

## **RENNINGTON PARISH COUNCIL**

**Clerk:** Deb Still, 26 Swansfield Park Road, Alnwick, NE66 1AT

**Email:** [renningtonpc@gmail.com](mailto:renningtonpc@gmail.com)

**Website:** [www.northumberlandparishes.uk/rennington](http://www.northumberlandparishes.uk/rennington)

### **PARISH COUNCIL MINUTES**

Minutes of the meeting of the Rennington Parish Council meeting held at 7pm on Thursday 10th March, 2022 at Rennington Village Hall.

**Present:** Cllrs Robert Dixon (Chair), Stephen Baggott, Alan Tremlett, Phil Green, Lalage Bosanquet, Fred Bosanquet, Karl Neilson.

**In attendance:** Clerk Deb Still and Cllr Wendy Pattison.

#### **47/22 Apologies for Absence**

#### **48/22 Declarations of Interest**

Cllrs F & L Bosanquet declared a pecuniary interest in item 55/22 ii and applied for a dispensation. It was RESOLVED to agree to grant the dispensation for the period of the meeting of 10th March. Cllr Green declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 51/22 i.

#### **49/22 Public Participation Time**

Cllrs F & L Bosanquet opted to make a personal statement at this point in the agenda regarding item 55/22 ii. They wanted the Council to note the following in relation to the refusal by Northumberland County Council Planning Authority to allow the erection of four dwellings (C3 use) and improvements to existing dwellings including upgrading of private roads, new parking and bin stores on the Land North Of 9 To 23 Rock Village:

- the row of 9 houses on the village street directly impacted by the parking and access issues are lived in by young working couples or retired people who all pay affordable rents
- there are difficulties in Rock due to residents having to park on the green which tears it up such that it is unable to recover and this application also sought to create formal parking places on the green
- if granted, the application, would have enabled improvements to be made at the rear of the cottages for the benefit of the tenants (private directly accessible gardens)
- there are increasing legislative actions on energy certificates and health and safety for rented housing
- the Ros Kain heritage report in the planning decision advocates an ultra restrictive interpretation for development in conservation areas making it harder to preserve the existing affordable housing provision

- if Rock Estates cannot maintain the rented properties as affordable housing they may be forced to sell them thereby potentially increasing the number of second homes in the parish
- the parish council's mission is to respond to local issues and Rock Estates would like these issues in Rock to be discussed.

- 50/22 Minutes of the Meetings of the Council held on Thursday February 3rd**  
RESOLVED (proposed by Cllr Baggott and seconded by Cllr Green) that the Minutes be accepted and signed as a correct and true record.
- 51/22 Matters Arising from the previous meeting**
- i) **Update on culvert silting and roadside drains.**  
Some additional works have been carried out by NCC in 2022. The Chair is finalising a detailed letter to be sent to Northumberland County Council on various issues in relation to this matter.
- ii) **Update on defibrillator at Rock Cricket Club.**  
Rock Cricket Club has confirmed they will respond to the email sent by RPC after their next April.
- iii) **Review of condition of triangle of grass at the junction of Church Road with the C73.**  
Further to the RPC meeting of 13th January 2022 and a second complaint by the resident about the condition of the grass due to vans and farm vehicles driving over it, the Council reviewed the matter. It was AGREED not to put any barriers around the triangle in the form of boulders, stakes/chains or hedging. The Council consider that Rennington is a rural working village and vehicles do need to turn around in what is quite a tight space. Putting a perimeter around the triangle may lead to damage to vehicles and to the perimeter itself. The grass does recover quickly particularly in the growing season.
- 52/22 Queen's Platinum Jubilee Preparations for the Parish**  
Cllr F Bosanquet has offered the support of RPC to the Rennington Village Hall Committee in planning or organising events. The Clerk will publicise the events planned for Rock and for Rennington on the RPC website.
- 53/22 Adoption/Review of RPC Policies and Procedures**  
The Clerk's suggested priorities for drafting and reviewing Policies and Procedures (circulated in a spreadsheet) was AGREED.  
It was RESOLVED (proposed by Cllr L Bosanquet and seconded by Cllr Neilson) to adopt the Data Protection Policy).  
It was RESOLVED (proposed by Cllr Baggott and seconded by Cllr F Bosanquet) to adopt the Publication Scheme)
- 54/22 Neighbourhood Development Plan**  
The NDP remains on hold pending the outcome of the government spending review on the allocation of funds to the NDP programme after April 2022.
- 55/22 Planning Issues and Enforcement**

### **Live Planning Applications**

i) There are no planning applications submitted since the drafting of the agenda.

