in Craster and states the reasons why they were found to be unsuitable.

Cllr Fettis advised that if residents do object to the mast, the best that could be considered would be to lower it however the engineer will have positioned it to ensure the strongest signal is achieved therefore it would be counterproductive to reduce the height. Cllr Fettis advised The AONB have been consulted and Embleton's mast is already in place. There were some questions about the possible alternatives to the site of the mast and the Clerk did advise that he would write directly to Arquiva to ask about possible other sites that may have been considered.

### **2371 Embleton Joint Burial Committee (EJBC)**

In Cllr Owen's absence, Cllr Elizabeth Pearson provided a verbal update on recent events on the EJBC. Cllr Pearson advised that the Committee were still awaiting receipt of their grant from CAN (Community Action Northumberland) to renovate the cemetery house. Cllr Pearson stated that she was hopeful that this would be paid soon and would keep the Council posted on this.

Cllr Pearson also advised that the committee had selected their cemetery contractor to carry out the grass cutting and that a member of the Parish had donated a seat for the cemetery too.

### **2372 Planning matters.**

**18/00100/FUL** - Construction of a two storey side extension with balcony to first floor and alterations to windows | 39 Dunstanburgh Road Craster NE66 3TT – the Clerk reported that this application had been permitted.

**18/00520/FUL** - Erection of two dwelling houses with underground garages. | Land To North Of Heugh View Dunstan Village Dunstan Northumberland. Though a discussion about this application came up in public question time and this was discussed at length with local residents, the Clerk reported that this application was still pending a decision.

### **2373 Northumberland Local Plan and “Call for Sites”**

Cllr Ann Fettis provided a report to Full Council on this issue. She advised that Northumberland County Council was preparing a new Local Plan for the County, covering the period 2016 to 2036. The Plan would allocate a range of sites for development to meet the requirements for future growth.

To support this work, the County Council was inviting landowners, developers, agents, local residents and other interested parties to submit for consideration details of sites that you think may have potential for future development. Site(s) that may be appropriate for allocation of land-uses will be considered:

Anyone wishing to put sites forward, would need to complete a separate form for each site that you wish to put forward for consideration.

The Clerk advised that an OS-scaled site map clearly showing the location and boundaries of the site being proposed must be submitted with each completed form.

The Clerk did advise those present that whilst the deadline for submissions was the 12th March 2018, any sites submitted after this date would also be considered

The Council were asked to consider which sites they may wish to put forward for potential development, however there was some concern expressed from members of the public present about encroachment on to their existing land and the rights of landowners.

### **2374 Bins and Bus Shelter Maintenance**

The Chair thanked both Cllr Smith and Mrs Marion Gallon for the work they had done to ensure an informed decision by the Council. The Council considered the audits carried out along with supplementary evidence of where the bins needed to be repaired or replaced. It was agreed that Cllr Smith should investigate the costs for this work and report back to the next Council meeting.

### **2375 Review of Standing Orders**

Cllrs Smith, Robson and Fettis reported back on their review of the standing orders and it was agreed that the final amends would be formally adopted at the next Full Parish Council meeting.

### **2376 LEADER grant update**

The Clerk advised that the submission date for the LEADER grant had to be postponed until mid-April following delays with contractors and other criteria as part of LEADER's requirements.

It was agreed that both Cllrs Robson and Smith would meet to decide on the location of the signs. The point was also raised that, as a stage 2 of the project, work should also be carried out to get rid of existing redundant signs from the harbour. The Clerk advised that this would take quite some time to achieve with the need to involve both residents and the highways department of NCC.

It was also agreed that Cllr Robson would approach the commercial outlets (Mick Oxley, Jolly, Shoreline, Smokehouse, Seafood Restaurant, Cottage, Stable yard) who will be advertised on the map and who have all agreed to pay the £100 for each insert and this is necessary to keep the project within the sum approved by the Council.

The Clerk also advised that he was continuing to chase the lease from the solicitor and the confirmation of a Right of Way from NCC.

