

MEETING OF CRASTER PARISH COUNCIL
Thursday 18th March 2021 – 6.00pm via Zoom

Agenda

Join our meeting via Zoom via the link below:

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Meeting ID: 861 0725 0028

Dear Councillor,

In accordance with both the Local Government Act 1972 and the Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of local authority and Police and Crime Panel meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020, I hereby give you notice that a meeting of the Full Council will be held in **via Zoom** on Thursday **18th March 2021 at 6pm** to transact the following business:

2361 Apologies for absence

2362 Declarations of interest

2363 Confirmation of the minutes for the meeting held on 18th February 2021

2364 Matters Arising

2365 Public participation

2366 Report by County Councillor Wendy Pattison – report attached

2367 Update on proposal to introduce additional cycle parking to Craster

2368 Report from fundraising/community project scoping committee – report attached

2369 Update on “Adopt a Craster Barrel” scheme, organising the competition and matters relating to the pedestrian zone scheme.

2370 Proposal to develop a retail area in the parish – report by Cllr M Green

2371 Proposal to tackle the growing number of holiday lets in the parish – report by the Clerk.

2372 Report from Embleton Joint Burial Committee representative

2373 Craster Community Trust report

2374 Planning Matters:

21/00319/FUL | Erection of a log cabin | Orchard Cottages Dunstan Village Dunstan Northumberland NE66 3TE

21/00416/FUL | New double detached garage. Single storey extension off kitchen to provide living/orangery. Replace windows/doors with dark grey aluminium to match adjoining dwellings. | Seascape The Skeres Craster Alnwick Northumberland NE66 3TN

2377 Items for Next Agenda

2378 Date and time of next meeting

18th February 2021 – 18:00pm via Zoom.

And pursuant to the provisions of the above-named acts, I hereby summon you to attend the said meeting.

Adam Shanley
Clerk of Craster Parish Council

MINUTES OF MEETING OF CRASTER PARISH COUNCIL
Thursday 18th February 2021 – 6.00pm via Zoom

Councillors present:

Chair: Martin Smith

Parish Council members: Marilyn Bagley, Stephen Bagley, Margaret Brooks, Michael Craster, Mark Green and Elizabeth Pearson.

In attendance: 19 members of the public and County Councillor Wendy Pattison

Clerk: Adam Shanley

2361 Apologies for absence

None received.

2362 Declarations of interest

None received.

2363 Confirmation of the minutes for the meeting held on 25th January 2021

The minutes of the meeting held on 25th January 2021 were unanimously agreed as a true and accurate record of proceedings, subject to the following amendments:

Under public participation, the following minute be added:

Mr and Mrs Reeves raised the concern about the U3014 road in Dunstan. Mr and Mrs Reeves advised that the road allows for water to gather and this is now freezing in the cold weather and proving extremely treacherous for local residents, not helped by the steep topography of the road. Mrs Reeves advised that this was reported last year and nothing was done about this. The Clerk agreed to write to NCC Highways to see what could be done as a matter of urgency.

Under Item 2368, the following minute be added:

Mr M Robson requested that the Parish Council reviews its policy on the number of bins and asks NCC how often they are emptied, to see if the bins warrant being in each location and to review the expenditure of £1500.

Under Item 2371, the minutes be corrected to state:

Mr M Robson offered to donate the strip of land to the east between the development and the neighbouring garden which to the Parish Council and advised that his solicitor will deal with this.

The Parish Clerk also agreed to look into the ownership of the land at the Bark Pots Development between the north of the burn and the road. Cllr Mark Green agreed to act on behalf of the Parish Council to carry out the searches and land registry.

2364 Matters Arising

None received.

2365 Public participation

The Chair asked members of the public to make all representations on any of the following agenda items as and when they come up for discussion as part of the Agenda.

2366 NCC Experimental Pedestrian Zone for Craster village

The Chair advised that the pedestrian zone is expected to come into force from April 2021. The Chair advised that he was aware of correspondence sent to the Parish Council and advised that a full response had been sent to all correspondents on matters raised. The Chair took the opportunity to remind the meeting that this is a trial scheme, it will be reviewed during the trial by both the County and Parish Councils and the scheme can be amended depending on how Highways feel that this is working. The Chair reminded all present that the Parish Council is a consultee only on Highways matters and NCC is the decision maker.

