

MILFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

THE MEETING of MILFIELD PARISH COUNCIL was held electronically on FRIDAY 17 APRIL 2020 at 8.30PM

This was the first virtual meeting of the Council held under the provisions of the Coronavirus legislation.

NB: NCC means Northumberland County Council

Present:

- Parish Councillors Allan Colman, John Fairburn, David Hughes (Chairman in the Chair) and Gillian Kozakiewicz
- County Councillor Anthony Murray
- One member of the public
- Stephen Rickitt – Parish Council Clerk

1: Apologies for absence, declaration of interests, grant of any dispensations and co-options

- Parish Councillor Jean Adamson
- PCSO Alexandra Carr

The Council agreed to grant Cllr Adamson a leave of absence until the May 2021 elections.

2: Public Questions

The public had been asked to email any question to the clerk in advance of the meeting. No questions had been received.

3: Minutes and urgent matters not on hold due to the National Emergency

The minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 15 November 2019 were approved as a true record and will be signed by the Chairman and emailed to the clerk.

4: Coronavirus

Councillors reported on their observations of life under lockdown. It was gratifying to hear that parishioners have taken, and are taking, steps to support the vulnerable within the parish. The Café and The Red Lion are offering take-out menus which are displayed on the Council's website.

If Councillors become aware of any individuals struggling during the lockdown, they will advise those parishioners of the ways to contact NCC and others for assistance.

The Council considered whether to hold a photographic "Best Garden" competition but concluded this would not be held at the present time as some gardens are affected by the now suspended work on the school site and adjoining roads.

5: Other Non-Coronavirus Issues

5.1: The play area - The annual inspection of the play equipment has been carried out and the report sent to Councillors. Work is required to prolong the life of the equipment, but that the small swing may need removal. Councillors will review this once the lockdown has ceased.

5.2: The John Grey Legacy – The Council reconfirmed that this should be used for assisting with the refurbishment of The Reading Room. The clerk was authorised to transfer the legacy of £5000 on sight of invoices addressed to the trustees. It was reported that the kitchen units being donated by Gleesons were ready to be delivered but that was suspended when the lockdown commenced.

6: Police & Highway Issues

6.1 PCSO Carr was unable to attend but had sent the following report

November - There were 3 reported incidents in Milfield. This includes a complaint re youths where unknown youths were jumping on the bus stop.

December - There was water on the road where temporary traffic lights were set up until it cleared.

January - Debris on roads was recorded on two occasions in the area around Milfield.

February – There were 6 incidents. This includes a report of a trailer that had to be abandoned by the side of the road, a damage RTC, a report of a dangerous driver speeding, a trouble with youths banging on a door where one was warned in front of their parents, and a concern re bats in an area of tree felling which was looked into by our wildlife officer.

March – There was a report of a suspicious vehicle in the area.

April – A Covid 19 enforcement log was created for Wooler Compressor Station after a call in suggesting that they should not be continuing under the present government guidelines. Officers attended and the workers there are classed as key workers who are obeying social distancing.

There have also been 5 crimes in your area.

Damage was caused to a heritage building in Milfield where someone had kicked the wooden panels. Unfortunately, there was no CCTV, forensics, or witnesses.

There was a theft other where a trailer was stolen from the side of the road with no CCTV or forensics.

A burglary was attempted where a lock was forced on a garage. Nothing was taken and there were no witnesses or CCTV in the area.

There was one case of Public order distress at the Red Lion where the unknown suspect left prior to police arrival.

Finally, a damage other where a garden ornament was damaged with no CCTV or forensics and no further information obtained from house to house enquiries.

Please can I ask that you remind people to stay vigilant but also to stay safe.

6.2 The currently suspended water and electricity works on Wheatriggs were raised. It was clear from comments made by workmen that

- The water company had not been aware of the Gleasons development
- There had been no coordination which meant the water company's contractors arrived at a time when Gleasons were still needing offsite access
- The water company had to suspend its works when the electricity company arrived to carry out recabling.
- An inspection by an NCC officer to view the issues had been in late afternoon when works on the school site had been completed for the day, thus the traffic conflicts were not present
- NCC do not appear to have endorsed a traffic management plan as required un the planning permission for the school site

NCC Cllr Murray will investigate these issues with NCC officers and report back to the Parish Council.

7: Finance and Audit

The draft final accounts for 2019/2020 were approved – a copy is attached to the signed minutes. The clerk will now arrange for a remote internal audit, notwithstanding the postponement of the statutory timetable by two months.

8: Date of Next Meetings

Councillors agreed that they should use the electronic format as a way of holding future meetings during the National Emergency and would next meet at 7.30 pm on Friday 15 May 2020.

This would have been the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council and the Annual Parish Meeting. Coronavirus legislation has now removed the requirement for these meetings in 2020

[Additional meetings may be called if urgent issues arise]

Confirmed as a true record by the Council on _____ 2020

Signed.....
Chairman

