

# FELTON PARISH COUNCIL

At the Meeting of the Parish Council held at Felton Village Hall at 7:15pm on 14 March 2022.

Present: Cllrs J Cruden, G Cuthbert, R Evans, T Hood, G Lings (Chairman), L Sowter and A Walton.

**179. Apologies for Absence** – Cllrs E Blagburn. Cllr Thornton gave her resignation in advance of the meeting and did not attend. Cllr Lings thanked Cllr Thornton for all her hard work on the Parish Council and its committees during her time as councillor.

## **180. Declarations of interest in items on the Agenda and Granting of Dispensations**

Cllrs Evans declared an interest in Item 7 (Recreation Lane – Access) as he owns property situated along the Lane. Cllrs Cruden and Sowter declared an interest in Item 7 (Recreation Lane) generally but concluded that they did not have an interest in the particular matter under discussion.

## **181. Public Participation**

- a. A resident asked why the Standing Item on Correspondence had been removed from the Agenda. Cllr Lings explained that this was because all councillors now receive all copies of correspondence under the trial policy, however as this list is useful to residents and councillors it will be included in agenda going forward.
- b. A resident noted that Felton Cemetery Joint Committee is not scheduled to meet until April and that there are two trees which need to be removed. The resident suggested that an additional line could be added as a standing agenda item to allow cemetery business to be dealt with by the Parish Council between meetings. Cllr Lings stated that the Parish Council may not take decisions on any items not listed on the agenda. The tree works are within the scope of responsibility of the Cemetery Joint Committee, which reports to the Parish Council.

**182. The Minutes of the meeting held on 7 February 2022** were approved as a true record subject to the following change:

- a. **Minute 164d** – replacement of ‘Cllr Thornton and Mrs Krzyzosiak’ with the words ‘South View Working Group’.

## **183. Finances**

- a. The financial statement and budget monitoring document to 25 February 2022 was received. The cemetery levies paid by the three parish councils should be received before the year end. The Zoom subscription was cancelled in November.
- b. A corrected payment for Clerk’s salary (January) is included in the payments list: this differs from the payment authorised at the last meeting due to changing over to the new payroll system.

Resolved: to authorise the following payments:

Payee	Head of Expenditure	Cost	VAT	Total	Reference
C Lewis (Jan) – corrected figure	Clerk’s Salary Cemetery – Clerk’s Salary Clerk’s Expenses Zoom	£465.28		£465.28	PC21/22.45 and FCJC21/22.31
SJS Law	Legal Fees	£750.00	£150.00	£900.00	PC21/22.50

- c. The Parish Council considered the request from the Clerk to apply for a business debit card. The limit can be reduced and the Clerk has checked which section of the form to complete.

Resolved: to apply to Lloyds Bank plc for the issue of a Business Debit Card to the Clerk as an authorised user, to be used in accordance with Financial Regulation 6.19 and to agree a transaction limit of £500.

## FELTON PARISH COUNCIL

### 184. Felton Surgery

- a. The north and west boundaries of the land to be transferred are still not agreed. The Clerk has instructed the solicitor that the land to be transferred should include everything owned by Bellway up to the north and west boundaries, i.e., there should not be any strip still owned by Bellway on the northern and western sides of the surgery land following the transfer. Cllr Lings is meeting with NCC highways tomorrow at the site to discuss the footpath adoption. There has been no further information on the development progress from either the surgery or the CCG.
- b. The Parish Council has agreed to proceed with the transfer regardless whether the surgery development goes ahead.

Resolved: To accept the transfer of the land as soon as possible, subject to receiving all the land owned by Bellway to the north and west of the site.

### 185. Report from County Cllr Trevor Thorne – None received.

### 186. Parish Representation at Meetings

- a. The Recreation Field Committee met on 17 February and is taking action on various matters. The play area rear fence has been lifted and straightened and the large hole has been repaired. The east and west play area fences have been repaired using fence posts donated by Cllr Cruden. Brambles around the play area fences have been cut back. The Committee is considering its options for improving the playing pitch, the most extreme of which is to plough the surface. Two fallen trees on the eastern field boundary have been removed onto Parish Council land. The Committee is progressing with a Recreation Field Regeneration Project following a report by Cllr Cuthbert and the Clerk. A resident has volunteered to assist with fundraising applications. The Committee has delegated to the Clerk to source quotes. The initial phase will be to replace the MUGA and possibly to install toilets. The bark needs replacing. Two dumpy bags were collected by Cllr Cruden as a temporary solution to infill under the swings. The same company is providing a bulk price.
- b. The Biodiversity and Climate Change Committee has been contacted by Matt Baker at NCC, who is masterminding the Warm Homes Scheme. This will target households with income under £30,000, with a focus on insulation and green energy. Felton has been proposed as a trial village. The Committee is liaising with NCC to arrange a public briefing in April/May for trades and residents.
- c. The South View Working Group is still awaiting the proposed scheme for South View from NCC, which was due at the end of January. The Layby Working Group is also expecting survey results. The Local Transport Programme has been published in draft on NCC's website and from this it appears the Parish Council's priorities have not been included, unless these fall under the 'other locations' section. The Working Group has asked County Cllr Thorne to confirm. This is disappointing news as it was hoped that the Oval Scheme would be included as a minimum as this Scheme is ready for implementation.

