

## Rennington Parish Council

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### PARISH COUNCIL MINUTES

Minutes of the meeting of the Rennington Parish Council meeting held at 7.00pm on Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> October, 2021 in Rennington Village Hall

**Present:** Cllrs Robert Dixon (Chair), Karl Neilsen (Vice Chair), Lalage Bosanquet, Stephen Baggott, Alan Tremlett, Phil Green

**In attendance:** Clerk Deb Still, NCC Cllr Wendy Pattison and 4 members of the public.

**135/21 Apologies for Absence – None**

**136/21 Declarations of Interest –** Cllr Bosanquet informed the council of a pecuniary interest in relation to item 142/21 ii. Cllrs Dixon and Baggott informed the council of a pecuniary interest in relation to item 153/21 ii for their expenses. Cllr Baggott declared a non-pecuniary interest in relation to item 142/21 iv.

**137/21 Public Participation Time –** four members of the public attended. One member of the public raised an issue in relation to Church Road Water Treatment Plant where the undergrowth around the area had not been cut back by Northumbria Water until 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2021 and had looked very untidy. The works should in their view have been completed at an earlier date once the birds had finished nesting. The council RESOLVED to write to Northumbria Water to request a schedule of tidying the undergrowth around the plant.

**138/21 Minutes of the Meetings of the Council held on Monday 9<sup>th</sup> August 2021 –** the Minutes of the meeting were RESOLVED as a true record with an amendment to item 122/21 i) in relation to the draft terms of Reference for the Working Group that should read that the 'maximum' number of volunteers be set at 6 (in place of the 'minimum' number).

**139/21 Matters Arising from the previous meeting**

i) Work on the filing cabinet in the RVH office has been largely completed. RESOLVED that the Clerk will attempt to source a replacement key for the cabinet and/or arrange to have the lock replaced.

ii) NCC has replied that additional grass cutting for Rennington to the verges and some pruning of lower branches of trees can be carried out for the sum of £145 per cut and that most villages usually request three additional cuts – two in October and one in March. RESOLVED that the three additional cuts will be purchased and a schedule of NCC cuts will be requested, including cutting down invasive species such as Himalayan Balsam which is growing by the burn and needs to be uprooted annually before it seeds. NOTED that Rock Estate will continue to cut the verges in Rock.

iii) Defibrillator – Cllr Dixon and Peter Purdom (PP) have been in discussions with regard to transferring responsibilities for management of the Defibrillator now that PP has decided to step down at the end of the month. Tim Walls will continue to be a Guardian and Elliot Smith will join the team. The Stephen Carey Fund will continue to support RPC to some extent. Cllr Dixon is working on a Policy and Procedure with the team for future management of the defibrillator and will bring the draft to the next meeting. NOTED that it will be necessary for the Parish Council to arrange for a professional annual electrical safety test in December of each year.

**140/21 Adoption of New Policies and Procedures**

**Co-option Policy** – a discussion took place over whether councillors would prefer to vote on co-options by show of hands or by secret ballot. RESOLVED to leave both options in the Policy and for a decision to be made by councillors on each occasion before voting. It was RESOLVED to amend p.4, paragraph 8 to read ‘any validly nominated candidates’ instead of ‘any validly elected candidates’ and bring the final draft of the Policy for adoption at the next meeting.

**Standing Orders** – these are based on the Model Standing Orders produced by the National Association of Local Councils. RESOLVED to make the following amendments and bring the final draft to the next meeting for adoption:

Add that mobile phones should be placed on silent during meetings  
Para 3 (f) that public participation be reduced from 30 to 15 minutes  
Para 3 (g) that a member of the public shall not speak for more than 5 minutes  
Para 3(i) that persons not be required to stand when speaking  
Para 3 (s) that voting shall be by a show of hands or by secret ballot  
Para 4 (d) (ii) shall be deleted  
Para 21 (a) that the Data Protection Officer shall be the Parish Clerk/RFO

**Financial Regulations** – these are based on the Model Financial Regulations produced by the National Association of Local Councils. RESOLVED to make the following amendments and bring the final draft to the next meeting for adoption:

Para 2.2 to amend to reflect new online procedures for banking and using dropbox for councillors to reconcile against bank statements.

