

TOGSTON PARISH COUNCIL

At the Meeting of the Parish Council held at Christ Church Hall on 13 July 2021 at 6:00pm.

Present: Cllrs A Cairns, K Farwell, M Farwell, F Moore, A Urwin and J Watson (Chairman)

17/21 Apologies for Absence

None received.

18/21 Disclosure of Interests

None received.

19/21 Minutes of previous Meetings

- a. The Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council held on 18 May 2021 were approved as a true record.
- b. The Minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting held on 28 June 2021 were approved as a true record, subject to a correction to Minute 16/21 to show that Cllr Urwin's wife is an allotment tenant, not Cllr Urwin himself.

20/21 Report from Northumbria Police

The Parish Council agreed to bring this item forward to allow PC Andrea Teasdale (8603) to leave the Meeting following her report. PC Teasdale gave a full and detailed report about policing in Togston and the surrounding area, and the following main points were noted:

- a. PC Teasdale and her team receive a lot of word-of-mouth reports directly about incidents or concerns. Unfortunately, to be able to act on these and to build up a full picture of the issues, these incidents and concerns need to be reported officially. There are several ways to do this:
 - By telephoning the 101 non-emergency number
 - By using the reporting form on the Northumbria Police website
 - By calling Crimestoppers

It is possible to make an anonymous report without providing your details by calling Crimestoppers.

If enough reports are received this can build up a picture of the issue which allows the police to request more resources to police the area. Without these reports, the police cannot put more officers or resources into the area. It is really important that any concerns are reported to the police using the methods above. You can report small things, for example dirty syringes in public places or the smell of cannabis, as evidence of drug use, and this will all help build up information.

- b. It is also possible to report concerns to the Housing Associations. Again, reporting issues helps build up a picture. If reports are made to both the police and the housing association then a joint investigation can take place.
- c. The police are unable to take much action to deal with empty houses. If these are becoming a problem they can be reported to Northumberland County Council Environmental Health. This team is able to issue fines and to make an order against the landlord.

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- d. Residents should be vigilant as there is a known drug addict in the area who is going through bins and trying door handles. Please ensure your properties are secured and telephone the police if you see any suspicious activity.
- e. The police can use private CCTV footage as evidence of crime. If you do notice something on your dashcam or doorbell or other private camera footage, this can be passed to the police.
- f. The police are aware of individuals from out of the parish walking in to meet at houses in the parish. This is being monitored and dealt with.

[21/21 Co-option to Vacancy](#)

Three applications for the vacancy were received, one of which was withdrawn prior to the meeting. The Parish Council was given the opportunity to propose and second each of the two candidates. Only one candidate, Susan Jeffrey, was proposed and seconded by councillors. The other candidate was proposed but not seconded.

RESOLVED to co-opt Susan Jeffrey to the vacancy. Cllr Jeffrey will be asked to sign a declaration of acceptance of office and to complete the Declaration of Interest Forms in advance of the next meeting.

[22/21 Chairman's Report](#)

Cllr Watson provided her report.

- a. Cllr Watson and the Clerk have been to the bank and completed the forms to change the bank mandate and correspondence address. The Clerk is awaiting confirmation from the bank.
- b. Cllr Watson and the Clerk have had two handover meetings to go through the files and papers from the former Clerk.
- c. The Parish Council resolved at its last meeting to put in place a Service Level Agreement with Northumbria County Council for grass and hedge cutting and strimming and weed killing of the common areas at the Togston Parish Allotments. The work is due to start as soon as possible. Cllr Watson and the Clerk will chase the NCC team to get this started as soon as possible.
- d. The Parish Council attended training provided by the Northumberland Association of Local Councils on 28 June. Cllr Watson has also attended Chairman training on 15 July with the same provider, which she has paid for herself.
- e. Cllr Watson has obtained a price for a new noticeboard from a local joiner. The noticeboard at the allotments is in good working condition so this quote is not needed at present but can be kept on file.