The Chair particularly highlighted the concerns raised by the RNLI on the new scheme and advised that he was aware that the RNLI is due to meet with NCC Highways next week.

Mrs Rosie Robson advised that whilst NCC are experts on Highways matters, they are not experts on village life, which is what members of the public expect the Parish Council to be.

Rosie advised that Craster Kippers had raised a concern with NCC Highways. Rosie advised that the impact on businesses in Craster ought to be considered and a short period of consultation on this new scheme would have been helpful.

Cllr Mark Green advised he felt that the impact on businesses in Craster ought to be a big consideration with this scheme.

Mr Kev Brown advised that he felt that the map detailing the scheme was very small and difficult to read. In particular, anyone with poor eyesight might struggle to read this. Kev advised that he felt an outdoor event ought to have been held (socially-distanced) in order to go through the scheme.

Mr Michael Robson advised that the current sign coming into the village reads "no public parking beyond this point" and he felt that this is not effective and would also question whether the new signage as part of the pedestrian scheme is going to be effective. Michael advised that not everyone living in Craster uses social media but a lot of people from other areas do and it is very easy to post online that public parking is available in Craster. Michael advised that this issue has not been addressed with this new scheme.

Mr Michael Doherty advised that he was very disappointed that the Parish Council had not foreseen the issues that will arise with this scheme. Michael advised that he felt that this scheme would bring chaos to Craster and he just hoped that this did not adversely impact on emergency service access to the village. Michael advised that he felt that the Parish Council ought to have insisted on having the permit parking scheme for Craster which the majority of residents voted for.

Cllr Elizabeth Pearson advised that she hoped that NCC would listen to the views of the Parish Council and residents when this scheme is reviewed.

Mrs Fiona Robson asked about the review process and how this would be carried out. Fiona advised that she felt that there needed to be more than simply anecdotal evidence as part of the review process. The Clerk advised that he would get more information on how the review process will work. Mrs Fiona Robson advised that she felt that there needed to be a plan in advance of the review.

Mrs Bev Blythe advised that her understanding from the January meeting was that NCC Officers, if minded to look again at the permit parking scheme, would be carrying out their own consultation on this and that they would apply a particular percentage at which they felt a consensus had been reached on this scheme in the village.

Mr Michael Robson advised that he had spoken with the Chair of Bamburgh Parish Council and that Parish Council had been in consultation with NCC on parking schemes for 4 years now. Michael advised that he felt that Craster could not wait this long. Michael advised that he felt that the Parish Councils ought to work collaboratively, speak as one voice and put pressure on NCC to introduce an effective scheme. Michael advised that he is concerned that tourists are put ahead of residents.

Mr Kev Brown asked that the Parish Council requests that NCC launches another consultation on the permit parking scheme.

Mr Michael Craster advised that he felt that a sub-committee should be established to monitor how this goes. The Chair agreed and also advised that he felt that this sub-committee should be made up of Parish Councillors and representatives of the community.

Mrs Rosie Robson advised that she was feeling positive about the pedestrianisation of Craster as this has been an answer to Cornwell's problems. Rosie advised that she is happy to monitor the situation and report on this matter.

Mrs Fiona Robson advised that she was concerned about the pedestrianisation of Craster as it may encourage visitors to walk into the road. Fiona advised that she felt that NCC should be asked to introduce a footpath on the South side entrance to the village, where many people already walk.

2367 Report by County Councillor Wendy Pattison

Cllr Wendy Pattison advised that Craster was magnificent last year dealing with all of the parking problems. Wendy advised that she requested a coastal summit with NCC to look into these sorts of issues and there is going to be a follow up summit later this week.

Wendy also advised that the chicane (as part of the pedestrian scheme) is actually a movable barrier.

2368 Recent power cuts and update to the electricity network

The Clerk advised that there have been a number of power cuts in the local area recently. The latest of which occurred on 6th February between 7am and 5pm.

The Clerk advised that a number of local residents have contacted the Parish Council about this to see what can be done to either avoid this from happening or mitigate the negative impacts of this occurring. A particular concern has been raised about vulnerable members of the community.

