

FELTON PARISH COUNCIL

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

Present: Cllrs J Cruden (from Minute 163 onwards), G Cuthbert, R Evans, T Hood, G Lings (Chairman), and A Walton.

161. Apologies for Absence – Cllrs E Blagburn, L Sowter, F Thornton. Cllr Dickson gave her resignation in advance of the meeting and did not attend. Cllr Lings thanked Cllr Dickson for all her hard work on the Parish Council, of which she has been a stalwart member for many years.

162. 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. Cllr Cuthbert declared an interest in Item 15 (Planning) as she has an application pending.

[Cllr Cruden joined the meeting]

163. Public Participation – A resident stated they have questions relating to specific Agenda items and the Chairman agreed that they could raise these at the relevant parts of the meeting.

164. Report from County Cllr Trevor Thorne [Agenda item taken out of order]

The Parish Council invited County Cllr Thorne to give his report before the remaining business was discussed.

- a. The Riverside parking scheme has begun. Fencing has been installed along the road edge. County Cllr Thorne is pleased with the works so far and is confident that this will improve traffic safety. County Cllr Thorne is disappointed that the parking bays along the Bridge have not yet been marked out as these are needed to improve parking. County Cllr Thorne is hoping to carry out some additional environmental improvements behind the fencing such as tree and bulb planting.
- b. County Cllr Thorne has been talking to the Parish Councils within his ward (Longframlington, Swarland and Newton on the Moor) about each establishing a committee to react to emergencies as experienced during Storm Arwen. These committees would coordinate efforts and would help to organise local facilities in an emergency. County Cllr Glen Sanderson has spoken with Boris Johnson about the response to Storm Arwen and has requested an investigation, in particular into the response by the power companies.
- c. NCC Planning are looking strategically at designating some parking bays in popular coastal settlements for mobile home parking. There was a huge increase in the number of mobile homes in the area during the 2021 staycation trend and there was a lack of suitable parking. NCC are running a pilot scheme with a number of dedicated mobile home spaces, with conditions attached on the length of stay, for self-contained mobile homes. NCC will not be providing waste disposal facilities during the pilot.
- d. County Cllr Thorne and the Parish Council discussed the South View and other parking issues and noted that the Local Transport Plan process is still ongoing. The various schemes are interlinked but can be carried out in phases as it may not be possible to get everything in a single financial year. The Parish Council can save towards the schemes and can continue to request their inclusion in the LTP. Following the site meeting between NCC, ~~Cllr Thornton and Mrs Krzyzosiak~~ and the South View Working Group, proposals for the initial scheme addressing parking on South View are expected now (end of January/early February).
- e. Cllr Evans commented that he had not received a response from NCC about the grant to encourage and support improved insulation, under which NCC is proposing to use Felton as a trial village. Cllr Evans will continue to chase.

165. The Minutes of the meeting held on 6 December 2021 were approved as a true record subject to the following change:

- a. **Minute 151** – addition of resolution c)The Parish Council solicitor will be asked to write to the Surgery, Assura and the NHS CCG to ask for an update on the current position with the development.

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166. Finances

- a. The financial statement and budget monitoring document to 27 January 2022 was received. The Parish Council noted that the allotment income received was £210 and not £220 as one tenant had made payment before the start of the financial year and it was accordingly recorded in last year's accounts.
- b. The Clerk advised that the payment to Design.art relates to the former website. This was retained in case there were any issues with the NALC hosted website but is no longer required going forward. A further refund has been received from SSE for electricity (Recreation Field). The Clerk will re-categorise the Cemetery Noticeboard expenditure as 'fixed assets': this will be a new category.

Resolved: to authorise the following payments:

Payee	Head of Expenditure	Cost	VAT	Total	Reference
P Brown	Cemetery Grounds Maintenance – Staff Fuel	£221.68	£2.33	£224.01	FCJC21/22.25
Felton Village Hall	Room Hire – Rec Field Room Hire – PC Room Hire – Cemetery	£60.00			PC21/22.34 and FCJC21/22.26
Clareheugh Entreprises	Cemetery Grounds Maintenance – other	£150.00		£150.00	FCJC21/22.27
Caloo	Play Area	£3,691.00	£738.20	£4,429.20	PC21/22.35
Greenbarnes Ltd	Cemetery – Materials	£740.77	£148.15	£888.92	FCJC21/22.29
Design.art	IT Costs	£50.00		£50.00	PC21/22.37
Felton Village Hall	Room Hire – Rec Field Room Hire – PC Room Hire – Cemetery Room Hire – PC (including invoice previously approved on 1/11/21 but not paid due to amendments to invoice)	£106.00		£106.00	PC21/22.36, PC21/22.41 and FCJC21/22.28
Southern Electric	Refund of Monies held	-£803.41	-£40.17	-£843.58	PC21/22.38
L Sowter	Reimbursement – materials for Rec Field and Play Area works	£121.44	£19.48	£140.92	PC21/22.39
J Hood Landscaping	Riverside Play Area Rec Lane (upkeep)	£1,145.00	£229.00	£1,374.00	PC21/22.40
C Lewis (Dec)	Clerk's Salary Cemetery – Clerk's Salary Clerk's Expenses Zoom	£590.07		£590.07	PC21/22.42 and FCJC21/22.30
HMRC	Clerk's Salary	£1.73		£1.73	PC21/22.43
NCC	Elections	£1,214.53	£195.33	£1,409.86	PC21/22.44
C Lewis (Jan)	Clerk's Salary Cemetery – Clerk's Salary Clerk's Expenses Zoom	£447.25		£447.25	PC21/22.45 and FCJC21/22.31
ROL Ltd	Recreation Field	£400.00	£80.00	£480.00	PC21/22.46

