

Longhirst Parish Council

Extraordinary Parish Council Meeting

10AM on TUESDAY, 23 JUNE 2020
(online)

MINUTES (draft)

This agenda can also be found online at
<https://northumberlandparishes.uk/longhirst/documents/agenda>

PRESENT:

Councillors: Cllr Peter Coates (Chair), Cllr Mark Davies, Cllr Glen Fahy, Cllr Catherine Farrell, Cllr Chris Marr, Cllr Richard Tordoff

APOLOGIES: Cllr Maureen Lowes

IN ATTENDANCE: Helyn Douglas (Clerk)
Residents: Sue Howard, Tom Howard, Joan McKenzie

1 APOLOGIES

Apologies are listed above. During this Covid-19 lockdown the Chair has given permission for absence to any Councillors not able to join these online meetings.

2 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

[Use this link to check individual Declarations of Interests for Longhirst Parish Council](#)

There were no interests declared.

3 PLANNING

3.1 Anaerobic Digester - [18/04533/FUL](#)

Or enter the above reference into the search box on the [NCC Planning Portal](#)

All those present were very concerned at the sudden notification that the above is due to be presented at the next Planning Committee on 30 June (to be held online).

Anyone wishing to object has a slot of 750 words (equivalent to the 5 minutes that would be allowed at a face-to-face meeting). If more than one submission is made then the 750 word allowance has to be shared. The proposal was therefore made that only one objection is submitted on behalf of all objectors. This approach was agreed.

The Clerk has already contacted Democratic Services at the County Council to confirm that the Parish Council does intend to make a submission.

The Clerk had earlier sent round a list of key points from all the objections during the earlier phase of consultation (from the Parish Council and from residents). In particular, the comments circulated by Dr Tom Howard were considered to be very relevant.

All parties felt that not enough public consultation has taken place and that a meeting with North East Grains would be very useful, along with representatives from the County Council and some residents. Ideally the Parish Council would like a deferment of the decision to allow for this meeting and potentially other public consultation by North East Grains to take place.

After some discussed and the following key issues identified:

- Access
- Volume of Traffic
- Environmental Concerns (such as odour)
- Legality of the change of use from agricultural to industrial within the Green Belt

The Clerk is to draft up a response based on the above, quoting factual information and using valid statistics and quotes. This can then be reviewed at another meeting on Thursday evening, with a view to finalising a single submission over the weekend, and sending that in before the deadline at 12pm on Monday 29 June.

ACTION: CLERK

There was some discussion about how to balance the overwhelming feeling for rejecting the proposal, and how much to include any conditions or mitigation measures, and whether this diluted the main argument. It does appear that the Planning Highways Department do not see any problems arising from the significant increase in traffic, though this is difficult to understand. Proposals to request enforcement of the “gentlemen’s agreement” on traffic routing will only move the problem to the other end of the village. The overall thrust of the argument will need to be reviewed in the final draft.

We are aware that resident, Dennis Hodges, is planning to submit a petition objecting to the scheme. He is currently working his way around the village seeking signatures. It is unclear if a petition would be accepted by the Planning Committee, or if it might count towards the 750 word limit - the Clerk is to check.

ACTION: CLERK

The Vice Chair noted that Cllr David Towns (NCC) has not responded to this meeting request. It would be useful to know if he intends to attend the Planning Committee meeting, and whether he is in favour or against the development.

ACTION: CLLR P COATES

4 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

No other items were raised.

5 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

- 6pm on Thursday, 25 June 2020 (online)