The Clerk advised that he has written to the Chief Executive of Northern Powergrid to highlight concerns from residents about the most recent power cuts and asked what action is being taken to address this. In doing so, the Clerk also advised that he had asked for an update on proposed upgrades to the network, as reported some months ago.

The Clerk advised that Northern Powergrid had responded to say that they look after the overhead cables that supply the Craster area and unfortunately, unforeseen faults can sometimes happen, causing residents to experience a power cut. There can be a number of reasons why the power cuts happen, including windborne debris and tree branches meeting the overhead lines. Sometimes, extreme weather and even wildlife can cause the power to go off. This may have been the cause of any particularly short power cuts. Although they are unable to prevent the power cuts, Northern Powergrid has advised that they remain pro-active in trying to minimise the disruption that they can cause residents. For this reason, they install specialist equipment on the overhead network. When a fault occurs that causes a power cut, the equipment automatically turns the power back on when the fault clears. This means that the power cuts for this type of fault are usually very short, meaning that residents do not have to wait a long time for the power to come back on.

The Clerk advised that the latest power cut that affected the area on 6 February 2021, was caused by a snapped overhead pole, that was supporting the overhead network; as a consequence a piece of equipment known as a wishbone, became detached on the high voltage that supplies the area, resulting in loss of power to customers.

The Clerk also advised that the power cut on 21 January 2021, was due to an overhead line conductor becoming detached from the network, Northern Powergrid's investigations indicate that this may have been caused by a bird coming into contact with our equipment.

The Clerk advised that Northern Powergrid had advised that they were able to deploy their customer service vehicle on the most recent power cut, the purpose of the vehicle is to support their most vulnerable customers. Northern Powergrid does this by making calls to those customers who are registered as Priority Service Members; they offer hot drinks and, in some cases, will carry out a personal welfare check. The Parish Council has been advised that the vehicle was very well received.

The Clerk reminded all present that anyone who is vulnerable and who has not already done so, can register as a priority service member.

Northern Powergrid has confirmed that a scheme of work has been raised and authorised, to replace approximately 45 – 50 spans of overhead line in the area, with various pole changes, as well as additional protective devices installed to improve reliability. Due to the size of the scheme of work, Northern Powergrid will need to approach a number of land owners to agree access to their land, in addition they have advised that they need to approach the local government planning department.

Northern Powergrid has advised that they are unable to provide a start date for the work at this time, however, would welcome the opportunity to attend a parish council meeting in the future, with the appropriate team to provide a progress report, once more information regarding potential time scales for the work to be carried out is available.

The Chair thanked the Clerk for this comprehensive report and it was agreed that a representative from Northern Powergrid ought to be invited to a future meeting of the Parish Council.

2369 Increasing the provision of cycle parking in the parish

Cllr Steven Bagley advised that the lack of cycle parking has been raised with him by local residents and this has been discussed at a previous Parish Council meeting. Cllr Bagley also advised that he felt that there is a lack of signage for cycle parking in the village.

The Parish Council agreed that further cycle parking provision ought to be investigated. Cllr Michael Craster advised that the obvious space for this to be introduced was by the Tourist Information Centre and the toilets.

Mrs Fiona Robson agreed with this and advised that she felt that cycle parking by the Shoreline café would also be a good location for cycle parking.

The Chair advised that, given that the National Trust do not want cyclists using their land, the Trust ought to provide additional cycle parking.

It was **agreed** that the Parish Council ought to write directly to the National Trust to request this.

Mrs Rosie Robson also recommended that the Parish Council writes to Sustrans on this too. It was **agreed** that the Parish Council should also write directly to Sustrans on this.

2370 Progressing the letter to all holiday lets in the parish requesting a voluntary contribution to the Parish Council precept

The Clerk reminded Members that the letter had now been agreed. It was now necessary to wait until the Covid-19 restrictions permitted letters to be posted by hand through doors. The Clerk also advised that an electronic copy of the letter would also be sent out to all holiday let operators.

2371 Registering land outside Bark Potts development with the Parish Council

The Clerk reminded Members that it was agreed at the last meeting that the Parish Council should look to have the land registered with the Parish Council.

Mrs Diana Ridley advised that this particular plot of land is owned by the North Side Owners Committee and Diana advised that she could send through a copy of the deeds relating to this land.