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- f. Cllr Watson has written to Broomhill First School to introduce herself and to ask whether the school would be interested in taking an allotment.

23/21 Report from County Cllr Terry Clarke

A report was received from County Cllr Clarke which the content of recent correspondence received by him relating to Togston and his responses. The Clerk will provide the dates of the next meeting and ask for him to attend.

24/21 Policies and Procedures

RESOLVED to adopt the following policies:

- a. Standing Orders
- b. Code of Conduct
- c. Co-option Policy

25/21 Finance

- a. The financial report to 10 June (the date of the last bank statements) was received.
- b. **RESOLVED** to authorise the following payments:

Supplier	Head of Expenditure	Cost	VAT	Total
NALC	Training	£75.00	£0.00	£75.00

- c. The following payments were noted:

Date	Source	Reason	Amount
10/5/21	Bank	Interest	£0.04

- d. As mentioned in the Chairman's Report, the Clerk is awaiting confirmation from the bank that the mandate and correspondence address have been changed.
- e. **RESOLVED** to ratify the addition of Cllr Watson as an additional signatory.

26/21 North End Close – Issues with Rats

Cllr Urwin has received several reports of a rat problem at North End Close. It is possible that this has been caused by the removal of the orchard at the very top end of North End Close. The Parish Council understands that some residents have taken matters into their own hands using industrial products straight onto the garden. This is clearly a health and safety concern for people and animals. Any dead rats need to be disposed of professionally as they are a potential hazard to wildlife if they have eaten poison, the corpses may be a source of Viles disease, and incorrect disposal could breach environmental law.

Affected residents should write to the housing association (Riverside) and should report the issue to Environmental Health at Northumberland County Council. Environmental Health can take action but this will be charged to residents.

Residents should remove sources of food, including bird or pet food. If this must be kept on the premises it should be in metal storage containers. They should remove sources of water and shelter as far as possible.

RESOLVED to write to Riverside Housing Association to raise the issue and to ask for their support to deal with the problem.

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27/21 Best Allotment and Garden Contest

The Parish Council discussed arrangements for the Best Allotment and Garden Contest.

- a. **RESOLVED** Geoff Elliot and Bill [] will judge the competition on the last Saturday in July. Prizes will be delivered to winners. The Clerk will put up a notice of the date of the competition and will also put up a notice of the winners after the event.
- b. **RESOLVED** to give £20 National Garden Scheme Gift Card first prize and £10 National Garden Scheme Gift Card second prize in the following categories, with a bottle of wine for all first and second prize winners:
 - Flower Garden
 - Allotment Plot
 - Container Garden
- c. **RESOLVED** Cllr Cairns to arrange engraving of the winners' trophies.

28/21 Christmas Lights

The Parish Council discussed arrangements for the Christmas Lights.

RESOLVED:

- a. The Clerk will check any insurance requirements.
- b. To approve expenditure up to £175 for the Christmas tree.
- c. To purchase two new sets of refurbished icicle lights at an approximate cost of £160/set and three new sets of refurbished lights for the Christmas tree at an approximate cost of £40/set. Clerk to ask County Cllr Terry Clarke, the Round Table and the Freemasons for a contribution, with an aim of raising £1,000 for a new set of icicle lights.
- d. Clerk to contact Warkworth and Amble Round table with the date of the switch on.
- e. Clerk to notify the Gazette and the Ambler nearer the time.
- f. Clerk to notify vicar and school in September.

29/21 Christmas Lights

Arrangements for the Christmas Fair to be discussed at the next Meeting.

30/21 Planning

The Parish Council discussed cars obstructing the Queen Street Public Right of Way (Footpath).

RESOLVED to serve a notice on the occupant, copied to the landlord, requesting removal of the vehicles within two weeks, failing which further action to be taken.

The Chairman closed the Meeting at 8:00pm.