### 187. Update from Northumbria Police – No crimes have been reported during the period 15 February to 9 March 2022. The Parish Council noted Northumbria Police's firm position that they are not allowed to report on any ongoing matters. The Community Engagement Van visited the village on Friday 11 March. The local Sergeant is moving to a new role and his replacement will be announced in due course.

### 188. Tree Works – not discussed as the tree which has fallen at Riverside is on NCC land.

### 189. Queen's Jubilee

- a. The Parish Council considered the request for a grant of £200 from the Village Hall Jubilee Garden Team, to be used to purchase a bench. The bench will be situated in the small garden outside the Village Hall. The Parish Council agreed that a wooden bench would be preferred, in order to match the benches already in place.

Resolved: To grant £200 to the Village Hall Jubilee Garden Team, for the purchase of a bench, which should be wooden if possible.

## FELTON PARISH COUNCIL

- b. The Parish Council discussed the planting of an oak tree. The Clerk had obtained some prices. It was agreed quality is important and that an untrimmed tree would be best. The trees available from the Woodland Trust will be too small. Cllr Cruden will obtain a quote from Scott Clarehugh/Woodland Burials as they have suitable equipment to transplant a tree. This could then be planted at the correct time of year, would support a local business and would ensure a proper specimen tree. The tree could possibly be planted where the small tree has been removed at the north of the village; however this land needs to be checked for suitability as it is boggy at the moment.
- c. The Parish Council has received a request to make a grant to allow commemorative coins to be purchased for the children at Felton Primary School. This will be added to the next agenda.

### 190. Verge Mowing

The Parish Council has received a report on verge mowing from FeltonCAN which proposes a number of sites which should be left unmown in order to improve biodiversity. The Parish Council supports encouraging biodiversity but expressed some concerns about the scheme, which would need to be carefully managed, at suitable sites, and include a reversion policy should the scheme be unsuccessful.

Resolved: The Biodiversity Committee will contact NCC to discuss the proposals further.

### 191. Planning

The Parish Council noted that the gabion baskets at 4 Low Close (retrospective planning application 21/04730/FUL) are already falling apart. The Clerk will email NCC Planning.

### 192. Ongoing Matters

The Parish Council discussed the list of ongoing matters:

- a. 2020/9 Japanese Knotweed on Recreation Field – there is an identified area of Japanese Knotweed on the left hand side of the entrance to the Field. This has been treated a number of times but has proven very persistent. Cllr Sowter suggested that the timing of the treatments may have missed the correct window. A current contract is needed for treatment.
- b. 2020/1 Lane Head – the Layby Working Group met with County Cllr Thorne on site and he indicated that bird's mouth fencing and planting would be installed.
- c. 2020/2 Leamington Lane Bus Shelter – the roofing has collapsed and the structure needs assessing. Currently it is not possible to get into the shelter due to vegetation so the risk to people is low. The Parish Council will discuss next steps at the April meeting, including the possibility of removal. The Clerk will notify Newton on the Moor & Swarland Parish Council.
- d. 2020/31 The Lodge – it appears there may be ongoing works at the Lodge. The Clerk will ask NCC for an update.

### 193. Items for the Next Agenda

- Grant request for commemorative coins
- Leamington Lane Bus Shelter
- Jubilee Tree
- Parish Council's position on supporting vulnerable people from Ukraine
- Co-option to vacancies

### 194. Date of Next Ordinary Meeting – 7:15pm on Monday 4 April 2022 at Felton Village Hall.

### 195. Recreation Lane – Access

- a. Resolved: Not to exclude public and press for the item relating to Recreation Lane access.

## FELTON PARISH COUNCIL

- b. The Parish Council considered the amendments made to the draft by the solicitor acting for Mr and Mrs Evans.

Resolved: To agree the changes to Clause 1 (removal of the reference to single dwelling house) but to refuse the changes to Clause 3 as the Parish Council does not agree that the additional wording is necessary if the reference to a single dwelling house is removed from Clause 1.

Chairman closed the meeting at 8:43pm.