Cllr Mark Green advised that the original intention of doing this was to protect the land from development. Cllr Mark Green advised that, if it is known that the land is already owned, then perhaps this would be sufficient to protect the land.

The Clerk advised that the land remains unregistered on land registry.

Mr Kev Brown advised that the RNLi looked into this some years ago and tried to get the North Side Owners together some time ago but to no avail. Kev advised that the North Side Owners Committee has now ceased as an organisation.

The Chair advised that he felt that the land being owned already would be sufficient to protect this land.

2372 Report from Embleton Joint Burial Committee representative

Cllr Margaret Brooks read out the following statement to the Council meeting:

"The EJBC has received a complaint regarding certain actions it took during the renovation of what was Cemetery House. The complainant is an Embleton parishioner. The first communication asked a number of questions relating to why a garden had been provided with the house, why a 6ft fence had been erected around it and why wider consultation was not undertaken. It concluded with the message that the EJBC had spoiled the cemetery for all who visit the cemetery to see the graves of their loved ones.

Before a response could be formulated by the Committee a second communication was received which accused the EJBC of having acted in breach of trust and contrary to the Open Spaces Act 1906. It also accused the Parish Councils of acting in breach of their Codes of Conduct in that they had not acted in the public interest by transferring part of the burial ground to make a private garden. It concluded by asking that the garden be returned to the cemetery.

The EJBC met as a task force and agreed the terms of a response to both communications which the Chairman of the EJBC was directed to prepare and send to the complainant. This was carried out on February 10th and to date nothing further has been heard."

Cllr Margaret Brooks also reminded Members that there is currently a tenant in place in the house.

2373 Craster Community Trust report

Cllr Michael Craster advised that there is nothing to report as the Hall is closed. Michael advised that the Trust continues to meet in preparation of lockdown being lifted.

2374 Planning Matters:

21/00013/FUL | Removal of front porch, construction of a two storey side extension, single storey rear extension, glass balcony to first floor front elevation and internal and external alterations | Seahaven 37 Dunstanburgh Road Craster NE66 3TT. It was **agreed** to object to this application.

21/00219/FUL | Remove existing first floor bedroom Juliet balcony to South elevation & replace with new balcony. | Aidan Cottage 3 Whin Hill Craster NE66 3TP. It was **agreed** to object to this application.

21/00316/FUL | Retrospective Change of Use of Garden Space to Holiday Let with Associated Hot Food Takeaway (Sui Generis) and Coffee Shed (Use Class E) | Land South West Of Cemetery House Embleton Northumberland. It was **agreed** to support this application. In agreeing to support the application, Members also **agreed** to request NCC to look further into funding a footpath from Dunstan to Embleton, whether through existing Section 106 funds or otherwise.

2375 Proposal to develop a retail area in the parish

Cllr Mark Green asked that this item be deferred to the March Full Council meeting, at which stage he hoped to have a report to Full Council for consideration.

2376 Update on the Neighbourhood Plan

The Clerk advised that Northumberland County Council has now provided the Parish Council with an update on the programme for the referendum on the Craster Neighbourhood Plan.

The Clerk advised that the Government recently confirmed that elections will be held in May. This means that NCC will now be able to plan to hold referendums on neighbourhood plans after current restrictions are formally lifted. NCC's Planning team has been in discussions with the Council's Elections Manager and can now confirm that a referendum on the Craster Neighbourhood Plan will be held on Thursday 10 June 2021.

The Clerk advised that NCC Planning will work with colleagues in the Elections Team to arrange all necessary publicity about the referendum and will publish an information statement on their website in due course in accordance with the relevant Regulations. Craster Parish Council will be kept updated on the plans for the referendum.

The Clerk advised that Members need to be aware that there are certain restrictions concerning activities and publicity at elections and during election periods, including referendums. There is a Government code of practice, published in 2011, which addresses these issues and remains valid. The main principles require publicity by a local authority, which includes town and parish councils, to remain unbiased and factual.

The Clerk advised that the Parish Council, and anyone involved in supporting plan preparation should remain neutral in any publicity about the Neighbourhood Plan. Publicity should be factual. The Parish Council should not encourage people to vote one way or another. Whilst this is often met with disappointment by people involved in preparing neighbourhood plans, it is important to follow this guidance to minimise the risk of subsequent challenge to any decision made by the County Council on bringing neighbourhood plans into force formally following a referendum. There are limits on expenditure for any publicity, similar to those that apply during elections. Members should also be aware that the Covid-19 rules specifically ban any leaflets/flyers which aren't sent via Royal Mail at present.