### **Other planning issues**

ii) Refusal Decision for 21/03294/FUL Land North Of 9 To 23 Rock Village Rock Village Rock.

Cllr Pattison (NCC) left the room for this item and returned for item 56/22.

Cllr Dixon NOTED that the refusal letter by the Planning Authority was a useful guide to future planning decisions of NCC. The letter stated the application was refused on the grounds of Impact on the Character of Area, Impact on the Conservation Area, Impact on the Setting of Listed Buildings in addition to a Lack of Information provided by the applicant on Archaeology, Highways and Coastal Mitigation. This demonstrates the importance of the Parish Council relating their own decisions and comments about planning matters to the Local and National Planning Frameworks and focussing on material considerations.

Cllrs Tremlett and Neilson felt that the Parish Council should support applications in future that might be good for the Parish and were keen to encourage such development in the Parish.

Cllr Baggott commented that the application was refused on objective grounds of being contrary to several local planning policies as the four houses were proposed in the Rock Conservation Area. Sited in another position for instance on a greenfield site, the application might have been met with approval by the Planning Authority.

All Councillors agreed that appropriate development should be encouraged and that a balance had to be achieved in the Parish between sustainability, economics, people and the built and natural environment.

**56/22**

### **Training**

The Clerk has completed 3 out of 5 modules of the ILCA Training. Cllr F Bosanquet has completed his planning training.

**57/22**

### **Rennington Village Hall Report**

Cllr F Bosanquet confirmed that all the repairs have been completed and all the users of the Hall have been notified. Rennington Village Hall Management Committee (RVHMC) has approached Rock Cricket Club with a view to developing the hall for indoor use.

RVHMC has also confirmed that the Scarecrow Festival will be taking place on the August Bank Holiday weekend. It was noted that a resident has written to RPC about the Festival and asked that consultation of residents takes place as to whether to hold the festival. Cllr Tremlett confirmed that he had also heard of people, particularly living around Rennington Village Green, who were less keen than they had been in the past of holding the event. Cllr F Bosanquet will pass these comments to the RVHMC and the correspondent

has also been asked to contact RVHMC direct as the decision is not one taken by the Parish Council.

**58/22 Register of Assets**

The Register of Assets was AGREED as correct by the Council.

**59/22 Parish Emergency Plan/Resilience Plan**

i) The draft plan will be amended in the light of responses to the first survey.

ii) There have been 33 responses to the surveys online and 8 paper surveys returned. Two letters of complaint and some verbal comments have also been received by residents in relation to issues around GDPR and concerns that organisation might replace neighbourliness.

Responses to this first survey were positive with support for the plan with people in the Parish, particularly some of the more vulnerable, feeling pleased and relieved to know that local support has been planned for times of emergency. 55% of respondents said they would make use of the designated Emergency Rest Centre (Rennington Village Hall) in an emergency.

Cllr Green emphasised that there was no intention to replace 'neighbourliness' but instead to increase resilience, self-sufficiency, volunteering and ensure that vulnerable people would be identified and looked after in an emergency.

Cllr Green has been sounding out some potential volunteers who would be willing to be called on in an emergency. A working group will discuss how to take this forward and bring proposals to the next meeting.

The Clerk reminded all councillors to be careful about using information gained in their personal life (for instance email addresses) in their council business. Councillors use their own personal emails for council business which can lead to a blurring of lines. The Clerk will continue to store and process personal information and sensitive personal information in line with Data Protection Legislation. Councillors will not usually have access to such information unless strictly necessary for council business and in line with the Council's Data Protection Policy. Correspondence received by the Clerk from residents will continue to be anonymised before forwarding to members. The Parish Council will not be keeping a register of 'vulnerable' people but in the event of an emergency the RVT members will be ensuring that potentially vulnerable people are identified and supported and in line with Data Protection Legislation. No personal information will be shared with third parties without consent or where vital interests need to be protected nor will personal information be used for purposes other than which it was provided. Personal information will be deleted in line with Data Protection Legislation and the Council's Data Retention Schedule.

**iii) Proposed Support from Civil Contingencies Team at NCC.**

Nigel Fisher, Civil Contingencies Officer, has been invited to speak at the Annual Parish Meeting on 28th April at 7pm and is providing useful information

to RPC and would be willing to lead sessions for councillors and volunteers in the future.

**60/22 Purchase of Assets for Parish**

The draft grant application prepared by the Clerk was approved and will be submitted by the Clerk.

