

**ANNUAL MEETING OF CRASTER PARISH**  
**Wednesday 9th May 2018 - 6:30pm in the Craster Memorial Hall**

**MINUTES**

**Councillors Present**

**Chair:** Cllr Ann Fettis

**Parish Council members:** Rosie Robson, Mark Green, Elizabeth Pearson, Margaret Brooks, Martin Smith, Henry Cummins

**In Attendance:** 28 members of the public and NCC Conservation Officer Ian McCaffery

**Clerk:** Adam Shanley

### **1. Chair's address**

Cllr Ann Fettis provided her address to the Parish meeting on behalf of the Parish Council. Cllr Fettis stated that it had been a productive year since the last annual meeting in May. Cllr Fettis advised that the Parish Council continues to provide a value for money service to the community and seeks to represent the community's views on a range of local, traffic and planning matters. Cllr Fettis highlighted that the LEADER project was coming to its closing stages and that this was proving to be a well used path for the community. She also highlighted that the Parish Council continues to support several initiatives locally such as the CCT project to enhance and upgrade the play park and were now looking to replace the bins in the community.

### **2. Confirmation of Minutes of last Parish meeting**

The Minutes of the last Annual Parish meeting were unanimously agreed.

Proposer: Cllr Elizabeth Pearson

Seconder: Cllr Mark Green

### **3. Conservation Area for Craster**

NCC Conservation Officer Ian McCaffery attended the meeting and provided a presentation to the Parish about the implications of the introduction of a Conservation Area. Mr McCaffery explained that a Conservation Area was essentially a control on demolition and that the test of any new development within a Conservation Area would be if the scheme preserved and enhanced the quality of the area. The Clerk advised the meeting that County Councillor Wendy Pattison has offered to fund the introduction of the conservation area for Craster at a cost of £9,000 from her allowances scheme. There was some concern expressed about the impact that the introduction of a Conservation Area would have on local businesses, which have been in existence for many years.

In addition, some expressed the concern that this was perhaps 30 years too late as the area had changed substantially since years gone by.

The Chair advised that the Parish Council had asked for Mr McCaffery to come along to the annual Parish meeting to provide further information on the implication for the community if such a Conservation Area were to be introduced. It was felt that the decision could only be made following receipt of the full facts.

The meeting unanimously voted against the introduction of a Conservation Area.



#### **4. Litter Bins in Craster**

Cllr Martin Smith provided an update to the Parish meeting about the intention of the Council to seek to purchase new bins for parts of the community. Cllr Smith advised that an audit had been undertaken to ascertain where the most urgent areas for replacement were for bins to be replaced. Cllr Smith advised that as soon as the funds were returned to the Council from the LEADER project, the Parish Council would be seeking quotes for the intended works.

#### **5. Listing of village assets**

Cllr Henry Cummins provided a presentation on the listing of community assets and what the benefits of doing this would be. Cllr Cummins advised that the Parish Council has the ability to nominate places and spaces in the community, which are viewed as important to local people as Assets of Community Value and if they come up for sale, the community has the opportunity to bid for them.

Cllr Cummins advised that the Parish Council could then use the Community Right to Bid if the selected asset ever comes up for sale – the community can have up to six months to raise the funds to bid for it. At the end of the period, the owner may sell it to whoever and at whatever price they choose.

Cllr Cummins advised that the Tourist Information Centre, the RNLI lifeboat centre and Village Hall had been identified as such assets and asked the community for their views.

It was felt that the Tourist Information Centre would be a good asset to look at having this done for the community. The point was made however that this should be limited as there was some concern that the Parish Council should not be able to list any residential properties or land. It was stated that the Parish Council are not seeking to do this.

#### **6. Residents parking**

The Chair advised that the County Council were looking to consult on introducing a scheme of resident only parking within the community. There would be a charge per resident for this however this would be aimed at relieving some of the parking issues that currently exist in the village. In particular, parking issues at South Acres were identified by the meeting as being particularly bad and a solution to this ought to be looked at. The Chair advised that the Parish Council would be working with County Councillor Wendy Pattison on this issue and the County Council Highways department. It was requested to be noted that the idea of resident only parking was not universally accepted as the ideal solution to the issues.

The Chair noted that the County Council were looking to extend their existing car park to increase capacity for tourists and visitors to the village and it was hoped that this would also help resolve this issue further.

#### **7. LEADER project – The Craster Trail**

The Clerk provided the following update on the LEADER project:

Craster Parish Council is very pleased that the work to the new footpath between the two small communities of Dunstan and Craster is nearing completion.

The footpath – known locally as the Craster Trail – is a project brought about and managed by Craster Parish Council following a successful grant application to the LEADER scheme under the RDPE 2014-2020. The path will stretch from NE66 2TR to NE66 3SZ.

The need for an off-road footpath was identified as improving safety and allowing for safer and easier foot traffic between the two communities.

The influx of traffic to this tourist-hotspot of North Northumberland, particularly during the sunny season, does put a strain on the infrastructure and inhibits safe pedestrian movement between Craster and Dunstan. The previous main route between the communities was along a

steep, winding single-track road on which it is difficult for pedestrians to pass cars going in both directions safely. It is hoped that this improvement will benefit catering outlets in Dunstan and allow them to provide for the many visitors to the Parish, who - because of the large numbers - cannot be catered for in Craster.

It is absolutely wonderful that this project is nearing completion. The Parish Council made a successful bid for funding to the LEADER scheme in September 2017 and since then the two communities have really got behind this project. We have hosted volunteer days, where members of the Parish have come along, rolled up their sleeves and mucked in to help us achieve this project. We very much hope that this off-road footpath will provide for safer access to pedestrians to and from our vibrant coastal community and thanks in particular must go to Cllr Bryn Owen who has worked incredibly hard on this project and to all the local people and businesses here who have helped us reach this goal

The Parish Council would like to take this opportunity to thank LEADER, Lord Howick – who has given us permission to create this path on his land, the local businesses who have sponsored this project and all the volunteers and members of the community who have supported this endeavour which it hopes will have a real and long-lasting benefit to all who chose to live and visit the community.

## **8. AOB**

On the LEADER project, it was by a member of the Parish that the Parish Council should look to try to improve safety further at both entrances to the trail. It was felt that, at present, the entrances of the trail represented a risk to public safety, particularly for dogs out walking and small children running close to the road. It was also noted however that the trail itself made the walk a lot safer for pedestrians as it took them away from walking on the road as they had had to previously.

A concern was also raised about dog fouling around the village and in some cases it was raised that filled dog fouling bags were being thrown onto the ground or in bushes as opposed to the bins. The Clerk advised that the Council would monitor this situation and hoped that the purchase of the new bins would help to resolve some of the issues.

*Ment*

