

# Minutes

## For The Craster Parish Meeting

### Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> November 2017

### Memorial Hall 18:30pm

#### Present

##### **Chairman**

Cllr Bryn Owen

##### **Clerk(s)**

Mr Geoff Newcombe (outgoing Clerk) and Mr Adam Shanley (new Clerk)

##### **Parish Council Members**

Margaret Brooks, Elizabeth Pearson, Ann Fettis, Alan Punton, Mark Green, Rosie Robson

#### **In attendance**

##### **Members of the public**

28 members of the public

##### **Apologies for absence**

Cllrs Martin Smith, Henry Cummins

There was a formal agenda for the meeting and Cllr Bryn Owen chaired the meeting. Both the outgoing Clerk Mr Geoff Newcombe and the new Clerk Mr Adam Shanley were in attendance at this meeting. Adam took the Minutes for this meeting. Refreshments were provided at the meeting by Cllr Ann Fettis.

- 1. Minutes of the last meeting.** The Minutes of the last Craster Parish Meeting, held on the 24<sup>th</sup> May 2017, were unanimously agreed as an accurate record. **Proposer: Marian Gallon. Seconder: Michael Craster.** Minutes were signed by Parish Council Chair Bryn Owen
- 2. Introduction of new Parish Clerk.** Adam Shanley introduced himself as the new Parish Clerk for Craster. He gave a brief outline of his experience, thanked Councillors and the community for placing their trust in him and said he was looking forward to working hard for the community.
- 3. Renovation of Cemetery House.** Cllr Bryn Owen provided a Powerpoint presentation to the meeting on this item. Cllr Owen advised of the proposal to renovate the Cemetery House and to let it as an affordable house in the area with the cemetery board as the landlord and thereby responsible for the maintenance of the property. The House became vacant in April 2017 and the alternatives of selling the property or renovating it and letting it have been considered. Cllr Owen provided indicative figures for the project to the meeting, with a grant being sought to renovate the house and the remaining cost for renovation funded by a loan over a 10 year period. The cost of the loan would be repaid from the rental income of the property and any surplus would be put towards the running costs of the cemetery.

A query was raised from a member of the public about what would happen if a tenant could not be found. The Chairman responded that it was very unlikely that this would happen, however, in a worst case scenario, the precept would need to be increased to fund the project.

A further query was raised as to whether the grant was guaranteed to be awarded for the project. The Chairman advised that this was not.



4. **Community-led affordable housing.** Cllr Owen presented this item, advising that Grants were available to Parishes to provide community-led affordable housing. He advised that Craster Council could explore using the same funding to buy a house for affordable housing to a local family from the area. The purchase may be grant supported but a long term loan would also be required. The rent would be used to repay the loan and the maintenance of the property would be the responsibility of the Parish. Cllr Owen advised that the repayments would be fixed and that both the rent and the value of the property would rise with inflation. Once the loan is repaid, it is envisaged that the rent would be an income to the Parish.

Cllr Owen advised that any potential tenant would have to be on the housing register and the Parish Council would define the criteria but the tenant would have to have a strong association with the local area.

Some concern was expressed about the indicative figures presented for this project.

There was also a query raised about who would assume responsibility and ownership for the property should the Parish Council fail to have enough members in future. The Chairman advised this was unlikely, however, should this ever occur, the County Council would assume ownership of the property.

The feeling of the meeting was that the community-led affordable housing project should not be pursued until after it had been seen on how the Cemetery house renovation and letting had worked out.

5. **Proposed new speed limits.** Cllr Owen again presented this item. He advised that there is a proposal from Northumberland County Council to extend 20mph throughout the village. A decision on the signage was yet to be taken by NCC. Cllr Owen advised that the County Council were the body responsible for roads and speeding but that the Parish Council submits its priorities through the Local Transport Plan.

There was concern expressed at the meeting from members of the public at Tower Banks being a 40mph zone – this was felt to be too high. In addition, some members of the public felt that there needed to be better signage on Tower Banks to inform drivers that this was a two-way traffic road. Some members advised that they had witnessed cars driving in the middle of the road in this area as the road is very narrow.

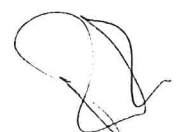
With the new speed limits introduced, NCC hope to improve safety in the village. It was agreed to support the scheme on the understanding that once it was introduced tests would be conducted by NCC to determine the speed of vehicles. The scheme could then be modified to achieve the objectives.

6. **Craster trail.** Presentation by Cllr Owen on this item. Cllr Owen illustrated on the projector to the meeting where the new footpath will go. He advised that the Parish had been successful in their application for a LEADER Grant to cover 80% of the costs of this project. The Parish Council would fund the remaining costs for this project initially, however there would be a contribution from local businesses, owing to the additional advertising they would receive from signage on the footpath.

Cllr Owen advised that there would be a new notice board placed in the car park, illustrating some of the key sites in the area.

It was hoped that the Craster Trail would be completed by the end of January.

7. **Car park petition.** Cllr Owen gave an update on the present status of the petition for the Parish to receive some or all of the revenue from the car park. He thanked those who had worked on and had signed this petition and informed the meeting that the decision on this would be taken at the Petition meeting at NCC in January. Cllr Owen advised that he had met with the Cabinet Member responsible for this at NCC and that the administration at County Hall were being responsive to this.



8. **Neighbourhood plan.** Cllr Owen advised that there had been insufficient support to create a neighbourhood plan. Many local Councils had attempted this and it had taken a long time and cost a lot of money. The Parish had therefore made the decision not to create a plan.

9. **Planning application.** Presentation by Cllr Mark Green in relation to the planning application to the land South East of the Lifeboat House on Haven Hill. The application is for a change of use of the buildings formerly used as garages/storage space, office and a small washroom to 2 new homes with external car parking and amenity space.

Cllr Green advised that the Parish Council needed to make comments on this application within the next few days.

The application did not state whether these properties would be used for holiday homes.

There was concern expressed by members of the Public present at the meeting about car parking at the properties – currently the application shows 3 car spaces between the 2 properties – and the position of the proposed parking spaces.

There were also concerns expressed at the meeting about congestion particularly around the Jolly Fisherman.

The Agent from George F. White – the Chartered Surveyors and Property Consultant firm – was also present to advise members of the public and Councillors should they have any queries about the application.

There was some debate about the precise response from Highways in relation to the car spaces at the property, which Cllr Owen advised he would check on.

It was agreed that the Parish Council should object to the application on behalf of the community and that individuals could also submit their objections. Cllr Pattison should be approached and advised of the feelings of the community.

10. **Open Forum.** Members of the public were invited to raise any issues of concern/ local matters they may have.

Cllr Rosie Robson advised that she felt that the walking entrance at the top of the hill as you come into the village needed tidying up.

It was also raised that the Cemetery Board were seeking helpers to help improve the condition of the cemetery in Craster. A notice for this would be put in the NET.

Cllr Elizabeth Pearson also raised the issue of LED lighting and gave the contact details of the person responsible for this should any members of the public have any issues with this.

Cllr Rosie Robson raised the issue of outside lights being left on at night and asked what people could do if they have any concerns about this. The Clerk advised that members of the public could contact the public protection department at NCC if they are concerned about this.

In closing the meeting, the Chairman thanked everyone for attending and for their contribution to the work of the Parish Council.

 23/1/18

