

FELTON PARISH COUNCIL

At the Meeting of the Parish Council held at Felton Village Hall at 7:15pm on 4 April 2022.

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

196. Apologies for Absence – None

197. Co-option to Vacancies (Agenda Item 4 – taken out of order)

The Parish Council considered its process for co-opting to fill the two vacancies and noted that it does not have a Co-option Policy. Although the agenda stated that prospective candidates should contact the Clerk with a brief background and their reasons for wishing to join the council, the most recent Parish Council article in the Bridge stated that candidates could contact the Clerk or attend the meeting. Several expressions of interest had been received at short notice and not all councillors had seen these before the meeting. The Parish Council noted the need to be treat all candidates alike to ensure the arrangements are seen as fair.

Resolved:

- a. To defer the co-option to the next Meeting. The Parish Council apologised to the applicants for the delay which is frustrating to all parties.
- b. To adopt a Co-option Policy at the start of the next Meeting, to be publicised clearly in advance.
- c. The Clerk to contact the existing applicants to ask them to provide a short background and reasons for wishing to join the Parish Council.

198. Declarations of interest in items on the Agenda and Granting of Dispensations – None

199. Public Participation

- a. A resident stated that they had questions on a number of agenda items and the Chairman confirmed these could be raised during the relevant item.
- b. Several residents attended to ask about NCC's proposed development of Mouldshaugh Garages into residential units. Cllr Lings explained that Jodie Saynor (Housing Officer, NCC) had presented the proposal to the Parish Council, to ascertain whether the Parish Council knew of any reason why the site would not be fit for development. The project was at a very preliminary stage and no designs had been produced by NCC, however the residential units would be pre-fabricated off site and installed within the garage shell. The Parish Council informed NCC about the contamination of the grass area to the south and the Clerk forwarded the contamination report to Ms Saynor. At the date of the presentation, the Parish Council was instructed that the matter was confidential and could not be discussed openly until NCC had contacted the current garage tenants. The Parish Council stated that the garages were important for storage and parking, especially given the shortage of parking elsewhere in the village. Ms Saynor stated that NCC would help garage tenants make alternative arrangements. She also stated that NCC would seek to give priority to locals for the housing, which would be aimed at those with accessibility needs, i.e., families with disabled or elderly members. The Clerk will contact NCC to seek clarification of the proposals and keep garage holders informed.

200. Leamington Lane Bus Shelter (Agenda Item 12 – taken out of order)

Cllr Anderson of Newton on the Moor & Swarland Parish Council attended the Meeting for this item. The Parish Council noted that the bus shelter at Leamington Lane is in poor condition. The roof has fallen in and the interior is blocked by vegetation. There are no current bus routes which call at this stop. The Parish Council has no inclination to pay for repairs and is minded to demolish the shelter. Cllr Anderson reported that Newton on the Moor & Swarland Parish Council has not yet reached a consensus on what should happen to the shelter. However, its councillors are keen to see bus services return to Swarland and feel that it may be more compelling to the bus companies if there is a stop with a shelter. Cllr Anderson appreciates that there is a maintenance cost and a health and safety issue. There would also be a cost for demolition.

Resolved: To defer any decision to next Meeting, to allow Newton on the Moor and Swarland to discuss the matter in the interim.

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201. The Minutes of the meeting held on 14 March 2022 were approved as a true record.

202. Finances

- a. The financial statement and budget monitoring document to 31 March 2022 was received.
- b. A resident asked the Clerk to confirm that her contract was linked to the SCP Payscale, which the Clerk confirmed it was included in the terms of appointment. The Clerk confirmed that the SCP Payscale negotiations for the payrise which should have been effective from 1 April 2021 have only just concluded. New contracts for the Parish Council's employees were considered by the Parish Council in closed session at its December Meeting and have been delegated to the Contracts Working Group for further review.
- c. Resolved: to authorise the following payments:

Payee	Head of Expenditure	Cost	VAT	Total	Reference
Southern Electric	Recreation Field	£50.33	£2.51	£52.84	PC21/22.48
ICO	Compliance	£35.00		£35.00	PC21/22.49
C Lewis	Clerk's Salary Cemetery – Clerk's Salary Clerk's Expenses	£1,593.70		£1,593.70	PC21/22.51 and FCJC21/22.33
HMRC	Clerk's Salary	£238.81		£238.81	PC21/22.52
Felton PC Cemetery Contribution	Cemetery	£1,302.72		£1,302.72	PC21/22.53
Clarehugh Entreprises	Cemetery – Grounds Maintenance Other Recreation Field	£800.00		£800.00	PC21/22.55 and FCJC21/22.32
DM Payroll Services	Admin	£24.00		£24.00	PC21/22.56
Felton Village Hall	Room Hire – Recreation Field and Parish Council	£32.00		£32.00	PC21/22.57