### **2377 Snow plough for the Parish**

The Clerk advised that he had carried out some investigation following the recent weather conditions caused by the "Beast from the East" re: snow clearance in Northumberland and had been advised that the County Council has, following a competitive procurement exercise several years ago, entered into contractual arrangements with a large number of agricultural and plant operators to undertake specific activities to help supplement our own winter services teams. These contractors are managed by the Council and called in to support our winter service activities based on our assessment of weather forecasts and priorities and these arrangements proved invaluable during the recent 'Beast from the East' severe weather event. The Clerk reported that it is intended that these contractual arrangements will be refreshed in the spring of 2019 through a tendering exercise and new arrangements in place for the 2019/20 winter period.

During the recent severe weather a lot of farmers undertook snow clearance activity from local roads around their farms as a 'self-help' activity and in support of their neighbours and local community. This voluntary activity was much appreciated by the Council and local communities and highlights the great community spirit that exists in Northumberland.

### **2378 NEED Ltd minibus service**

The Clerk reminded the Parish Council that, on 6th February this year, NEED Ltd and Northumberland County Council approved a pilot scheme running a mini-bus service taking people to Alnwick for shopping and back to their homes.

The scheme was originally due to run for four weeks each Friday commencing on Friday 16.02.18 and taking in the Craster Parish.

The Clerk reported that correspondence has been received from Cllr Adrian Hinchcliffe to advise that the Pilot has been extended. At present, it is not clear for how long this has been extended however, Adrian is intending to update us on this ASAP.

Friday 9th March was the best of the Pilot weeks with four people from Boulmer on the bus. So far, there have been no takers from Longhoughton, Howick or Craster.

The Council were asked to consider this report and to consider how to encourage usage of this scheme from the Parish and the best way to publicise this in light of the Pilot extension.

### **2379 Transparency Fund update**

The Clerk reported that Cllr Mark Green's submission for Transparency Grant funding had been successful and funds were paid to the Council accordingly. In Cllr Green's absence, the Council decided to defer any updates to the next meeting.

### **2380 Craster Community Trust**

The Chair, also currently our representative on the Community Trust, reported that the meeting of the Community Trust had been cancelled due to severe weather conditions and that there would be a further report to the next Full Parish Council meeting.

### **2381 Consideration of CCT and HR representatives for the Parish Council**

Following the election of Cllr Fettis as Chair of the Parish Council, it was felt that other Councillors should be invited to pick up the work involved in the roles of CCT rep and the HR rep for the Council.

It was agreed that Cllr Rosie Robson would become the Parish Council's CCT representative and that Cllr Henry Cummins would take on the role of the Council's HR representative.

### **2382 Community Governance Review**

The Clerk reported that correspondence had been received from Northumberland County Council in relation to a Community Governance review. Longhoughton Parish Council has requested that a community governance review be carried out with a view to amending the boundary between their Parish and that of Craster.

The Clerk advised that the consultation process will get under way on 15 March 2018 and residents of Longhoughton and Craster Parishes will have the opportunity to make their views known. The occupiers of the properties directly affected by the proposal will be contacted individually. NCC also provided some posters and it was agreed that the Council should put these up in the noticeboards around the Parish.

### **2383 Correspondence received**

Correspondence received from Marion Gallon as to the state of the bins. Marion asked if the Parish Council could urgently look into replacing these.

Correspondence received from Sharon Spurling, CEO of Carers Northumberland to raise awareness and identify unpaid carers in the Community. Report circulated.

Correspondence received from Cllr Wendy Pattison asking the Council to consider inviting the Conservation Officer along to the next Parish Council meeting for a presentation and vote on this – it was agreed that the Clerk should invite the Conservation Officer along to the next Parish Council meeting.

### **2384 Parish Council Administration**

An update was provided from the Parish Clerk on new General Data Protection Regulations. The Clerk reported that the national NALC have produced a toolkit for Local Councils to assist with implementing the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR), which come into effect from 25th May 2018.

The toolkit is available on the Members area of the national NALC's website but has also been circulated to Councillors.