The Clerk advised that he had asked whether an earlier date than 10th June 2021 for the Neighbourhood Plan referendum may be possible, for example timing this at the same time as

the local elections, would not only cut costs but would also be easier logistically. However, this will not be possible. Unfortunately, due to the work involved in holding three ballots on the same day in May, NCC has advised that this will make it impossible to organise the referendum any earlier than 10th June 2021.

The Clerk advised that Members should be aware that, at this stage, the Plan now carries significant weight in the determination of new and pending planning applications in our Parish.

2377 Proposal to install donation post at Craster Harbour

The Clerk reminded Members that, at the January Full Parish Council meeting, Members requested that the Clerk investigate further a proposal to have donation posts installed in Craster. This followed the report in which Members agreed to draft a letter to all holiday let owners in the parish, requesting a voluntary contribution towards the Parish Council's precept. The Clerk advised that the aim of this donation post is to ensure that funding is captured from visitors of Craster towards the upkeep of the Parish, to ensure that holiday let owners are not the single source of external finance requested by the Parish Council. In addition, whilst tourism is very much welcome in Craster and helps to sustain our local economy and employment, it has often been raised that residents are subsidising a growing tourism market in Craster.

The Clerk advised that he had investigated this proposal further and has identified a supplier of these posts, which can be fitted securely into the ground.

The total cost associated with the installation of such a donation post is approximately £1,055.00.

The Clerk advised that two possible locations have been suggested for the installation of this donation post:

Option 1 - Craster Harbour

One option is at the harbour itself next to where the A boards used to be located – this would capture visitors to the village, whether they were visiting Dunstanburgh castle or not. This option has been discussed with the landowner and the harbour operator and they are happy to support this but have asked if the Parish Council may be able to make a percentage donation from all funds raised to support the harbour. If agreed, it is recommended that this agreement be formalised.

Option 2 – At the end of Dunstanburgh Road

Another option is at the end of Dunstanburgh Road in order to capture the visitors to the castle. This area is well overlooked and would therefore be a more secure location. However this option would not capture those visitors who come into Craster village only and do not walk to the castle.

If agreed, the Clerk advised that it is proposed that the sign includes a graphic and reads something like:

PLEASE DONATE

Suggested donation £X.

***Help us keep Craster clean, green and beautiful for all
Craster Parish Council***

The Clerk advised that this sort of initiative is done at other major tourist areas and helps to raise funds for the local area or the organisation involved with this.

The Clerk advised that, for the Parish Council to deliver on projects such as new footpaths, Northumbria in Bloom, cycle parking and more, it cannot rely solely on the precept and therefore external funding must be sought.

The Clerk advised that NALC has confirmed that they are happy for the Parish Council to raise funds in this way. If approved, this post would be included in the Parish Council's list of assets and would be covered by the Parish Council's insurance.

Mrs Rosie Robson advised that she felt that this needed to be a more community-led project with all stakeholders involved in this. Rosie also advised that she felt that any scheme such as this would need to be very specific about what the money would go towards funding. Rosie also asked if businesses could not also have a donation box at their premises towards such a scheme.

Cllr Mark Green asked who would empty the box. The Clerk advised that he had been contacted by two members of the public who had already volunteered to do this.

Mr Geoffrey Ridley advised that he agreed that this funding should go towards projects for the community.

Members **agreed** to set up a working party of all local stakeholders in the parish and to provide a report back to the next Full Parish Council meeting.

2378 Items for Next Agenda

The Chair reminded Members to request for any items to be added to the Agenda in writing to the Clerk.

2379 Date and time of next meeting

18th March 2021 – 18:00pm via Zoom.

There being no further business, the Chair thanked Members for their attendance and closed the meeting.

Signed,

**Chair of Craster Parish Council
(18th March 2021)**



CRASTER PARISH COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORT

County Councillor wendy pattison

wendy.pattison@northumberland.gov.uk - Tel. 07779

983072 and Facebook – Cllr Wendy Pattison

CRASTER PARISH

Coastal Path funding gets the green light

A grant of £100,000 has been formally accepted from Natural England to start work on the latest phase of the England Coast Path between Amble and Bamburgh.