**61/22 Communications/Correspondence Received**

Correspondence was NOTED from a parishioner regarding item 12/22 of the 13th January minutes regarding a bench damaged in the storm. The Council has written to the respondent to confirm that the bench is the responsibility of Rock Estates (in addition to two other benches that were gifted to Rock Estates by the Parish Council some years ago).

**62/22 Rennington CPAD Defibrillator**

The Council NOTED the 6 monthly report from the Lead Guardian.

**63/22 Annual Parish Meeting**

The meeting will take place on 28th April at 7pm in Rennington Village Hall. External speakers to be invited are Nigel Fisher (Civil Contingencies Officer at NCC); Laurence Dent (Chair of RVH); Adam Ferry (Rock Cricket Club); Rev Alison Hardy (Area Dean for the Diocese of Newcastle) and NCC Cllr Wendy Pattison.

**64/22 Ukraine**

NOTED that Rennington Parish Council confirms that it stands in support and solidarity with the people of Ukraine, strongly condemning the multiple attacks and violations of the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Ukraine. The Clerk will put links on the website to actions that residents can take to support Ukraine.

**65/22 Age UK Northumberland**

Age UK Northumberland has launched a two-year Scams Awareness and Support Programme. The Parish Council will invite them to deliver a group scams awareness session for residents in 2022. The programme also offers free, confidential one to one support and advice and free call blocker units to some individuals.

**66/22 Updating the Parish Council Website**

AGREED that the Clerk will draft appropriate news items and upload to the website and notify councillors after publishing. Councillors will also send photographs to the Clerk to use for the website.

**67/22 Financial Matters**

**i) Financial Report** and update of Lloyds Bank Account balances as at 4.3.22 (monthly financial report circulated in advance).

Treasurer's Current Account Balance 4th March 2022

Business Bank Instant Reserve Account

Parish Council Reserves

**£4999.51**

**£3750.61**

s.106 monies from NE for RV Hall

**£1961.57**

**ii) To approve current payments:**

It was RESOLVED to approve the following payments:

Printing of Emergency Plan letter and survey - CBS Print Costs **£36.26**

(paid by debit card pursuant to Financial Reg 4.1)

St James' URC Meeting Room Hire 20.1.22 and 3.2.22 **£38.25**

6 months' Rent for Village Hall to Northumberland Estates **£425**

**iii) Bank Reconciliation by Councillor**

It was NOTED that Cllr Green has checked the Bank Reconciliations of the two Council bank accounts pursuant to Financial Regulations 2.2.

**iv) VAT**

It was NOTED that the VAT reclaim has been submitted by the Clerk.

**v) Online Banking** – Cllrs Green and Baggott have both been added as signatories by Lloyds Bank and are now able to apply for online banking registration.

**vi) National Joint Council for Local Government Services agreement to increase local government salaries by 1.75% backdated to April 2021**

It was RESOLVED to increase the current Clerk's salary by 1.75% in line with the NJCLGS agreement backdated to 1st April 2021 and RESOLVED to pay the same increase to the previous Clerk for the period 1st April to 30th June when they were in employment.

**68/22 County Councillor** – the Monthly Report was circulated in advance. Cllr Pattison reminded councillors and residents to report potholes on the NCC website. As a resident of the parish, Cllr Pattison was pleased with the Resilience Plan and Survey prepared by the Parish Council which she found very reassuring.

**69/22 Any Other Urgent Business**  
Northumberland County Council are consulting on Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans and how to enhance the walking and cycling infrastructure in the county and the proposed walking and cycling networks for the 12 main towns (Alnwick, Amble, Ashington, Bedlington, Berwick-upon-Tweed, Blyth, Cramlington, Haltwhistle, Hexham, Morpeth, Ponteland, Prudhoe).

Cllr Green will work with interested parties to draft a response and the Clerk will submit it by the deadline of 15th April 2022.

**70/22 Staffing Matters**

It was RESOLVED to exclude the public due to the confidential nature of the business to be discussed. It was AGREED that an Employment sub-committee will be set up composed of Cllrs Dixon and Green. It was RESOLVED to agree the verbal report of the Clerk which will be confirmed in writing and signed by the Chair.

**71/22      Date of Next Meeting** – Thursday 14th April 2022 at Rennington Village Hall.

**Future Meeting Dates**

28th April 2022 (Rennington Annual Parish Meeting)

12th May 2022 (and Annual Meeting)

9th June 2022

14th July 2022

8th September 2022

13th October 2022

8th December 2023

12th January 2023

9th February 2023

9th March 2023