Northumberland NALC are arranging some workshops in the near future to assist local Councils with the implementation of these new procedures.

There is a need for all public authorities to have an independent data protection officer (DPO).

The national NALC and others are lobbying hard to try to ensure that the Data Protection Bill going through Parliament adopts a proportionate approach to this issue.

Although the toolkit casts some doubt on whether a clerk can also be the DPO, this reflected the position earlier this month. The Govt have indicated sympathy for the position of Local Councils and there is some optimism that the Bill will be amended to allow clerks (or some of them) to be the DPO.

Because of this uncertainty around the DPO, NALC has suggested that Councils do not appointment a DPO at this stage.

The other work in the toolkit should be commenced, especially the data audit.

The Clerk reported that there will be more information available in the near future, especially as the Information Commissioner's Office have promised to provide guidance for our sector.

### **2385 Date and time of Annual Parish Meeting**

It was decided that the Annual Parish Meeting should be held at the Memorial Hall at 18:30pm on Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> May. The Clerk advised that he would book the Hall for this date and time.

### **2386 Items for next Agenda**

The Clerk asked that Cllrs put in their requests for Agenda items and provide all necessary reports to go with each item as promptly as possible to ensure a timely publication of the Agenda.

### **2412 Date and Time of Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Council is to be held at 7.00pm on 19<sup>th</sup> April 2018.

**Open to Public & Press**

|  |  |                                 |  |                   |
|--|--|---------------------------------|--|-------------------|
| <b>Craster Parish Council - Financial Position @ 15th April 2018</b> |  |                                 |  |                   |
|  |  |                                 |  |                   |
| <b>RECEIPTS</b>  |  |                                 |  | <b>This Year</b>  |
|  |  | <b>Precept</b>                  |  | £0.00             |
|  |  | <b>Bank/VAT</b>                 |  | £0.00             |
|  |  | <b>Refunds</b>                  |  | £39.00            |
|  |  | <b>Misc</b>                     |  | £0.00             |
|  |  |                                 |  |                   |
|  |  |                                 |  |                   |
|  |  | <b>TOTAL RECEIPTS</b>           |  | <b>£ 39.00</b>    |
|  |  |                                 |  |                   |
|  |  |                                 |  |                   |
| <b>PAYMENTS</b>  |  |                                 |  |                   |
|  |  |                                 |  | <b>This Year</b>  |
|  |  | <b>Salary</b>                   |  | £0.00             |
|  |  | <b>HMRC</b>                     |  | £0.00             |
|  |  | <b>Grants/ Donations</b>        |  | £0.00             |
|  |  | <b>Travel</b>                   |  | £0.00             |
|  |  | <b>Postage Etc</b>              |  | £0.00             |
|  |  | <b>Burial Cmttee</b>            |  | £0.00             |
|  |  | <b>Admin</b>                    |  | £0.00             |
|  |  | <b>Misc</b>                     |  | £0.00             |
|  |  | <b>VAT</b>                      |  | £0.00             |
|  |  | <b>Bank</b>                     |  | £0.00             |
|  |  | <b>TOTAL PAYMENTS</b>           |  | £0.00             |
|  |  |                                 |  |                   |
|  |  | Increase/Decrease in Funds      |  | <b>£39.00</b>     |
|  |  |                                 |  |                   |
|  |  |                                 |  |                   |
| 9,921.61   |  | Funds at start of the year      |  | £16,240.44        |
|  |  | <b>Funds at end of the year</b> |  | <b>£16,279.44</b> |

# COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORT

**County Councillor wendy pattison**

[wendy.pattison@northumberland.gov.uk](mailto:wendy.pattison@northumberland.gov.uk) – Tel. 07779 983072



## **Craster Parish**

**Pavements at Heugh Wynd** – The pavements have now been renewed and repaired and residents should find it much easier to negotiate paths and enjoy their environment without having to step over cracked paving and broken kerb stones.