**141/21 Neighbourhood Development Plan**

i) **Report back from consultation drop-in session on 23<sup>rd</sup> September** – very successful event attended by 46 members of the public. To date, 56 questionnaires have been returned via SurveyMonkey and by post. NOTED that the results will be collated, analysed and brought to the next RPC meeting.

ii) **Terms of Reference for the Working Group.** Discussion took place about the members of the group and Cllr Baggott confirmed that members may come and go and some may join because of a particular interest or expertise but may not be involved throughout the whole term of the project. RESOLVED to redraft the Terms of Reference relating to the finances to read that ‘All capital and

revenue expenditure in the preparation and adoption of the Neighbourhood Development Plan will be made in accordance with Rennington Parish Council's financial regulations'.

iii) **Grant funding** – the current grant funding from Locality ends in March 2022 when any monies unspent will need to be returned. The form to complete is long and detailed. A new scheme is to be announced on 27.10.21. **RESOLVED** to wait until more is known about the new scheme before applying for grant monies.

#### **142/21 Planning Issues and Enforcement**

##### **Live Planning Applications**

i) **21/03303/DISCON** - Street Lighting - Fmr North Farm Site, Rennington (Condition 18 of 20/03446/VARYCO) – RPC was specifically invited to comment by the Planning Authority which was done within the 7 days' time limit. RPC objected and in summary, objected to the urban street furniture in a 'dark skies' rural environment deeming it out of step with other village developments and inappropriate, unnecessary and an intrusion on the Rennington sense of place. The decision has not yet been made by NCC.

ii) **21/ 03294/FUL** – Erection of 4 no. dwellings (C3 use) and improvements to existing dwellings including upgrading of private roads, new parking and bin stores. Lnd North 9-23 Rock Village, Rock. Cllr Bosanquet and County Councillor Pattison and one member of the public left the room for this item.

Discussion by the councillors raised the following points about the application:

- the proposed development would have a detrimental impact on the setting of 6 grade 2 listed buildings;
- the reduction of green space within the conservation area would significantly reduce the amenity of the area;
- the development is not proportionate for a small village in line with Policy STP1 of the emerging Local Plan;
- four out of five dwellings already completed in Rock have been purchased as second homes and this development may do little to support the social and economic vitality of the rural area;
- the application does not evidence that it will 'provide a type and mix of housing to meet local housing need', 'contribute to the conservation and enhancement of Northumberland's natural, historic, water and built environment assets' or 'be accessible by, or be able to be made accessible by public transport, walking or cycling where feasible, thereby reducing the need to travel for both people and goods, and the dependence on travel by private car' (policies within the emerging Local Plan);
- the development does not meet the requirements of the National Policy Planning Framework (NPPF) for sustainable development nor demonstrate that it will meet the social objective by providing housing that meets the needs of present or future generations;

- this proposed development does not take a proactive role in mitigating climate change as required by the NPPF;
- there has been no archaeological survey in what is a conservation area of some importance with known and unknown archaeological heritage;
- the previous development of five new dwellings improved the look of the village, by transforming the previous steadings that were an eyesore,
- the new development will enable improvements to the parking around the cottages;
- the development may improve the look of the village.

A motion was proposed by Cllr Green to object to the application and was seconded by Cllr Baggott and councillors voted three in favour of the motion and two against. RESOLVED to object to the application.

iii) Cllr Bosanquet and County Councillor Pattison and a member of the public returned to the Village Hall.

**21/00752/FUL** Land west of Rennington Village. Proposed Block Plans submitted showing car parking. Proposal suggests limitations and access problems relating to RVH parking.