203. Felton Surgery

- a. Cllr Lings reported back on the site meeting with and subsequent email from NCC's Footpaths Officer. All parts of the footpath have been adopted by NCC either as Public Right of Way (Footpath) or Highway, are recorded on the relevant maps, and will be maintained by NCC.
- b. Cllr Blagburn reported that the Surgery's Patient Participation Group contacted and received a response from Assura. Assura is assessing its options over the next few weeks. The construction sector is suffering major increases in the costs of labour, materials and fuel, and this is impacting project such as the new surgery development at Felton. The PPG received notification via Facebook of the Surgery's inclusion in the Well Up North Group which comprises six practices Alnwick Medical Group, Belford Medical Practice, Cheviot Medical Group, Coquet Medical Group, Felton Surgery, Gas House Lane Surgery, Greystoke Surgery, The Glendale Surgery, Union Brae and Norham Proactive, Well Close Medical Group, and Widdrington Surgery. The PPG is putting together questions for the Surgery about the impact on patients.
- c. A further plan has been provided by Bellway for the Transfer of land.

Resolved: To ask for confirmation that the new plan includes all the land owned by Bellway to the north and west of the site.

204. Report from County Cllr Trevor Thorne – None received. The Parish Council noted that County Cllr Thorne attended the official opening of the new EV Charge points.

205. Parish Representation at Meetings

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- a. The Recreation Field Committee met on 17 March. Work has progressed. The patch of brambles in the north east corner of the Field has been flattened out and re-seeded. The mole hills are being tackled. A working party is being organised to tackle the boggy area on the east side by installing two offshoots to the field drains. Cllr Cruden and the Clerk are looking into options for a woodland walk through the sloped area to the south of the field, possibly as part of a community project. This would be similar to the well-used walk through the Groves, which although beautiful is not easily accessible to all residents. Cllr Cuthbert has spoken with an ecologist and the Committee will need to look into the ancient woodland status of part of the land.

206. Update from Northumbria Police – No crimes have been reported which would have wider community impact.

207. Queen's Jubilee

- a. The Parish Council considered the request for a grant of £125.23 from the W.I. to be used to purchase commemorative coins to be given to the children at Felton Primary School. The Parish Council was unable to reach a majority decision. Cllr Cruden stated that the Panthouse would donate the funds instead.
- b. Cllr Cruden reported that he had spoken with Mr Clarehugh about suitable trees to commemorate the Jubilee. If the site is wet, oak would not be suitable. Mr Clarehugh suggested a couple of options and offered on behalf of the new crematorium to donate a tree.

Resolved: To accept the offer of a tree for the Jubilee with thanks.

208. Parish Council Position on vulnerable Ukrainians

Cllr Cuthbert asked the Parish Council to support and encourage the community in any efforts to house Ukrainian refugees. It appears that many will be housed in larger settlements, but it may be possible to coordinate weekend respite or lending libraries, for example, for toys. The Parish Council noted the efforts of the community to raise funds and collect clothing etc.

Resolved: To make the following statement of intent:

"We as a Parish Council fully support all endeavours to welcome and support Ukrainian nationals in our community."

209. Correspondence

The Parish Council discussed the email from Cllr Francis (Newton on the Moor & Swarland Parish Council) stating that NCC have agreed to Highways England's proposal to dispense with one or both footpath underpasses at the Coquet Bridge, Felton By-Pass. It is unclear from the documents whether both will be closed temporarily for the works or permanently. The footpath on the north side of the river forms part of St Oswald's Way which has great cultural significance. Both footpaths form part of a network of local paths and are an asset to the community.

Resolved: To contact NCC Footpaths Officer and County Cllr Thorne and to publicise the plans.

210. Planning

The Parish Council received the list of ongoing planning matters.

211. Ongoing Matters

The Parish Council discussed the list of ongoing matters:

- a. 2020/15 Ramp at Riverside – The Property Management Committee is working on obtaining quotes; these have been difficult to obtain due to the SSSI status of the site. Cllr Cruden is continuing to pursue this.
- b. 2021/1 Red Phone Box Refurbishment – A resident raised that the Village Fair provides grants for local and community projects and that the Parish Council could apply for this rather than the project needing to go through the Property Management Committee.

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- c. 2021/4 Tree Inspections – The Recreation Field Committee recommended a professional survey is carried out initially. Quotes were obtained but various routes were suggested. The Clerk will obtain further quotes.

212. Items for the Next Agenda

- May Meeting business including election of the Chairman
- Co-option policy
- Co-option to vacancies
- Ramp at Riverside
- Red Phone Box

213. Date of Next Ordinary Meeting – 7:15pm on Monday 9 May 2022 at Felton Village Hall.

Chairman closed the meeting at 8:42pm.