The approval from the County Council's Cabinet marks the latest phase of an ambitious government plan to create a continuous walking route around the entire coastline of England and Wales.

Known as the England Coast Path, work on the Northumberland coast section started five years ago and the stretch between Amble and Bamburgh was given national approval in July 2020.

While Natural England have done the research and consultation work themselves, the county council will create the path and be responsible for ongoing maintenance – largely funded by the Natural England grant.

Council Leader and Cabinet Member for Local Services Councillor Glen Sanderson said: "We're so proud to have the most beautiful coastline in the country and this will be another magnificent addition to the Coast Path in Northumberland with the sections from Old Hartley up to Amble having already been established.

“This latest stretch will take walkers past some of the county’s most iconic landmarks and is sure to be a great attraction both for local residents and visitors to Northumberland.”

The next and final phase of the scheme in Northumberland will run from Bamburgh right through to the Scottish border, and is still to be fully agreed.

Everyone will benefit from Census 2021

Households across Northumberland will be asked to take part in Census 2021 in March.

The census, run by the Office for National Statistics, is a once-in-a-decade survey that gives us the most accurate estimate of all the people and households in England and Wales. It has been carried out every ten years since 1801, with the exception of 1941.

Understanding the needs of the nation helps everyone from central government to organisations, such as councils and health authorities, plan and fund public services across England and Wales. Census outputs inform where billions of pounds of public funding is spent on services like transport, education and health – on cycle routes, schools and dental surgeries.

Information from the census is also important in helping lots of other people and organisations do their work.

Charities and voluntary organisations often use it as evidence to get funding. It helps businesses to understand their customers and, for example, decide where to open new shops. Plus, those doing research, like university students and people looking into their family history, use census data. It provides important information on population diversity, allowing organisations to know whether they are meeting their responsibilities and triggering action where necessary.

Census 2021 will be the first run predominantly online, with households receiving a letter with a unique access code, allowing them to complete the questionnaire on their computers, phones or tablets.

Census day will be on March 21, but households will soon receive letters with online codes explaining how they can take part. The census will include questions about your sex, age, work, health, education, household size and ethnicity. And, for the first time, there will be a question asking people whether they have served in the armed forces, as well as voluntary questions for those aged 16 and over on sexual orientation and gender identity.

“The census provides a unique snapshot of our communities,” Iain Bell, deputy national statistician at ONS, said. “It benefits everyone. Based on the information you give, it ensures millions of pounds are invested in emergency services, mental health care, school places, hospital beds, houses, roads, GP’s and dentist’s services.

“No-one should miss out. Everyone can complete on online with a new search-as-you-type ability and paper forms for those who need them.”

Results will be available within 12 months, although personal records will be locked away for 100 years, kept safe for future generations.

For more information and advice on how to answer the questions, visit [census.gov.uk](https://www.census.gov.uk).

Leaders welcome cautious approach to easing lockdown

The region's leaders have welcomed the cautious approach to the easing of lockdown in England.

In their latest joint statement they say:

"The government’s announcement of a cautious approach to easing lockdown is sensible but it needs to be kept under constant review.

We understand the desire of businesses and our residents to see restrictions lifted so we can get back to something like normality.

But while the infection rates continue to fall, they remain high, with many people still in hospital and too many of those are sadly still dying as a result of COVID 19.

The threat of new variants is something we are all wary of so as the vaccination programme continues, we all must remain vigilant and continue to follow simple the rules we have become used to.

Our immediate focus is to do everything we can to support our schools to fully reopen on March 8.

It is important to remember all our school staff have been working hard throughout the pandemic, teaching vulnerable children and those of key workers face-to-face while providing resources and online lessons for those at home.

They have done a magnificent job in the most trying of circumstances, as have parents and carers who have home-schooled their children and we must do everything we can to support a safe return to the classroom.

Many of us have missed physical social contact so the opportunity to hold the hand of a loved one while visiting them in a care home or meet outdoors with one other person for a chat is a welcome step forward, with the prospect of wider meetings and outdoor sports resuming on March 29, but again only if the conditions are right.