It was RESOLVED to raise concerns with the planning authority about the parking space allocated for two vehicles being very small and difficult to manoeuvre.

iv) **20/04399/REM** and **20/02451/REM**. Reserved matters land north of Grange Park. Drainage matters remain unresolved.

Discussion about the application was around the fact that drainage would be into the Stamford Burn which is in a Flood Zone 1 area. RESOLVED to make a comment about concerns in relation to surface drainage and potential flooding.

v) **21/03612/AGRGDO** Gallowmoor. Proposed general purpose agricultural building.

RESOLVED to make no comments or objections.

vi) **21/00980/FUL** Broxfield. Part retrospective erection of 3 agricultural buildings. Amended plan submitted 6 September 2021.

NOTED that this planning application has been granted.

#### **Other planning issues**

vii) NOTED that the training due to be carried out by the NCC Director of Planning has been postponed pending the finalisation of the Local Plan. The Discussion about future RPC decision making in connection with planning/enforcement matters and providing effective representation for the views of the community will take place after the training.

viii) Proposed Meeting with Northumberland Estates following the refusal by NCC at the Pre-planning application for Phase 2 of the North Farm Development – dates were discussed and it was RESOLVED that the meeting would take place on 19<sup>th</sup> October in the afternoon. Cllrs Dixon, Baggott and Green to attend.

- ix) Update on Stamford Lea (Mason's Arms) - removal of spoil – NOTED that NCC were due to issue an enforcement notice at the end of August and the Clerk has requested an update on progress.
- x) 17/04588/FUL North Farm Rennington - Installation of foul and surface water drainage – NCC has investigated the concerns raised by RPC and has provided assurances that the developer is building the new drainage as per the agreed plans and that the new foul and surface pipework is not increasing flood risk on or off-site.
- xi) NCC Planning validation list public consultation – no comments from RPC.
- xii) Any planning applications submitted since the drafting of the agenda – none.

**143/21 Website and website Analytics** – Analytics from July to September 2021 show Nearly 3000 page views of 206 users with 188 new users which councillors NOTED shows good footfall. The current website is hosted by the Northumberland Association of Local Councils and is quite basic and costs £75 per annum.  
RESOLVED that Cllr Baggott will explore options for a website for the future that would be more flexible, user friendly and might be shared with other local organisations.

**144/21 Northumberland and Newcastle Society subscription**  
RESOLVED not to subscribe to this Society in the future.

**145/21 Transport North East Stakeholder Forum**  
Cllr Green was unable to attend the meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> September but has been asked to organise a local focus group to meet in Rennington Village Hall on 14<sup>th</sup> October to collect views from local people about the impact on their lives of the lack of public transport.

**146/21 NCC Climate Emergency Declaration** – NCC has made a request of all local councils to respond to the NCC Climate Emergency Declaration. RESOLVED that this will be dealt with via the Neighbourhood Development Plan.

**147/21 Rennington Parish Definitive Map** – NCC can supply a map of the parish A1 paper size at a scale of 1:12,000 that will show all the recorded public rights of way including all of the changes reflected in previous Modification Orders for an approximate cost of £30. RESOLVED that the Clerk will ascertain whether a free version might be available as part of the NDP process.

**148/21 Christmas Lights**  
RESOLVED to grant £50 to the Rennington Village Hall Committee and £50 to the Rock Community Fund for the provision of Christmas Lights.

**149/21 Communications/Correspondence Received**  
1) Healthwatch are holding regular drop-in sessions around the county and Zoom drop-ins on the 2 Friday of each month to give residents an opportunity to tell them about residents' experiences of NHS and Social Care Services. (details on RPC website in the News section)

2) NCC has pledged to make Northumberland the first net-zero county by 2030 and is giving 15,000 free tree saplings to residents.(Details on RPC website in the News section).

3) Correspondence from a member of the public about Rennington watercourse culvert silting and roadside drains clearance need. RESOLVED that the clerk will respond to update the person about NCC's latest response and chase the previously requested schedule of maintenance works.