**Roadworks in Craster** – Roadworks will take place to repair the road near the bus shelter in Heugh Wynd and also road repairs in the vicinity of the Jolly Fisherman /Robsons Kipper Factory areas on the main street. This work will take place from April 16<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup>. Residents will have single lane access and Emergency vehicles access at all times. It is hoped if the weather is good, this work may only take 2 days to complete.

## **Northumberland Local Plan – Spring 2018 Consultation**

NCC is preparing a new county-wide Local Plan. To inform the draft Local Plan the Council is inviting views on your preferred locations for housing and employment development and the key planning issues the Plan should consider. The timetable for the preparation of the Plan is set out in the published Local Development Plan.

The consultation will run from 28<sup>th</sup> March – 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2018 and is taking the form of an online spatial survey using an interactive map. You will be asked to mark on it where you feel are the most appropriate places are for housing and employment. <http://bit.ly/NCC-LP-Spatial-Survey>

**9 Parish Council Chairman's Meeting** – On Friday, March 9<sup>th</sup>, Cllr Ann Fettis Chairman of Craster Parish Council met with the other 6 Chairmen of Parish Councils who make up the 9 Parishes in the Longhoughton Ward (Ellingham and Eglington PC were not represented). This was an excellent meeting and Councillors were able to put forward their points and views to the Head of Highways (North) Graham Bucknall and Head of Neighbourhood Services, Bob Hodgson. Councillors also agreed to work more closely together and exchange relevant information between parishes.

**Damage to Roads and Potholes** - This winter has been very hard on our roads and pavements as you know. The combination of wet weather and frosts resulting in repeated freeze/thaw cycles during November to December has created a much larger than normal increase in potholes and road damage this winter, with over 40% more potholes being reported by January 2018 than at the same time last year.

We acted quickly to address this and in early February took the decision to use £420,000 from our Council contingencies which, together with £930,000 of Government money, enabled us to increase our efforts to help deal with the problem.

However, the 'Beast from the East' snow events in Feb/March hit Northumberland particularly hard, have created even more damage and will cost much more to deal with. Already we know the number of pothole reports in February has increased by 75% compared to the

same month in the previous year, and we expect that many more reports will come in over the next few months.

We are therefore looking at options for funding as are the many other Councils throughout Britain who have similar difficulties.

The current situation is not surprisingly causing annoyance to many of our residents and some are expressing their frustration to many of us members.

So this note is just to explain where we are. Our staff are working flat out and we have also brought in some external contractors to boost our capacity further. However, whilst I would still encourage members to report pothole repairs, I would also ask that you be patient and allow staff to deal with the requests and schedule the repairs without pressing them for urgent action, as they simply can't deal immediately with problems everywhere. There will inevitably mean unwelcome delays in addressing your requests and some repairs falling outside of our standard response times.

## New initiative will bring more empty homes into use



Homeowners or landlords seeking to carry out major works to a property are now being offered a council tax discount from Northumberland County Council.

From April 1st, anyone who is undertaking major refurbishment work or structural alterations to a property could now receive a council tax discount for up to 12 months. For a Band D property this would be a saving of up to £1,743.96.

The discount will act as an incentive to property developers to take on major works and bring more empty homes back into use.

The amendment to the policy follows feedback from landlords and property developers, who were often discouraged from buying empty, derelict properties due to the financial pressures they faced.

Cllr John Riddle, cabinet member for housing at the council, said: "Our aspiration as a council is to not only have more rentable accommodation in the county but also to raise the standard of that accommodation.

"This discount will act as an incentive to landlords and people planning major work on their property, who can be safe in the knowledge that they have up to a year where they will not have to pay council tax.

"We have spoken with a number of landlords who have explained the constraints and pressures they faced previously. We have listened and made the change, and we now hope that this will encourage more people to take on major refurbishment plans and help to improve our towns and villages."

For more information on the policy or to find out if your scheme falls into this category please contact NCC on (01670) 624884 or go to [www.northumberland.gov.uk](http://www.northumberland.gov.uk)

**Northumbria in Bloom** - Northumbria in Bloom began in 1964 as one of the founder regions of the [national Britain in Bloom](#) competition. The Northumbria region is the area from Berwick in the north to Cleveland in the south and Greenhead in the west.