What is certain is further delay to the reopening of non-essential retail until at least the end of next month and beyond for hospitality, leisure, tourism and our cultural venues.

While this cautious approach is the right one, the Chancellor has an opportunity in his Budget next week to widen the packages of support to these businesses and communities— along with support for individuals who have to self-isolate.

Not to do so will lead to much higher costs in the longer term of businesses closing, higher unemployment, a greater risk to public safety and more people struggling both financially and with their mental health.

We also need greater clarification as to how we will control future outbreaks. Unless Test, Trace and Isolate are all strengthened further and businesses in areas affected are given full financial support, adherence and compliance will be undermined because people will fear losing out financially.

What today's announcement doesn't change for now is the need to stay at home and only go out for essential reasons, including staying local when exercising, maintaining social distancing at all times, wearing face coverings and continuing to regularly wash our hands.

We urge everyone to take up the vaccine when offered and to those in the priority groups who may still not have had their first dose to come forward. There is growing evidence that the vaccines are highly effective in protecting our communities from COVID, having a significant impact on the risk of serious illness and reducing the risk of infection, giving us great reason to be optimistic.

In the meantime, we continue to be in regular dialogue with government, the region's MPs, and other partners to secure the best possible deal for the North East as part of the levelling up agenda.

We have lived with restrictions for almost a year now – there are still a tough few weeks ahead – but thanks to the incredible efforts of our NHS, key workers, volunteers and the North East public we are as close as we have been since this pandemic began to finding a way through it.

Let's not blow it now. Thank you for everything you are doing to beat Covid."

Cllr Simon Henig CBE, Leader, Durham County Council

Cllr Martin Gannon, Leader, Gateshead Council

Cllr Nick Forbes CBE, Leader, Newcastle City Council

Norma Redfearn CBE, Elected Mayor, North Tyneside Council

Cllr Glen Sanderson, Leader, Northumberland County Council

Cllr Tracey Dixon, Leader, South Tyneside Council

Cllr Graeme Miller, Leader, Sunderland City Council

Jamie Driscoll, North of Tyne Mayor

Kim McGuinness, Northumbria Police and Crime Commissioner

Countryside volunteering in Northumberland

There are opportunities to volunteer at our country parks, local nature reserves and other countryside sites.

If you would like to help out with practical tasks, or simply report problems or wildlife sightings, please email neil.dawson@northumberland.gov.uk

ITEM 2368: REPORT FROM FUNDRAISING/COMMUNITY PROJECT SCOPING COMMITTEE

As Members will recall, it was agreed at the last Full Parish Council meeting that a working group of local stakeholders be established to investigate possible funding initiatives towards local projects.

Accordingly, a working party including representatives of the Parish Council, St Peter's Church, the Community Trust, the WI, the RNLI and the harbour were invited to a meeting last month and the following was proposed:

- Donation boxes be erected in two locations: at the harbour (attached to the finger post) and at the end of Dunstanburgh Road (attached to the top of the bin there at present).
- These boxes should be low cost (currently costed at just over £100 incl. clips and bolts, etc) but durable and demonstrably temporary so as to ensure that no planning application be required for their installation.
- These boxes should be emptied on a daily basis using a rota of local volunteers and there ought to be two people involved with the collection of the funds.
- Subject to the Trust's agreement, the funds would be collected and deposited into a separate and secure account for that of the Trust's account.
- The funds raised ought to be directed to local projects, including a donation to the harbour for the use of their land for this activity. Possible other local projects include the installation of footpaths and supporting the blooming of the village, particularly the new barrels which have been installed as part of the pedestrian zone scheme for Craster.
- These boxes are intended to be for a trial period of 1 year to see how much is raised and how successful this scheme turns out to be.
- It was agreed that a sign stating "Help keep Craster special" be installed with the box at the harbour and stickers saying "honesty box...all funds towards local projects" be put on to the box at the end of Dunstanburgh Road.
- During the first few months of the instalment of these boxes, an assessment of funds raised will be carried out in case of the need to require an additional level of auditing for the Trust as the recipient.
- The working group needs to have delegated authority to make decisions on behalf of each respective organisation which forms part of the working group on the allocation of this funding.

NB: To date, only representatives of the Parish Council, The Trust and the WI have attended a meeting of this working party but other representatives will be invited along to future meetings.