**150/21 NCC Local Transport Plan Programme 2022-23** - After discussion it was RESOLVED to submit the following highways and transport priorities for the parish in no particular order of priority:

- C73 through the village of Rennington. Repair and resurface the road and repair grass verges. Parts of the road have become unsafe, particularly the sharp bend in the road at its junction with Church Road where the surface has become very smooth. The recent development work at North Farm has hastened the deterioration of the road;
- B1430 from Hockett to the railway bridge at Gallowmoor. Repair and resurface the road and repair grass verges. Sections of this stretch are badly pitted causing drivers/vehicles taking avoidance manoeuvres which increases the potential for accidents. Pothole repairs are shown to be inadequate in providing a sustainable surface on this busy road with increasing vehicle capacity due to holidaymakers;
- B1339 4-way junction at Long Row, Stamford. Junction improvements needed to clearly inform motorists on route priorities;
- Stamford Farm and hamlet. Introduction of a 30 mph speed limit
- C73 between the settlements of Rennington and Rock. Installation of a foot/cycle path adjacent to the road.

**151/21 Comparison of Spend with Budget for 21-22** – RESOLVED to set a budget at the next meeting of the Parish Council and for the Clerk to discuss with the auditor.

**152/21 Review of Asset Register and Asset Maintenance** (circulated in advance)  
After discussion of assets, maintenance and values it was RESOLVED for Clerk and Councillors to finalise the Asset Register and Asset Maintenance ready for agreement at the next meeting.

**153/21 Financial Matters**

i) Financial Report and update of Lloyds Bank Account balances as at 30th September 21 (monthly financial report circulated in advance).

Treasurer's Current Account Balance 30th September £9,046.48  
Business Bank Instant Reserve Account  
Parish Council Reserves £2,875.50

Community Benefit Fund for Village Hall £1,961.46

ii) Cllrs Dixon and Baggott left the meeting when discussion of their expenses took place and returned for the next item. It was RESOLVED that the following payments be approved:

Clerk's mileage by car to RPC meeting 9.8.21 £4.05

Clerk's mileage by bike to RPC to sort filing cabinet in office £1.80

Clerk's purchase of 1 ream of paper £3.50

Defibrillator Carry Case for iPad 11.8.21 £91.14

Cllr Dixon's expenses for printing Flyer and Questionnaire for NDP Consultation Day 23.9.21 £245.60

Cllr Baggott's expenses for Survey Monkey for NDP Consultation analysis for next 12 months, refreshments and stationery for NDP Consultation Day 23.9.21 £430.40

Rental Payment to Northumberland Estates for 25.3.21 to 28.9.21 £425

ICO annual Data Protection Registration Fee £40

**154/21 Online Banking – RESOLVED** that Cllrs Baggott and Green will become additional signatories to the RPC bank account.

**155/21 County Councillor – Monthly Report** (circulated in advance)

**156/21 Co-option of Parish Councillor (s)  
Consideration of Co-option of Fred Bosanquet**

Fred Bosanquet's statement and application were considered and Councillors asked questions of the candidate. Votes were taken on a show of hands and it was RESOLVED that Fred Bosanquet be co-opted to the Parish Council.

**157/21 Acceptance of office of new Parish Councillor – Cllr Green's acceptance of office** was RECEIVED.

**158/21 Setting dates for future Meetings – RESOLVED** that the Clerk will send round dates for the next 15 months' of meetings to be agreed at the next PC meeting.

**159/21 Other Urgent Business – none.**

**160/21 Staffing Matters – RESOLVED** to exclude the public due to the confidential nature of the business to be discussed. The verbal report by the Clerk was APPROVED.

**161/21 Date of Next Meeting – Thursday December 2nd at 7pm (RPC Business Meeting) Thursday 28th October 2021 7pm Rennington Parish Annual Meeting (postponed from May 2021)**