The purpose of the competition was, and still is, to bring cheer to the country through community gardening.

The judges, all volunteers, come from a variety of horticultural backgrounds. Northumbria in Bloom is a registered charity, administered by a board of trustees. More than 1,600 groups across the country participate each year focusing on community action to transform spaces. Anybody can register a local group and get stuck in straight away. Once you have registered Northumbria in Bloom will send you support and advice to help get you started.

The three areas to be judged in the main competition are:

- horticulture (assessing standards of gardening knowledge, skills and practice across the entire entry) – 40%;
- environment (assessing standards of care, maintenance and improvement of the local environment across the entire entry) – 30%;
- community (assessing level of engagement of local people and ongoing sustainability of the local campaign across the entire entry) – 30%.

### **How to Enter the Main Competition**

If you would like to enter into the NiB Main Competition, please check the [Information for Entrants](#), and then complete and send [in an entry form](#). All information is available on the Northumbria in Bloom website.

## **Proposed National Salmon and Sea Trout Protection Byelaws**

The Environment Agency is proposing new measures to protect salmon stocks across England and in the Border Esk, which are currently among the lowest on record. The 2015 national salmon stock assessment indicated that salmon stocks in many rivers across England had failed to meet their minimum safe levels. The 2016 assessment showed this trend continued and the new measures proposed are based on this assessment. The proposals come after an initial EA consultation last year to understand how the better management of salmon fishing in England and the Border Esk can reduce the impact on salmon numbers. The responses to that consultation helped inform these proposals and build an understanding of the likely impacts for managing salmon fishing in the future. The Environment Agency is now proposing the following measures to protect salmon stocks in England Fisheries and on the Border Esk:

1. Stop the taking of salmon from the majority of net fisheries by 2019.
2. For rivers with the lowest salmon stocks, a mandatory requirement to return all salmon caught. This reflects the need for both net and rod fishermen to help protect Salmon stocks.
3. Voluntary catch and release targets for all other rivers.
4. Restriction on the number, size and type of hooks that can be used when fishing.

The above proposals will affect local fishermen and impact on their livelihood.

## **Northumbria Police**

With lighter nights approaching officers are taking action to tackle changing crime trends. As the clocks go forward, lighter nights and warmer weather historically sees a rise in anti-social behaviour, thefts and burglaries. Northumbria Police are reassuring the communities they serve that officers are getting ready to tackle the changing crime patterns and continue to keep people and property safe. Officers across the Force will be carrying out initiatives and operations to prevent these types of crimes and ensure those caught committing offences are brought before the courts. Chief Superintendent Janice Hutton said: "Neighbourhood Teams across the force have launched a number of operations to ensure residents have the correct crime prevention advice and proactively target those suspected of being involved in such crimes. With the lighter nights and warmer weather it's a timely reminder to be vigilant. "I want to reassure the public that officers and staff are working hard to investigate crimes and proactively target criminals." Chief Superintendent Hutton added: "As the nights get lighter, criminals look to take advantage of people enjoying the weather. Thieves will target open doors, windows, sheds and garages, hoping for a quick and easy steal. Our advice is to not leave valuables on show and if you're in the back garden, make sure doors and windows are locked. Don't become an easy target." Operations are planned across all three of Northumbria Police's Area Commands. Officers will be working closely with partner organisations, local authorities and communities to help prevent crimes and address any concerns. Residents are also urged to continue to report suspicious activity by contacting police on 101 or Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111. For further crime prevention advice, visit the Northumbria Police website: <https://www.northumbria.police.uk/advinfo>

## Playground Equipment

Approval was given on 25 January 2018 for the grant for the safety surface. There was a follow up meeting on 15 March 2018 to give guidance on the claim process. The details as to what this means are as follows

### **Finance** (Inclusive of VAT)

|                                   |             |
|-----------------------------------|-------------|
| Total Cost of project to CCT      | £15 816.00  |
| Leader Grant                      | £13 262.40  |
| CCT contribution after grant      | £ 2 553.60  |
| <br>                              |             |
| Cost of project to Parish Council | £. 6 000.00 |

This leaves the CCT with the following funding for the playground after the safety surface is paid for

|                                       |                     |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------|
| Restricted Funds for playground       | £14 205.44          |
| Less CCT contribution to surface      | £ 2 553.60          |
| Remaining in restricted fund          | £11 651.84          |
| Cost of repairs to existing equipment | £ 4 700.00 (approx) |

Money left in restricted fund for playground after all work completed will be approximately £6 900

As the work has to be paid for first and then the grant reclaimed, most of the money in the CCT's Building Society account will be used. There will be enough money left in the CCT's other account to keep us solvent until the Leader money is reclaimed. This should take about 30 days after the work is completed.

### **Contractor**

IHL group were the preferred bidder due to cost and location and it was confirmed that this is who we would use. Work scheduled for after Easter school holidays, week commencing 16 April 2016. Workers on site for a week, then further closure for approximately 2 weeks as turf settles in

### **Repairs to existing equipment**

There will be a playground inspection over Easter at which Jackie and Steve will accompany Karen to check what repairs are needed but it is areas that have been identified by ROSPA and the weekly inspections already. The work can not be done until we know the Leader grant money is on its way.

### **Publicity**

We are required to advertise that Leader has given us money so we will look to do a launch with the Gazette invited

**New equipment**

The Parish Council agreed on 16 March 2017 to buy some new equipment to the cost of £1615 excluding VAT. This will be installed at the same time as the repairs to existing equipment

**LEADER Grant**

There are conditions attached for 5 years following installation and for example, we have to demonstrate that there are people using it. Karen has these in hand.

**Craster Community Trust**  
**Update report from meeting 22/03/18**  
**Ann Fettis**

**1. Booking System**

This is now publicised on notice boards for visibility. It was agreed the original paper version didn't lend itself to amendments if dates needed to be moved or cancelled. Jackie will replace with a laminated version which can easily be changed.

**2. Burns Night 2019**

To be held 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday in February

**3. Fund raising tea day**

To be held on Monday 28<sup>th</sup> May (half term week)

**4. Notice Boards**

Now in place and in use. Thanks to Mark Green and Steve Reeves.

**5. Community Assets**

Lively discussion on this topic. Outcome was a request for PC to explore potential for Lifeboat Station and Tourist Information Centre being listed and bring this to May Full Parish meeting for further discussion.

**6. Financial Report**

Jackie provided a detailed walk through of financials.

Current remaining funds £5778.53

**7. Playpark update**

Karen provided an update on next steps to progress Playpark. Work expected to start mid-April and will take approx. 1 week. Playpark will be closed for 3 weeks.

PC contribution - £6000 for safety surface and a further £1615 (excluding VAT) for Vortex Sturdy Play Unit.

**8. Charging Policy**

CCT are revising their charging policy and increasing hourly rate to £12 an hour. Request to PC to review current and future charges. New policy starts 1<sup>st</sup> April. (PC stays as is until discussed at April meeting)

**9. Film Club**

Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> April and Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> April - Paddington 2.

Details re attendance TBC.

**Craster Community Trust (CCT) New Charging Policy**  
**Ann Fettis**

CCT are revising their charging policy and increasing hourly rate to £12 an hour. Request to PC to review current and future charges. New policy starts 1<sup>st</sup> April. (PC stays as is until discussed at April meeting)

Background info to inform decision making provided by Jackie Reeves Treasurer CCT.

## **Community Assets**

### **Ann Fettis**

Craster Community Trust have asked that Parish Council explore the potential of Lifeboat Station and Tourist Information Centre being listed as a Community Asset

It's clear from discussion at last full Parish meeting and recent CCT meeting this is an emotive topic generating mixed feelings and differing levels of understanding about what it means for individuals and the community.

A lively and lengthy discussion at CCT meeting was productive and exposed concerns from some and enthusiasm from others but resulted in an agreement that as a starting point we tentatively look into a couple of buildings which are considered important to our community and to discuss findings at May full Parish meeting.

Attached is a report from GOV.UK site...

### **Community Right to Bid: Non-Statutory advice note for local authorities Part 5 Chapter 3 of the Localism Act 2011 and the Assets of Community Regulations 2012**

Wondering if this could be used to 'Tell the Story' in an attempt to reassure, guide and provide background, advantages and disadvantages with regard to the listing (or not) of what people consider worthy of being considered (or not) as an asset to our collective community.

## LEADER PROJECTS REPORT

| What  | By when | Who                            | Completed | Comments |
|---|---------|--------------------------------|-----------|----------|
| Decide the signage location   |         | Rosie<br>/<br>Martin<br>/ Mark |           |          |
| Agree suggestions with highways and all other interested parties  |         |                                |           |          |
| Remove existing signage as agreed with those concerned  | TBC     |                                |           | Phase 2  |
| Display boards map and associated details to be ready before installation (waiting to see and approve the initial outline)                    |         | Mark                           |           |          |
| The commercial outlets (Mick Oxley, Jolly, Shoreline, Smokehouse, Seafood Restaurant, Cottage, Stable yard) who will be advertised on the map |         | Rosie                          |           |          |

|   |                  |             |            |  |
|---|------------------|-------------|------------|--|
| <p>have all agreed to pay £100 for each insert and this is necessary to keep the project within the sum approved by the Council.</p>  |                  |             |            |  |
| <p>Need to develop and agree the inserts for the tourist locations - Castle, Harbour, Radar Station, Howick Hall, Quarry etc.</p>     |                  |             |            |  |
| <p>History web site to be used as a resource for above and History Group to be approached. Margory indicated she wanted an input.</p> |                  |             |            |  |
| <p>Leader logo to be added to the map also acknowledge contributions made by Lord Howick and the Greys.</p>                           |                  |             |            |  |
| <p>Fence to be erected before the sheep</p>   | <p>Mid March</p> | <p>Adam</p> | <p>Yes</p> | <p>Adam in contact with Fencer to replace barbed</p> |

|   |                             |                        |     |   |
|---|-----------------------------|------------------------|-----|---|
| return to the pasture. (when do the sheep return)   |                             |                        |     | wire with plain wire  |
| <p>Meeting with the footpath officer for agreement to the path on 21/3/2018 at 8.00 am.<br/>(who can attend this meeting)<br/>Lease with Howick Estates. This document should be suitable for Mark to clone a similar one for the Greys. (how far on is this)</p> | 22 <sup>nd</sup> March 2018 | Ann / Bryn<br><br>Adam | Yes | <p>Email to Phil Bradley stating PC requesting NCC to adopt the footpath as a Right of Way. Awaiting decision from Phil and his team.<br/>Adam chasing up for response before April PC meeting.</p> |
| <p>Hold an opening to recognise the contributions made to the project. Rosie's suggestion of an opening on 8/4/18 is optimistic, but a challenge that could be achieved.(need to agree and confirm date and advertise / invite people)</p>                        |                             |                        |     |   |
| Press release to promote Craster Trail  | End of March                | Adam                   | Yes | Press release sent to local press 28 <sup>th</sup> March 2018   |

|  |  |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|--|
|  |  |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|--|

**Report on litter bins for Craster Parish**  
**Martin Smith**

I've received the attached email following my enquiry for coatings for 20+ bins.  
The normal prices are:-

90l £125+£6 for 1 finger curtain=£131 reduced to £126

180l £199+£6=£205 reduced to £186

Plus each pallet has £55 delivery charge.

I recommend we look at either 3 or 6 of the 180l as they come on pallets of 3 and make up the rest in x4 90l bins as they come on pallets of 4, which allows them to give us free delivery  
I haven't got prices for ashtrays stubbing plates etc but we could consider the necessity for these when we discuss where we will locate the bins.