- c. The Parish Council considered the request from the Clerk to apply for a business debit card. This would be used for small online purchases which currently have to be paid on personal cards and reimbursed, for example NALC training and materials for repairs at Recreation Field, and would bring practices in line with the Financial Regulations. It was noted that the default limit is £700 and the card would be issued for the Clerk's sole use. There is also a question over which section of the form to complete.

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Resolved: to check with Lloyds regarding which part of the form to complete and to ask Lloyds if the limit can be reduced.

167. Felton Surgery

An email has been received from the Surgery citing the current practice manager vacancy as a reason for the delays. The Clerk has contacted Bellway referring them to the various plans showing the boundaries as previously agreed and included in the planning application made by Bellway. Cllr Lings wrote to Healthcare in December asking if they could provide an update and this was forwarded by Healthcare to the CCG. The Parish Council noted that the Surgery could put an outline planning permission application in, despite not yet occupying the land. It was noted that there has been no practice manager at Felton or Widdrington since September.

Resolved: The Clerk will instruct the solicitor to write to the CCG, Surgery and Assura as previously resolved and to copy in the NCC Section 106 Officer.

[County Cllr Thorne left the meeting]

168. Recreation Lane – Access

[Cllr Cruden considered whether he needed to make a declaration of interest but concluded that the matter did not relate to his property. Cllr Evans left the meeting during this item.]

The Parish Council considered the legal costs relating to access along Recreation Lane and the charge to be made to residents for the Deeds granting access. The Parish Council also discussed the listing of assets of community value: the parish allotments are listed but the Felton Park Estate allotment is not.

Resolved: To charge each property £250 for its Deed of Grant of Access to cover the legal fees incurred by the Council, on the understanding that there have been two invoices. The Clerk will return this item to the Parish Council if this is not correct on reviewing the financial records for earlier years.

169. Parish Representation at Meetings

Members of the Parish Council had an online meeting with NCC to discuss elderly/disabled affordable rented housing provision, in particular to see whether the Parish Council knew of any reasons which might prevent a project going ahead, before NCC does more in depth planning. The Parish Council is not able to comment publicly on this at the moment but it was noted that there may be some parking benefits.

170. **Update from Northumbria Police** – None. It was noted that the Speedwatch team have been in the village and a number of speeding vehicles were caught. The Parish Council noted that there is still speeding through and around the traffic control pinch point at the north of the village.

171. Queen's Jubilee

The Parish Council considered options for marking the Queen's Jubilee. It was noted that the Village Hall is creating a jubilee garden and there may be an event hosted at the Village Hall.

Resolved:

- a. To plant an oak tree of a reasonable size, subject to identification of a suitable site, and to erect a plinth or similar commemorating the Jubilee. The Clerk and Cllr Cruden to obtain prices and to look into grants.
- b. The Clerk to speak to Felton CAN about suitable locations.

172. Storm Arwen

The Parish Council has been consulted by NCC on its experiences on Storm Arwen and the multi-agency response. The Parish Council discussed the impact of Storm Arwen and possible responses to similar future incidents. The Village Hall is looking at 'going greener'. This could include installing solar panels with a large

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capacity battery, which could remove any need for an emergency generator. Cllr Evans stated that NCC should be providing as much money as possible to assist householders to install their own solar panels. The Parish Council also discussed community committees, as raised by County Cllr Thorne during his report. It was noted that there was a successful community responders group during the first Covid lockdown, coordinated by Chris Metherell and others.

Resolved:

- a. To respond to NCC to say that communication from agencies and power companies during emergencies needs to be improved.
- b. The Clerk to liaise with County Cllr Thorne and Chris Metherell regarding community committees.

173. Correspondence – The Parish Council noted the list of correspondence received since the last meeting. Cllr Cuthbert and the Clerk commented on reports of exposed stones/concrete in the play area, which are low risk, but will be referred to the Recreation Field Committee for action. The Parish Council noted and discussed Thirston Parish Council's letter of intent to change their contribution basis for Recreation Field from a percentage (taken from elector numbers) to a fixed contribution.

174. Correspondence Policy

The Parish Council considered the correspondence policy, in particular relating to emails. It was noted that there were very few items which are not either already referred to councillors or added to the agenda. The Parish Council agreed that there should be a written policy in place and that it would be helpful to identify the date by which items must be received to be considered for the agenda. The Clerk confirmed that correspondence from auditors and items flagged as green, for example the surgery, are already being circulated to councillors. The Ongoing Matters list has not been updated recently and the Clerk will reintroduce this.

Resolved: To circulate all items received from individuals until May as a trial period.

[The Parish Council resolved to extend the meeting.]

175. Planning

The Parish Council discussed the retrospective planning application 21/04730/FUL 4 Low Close – Installation of Gabion Basket Wall and expressed concern that this was already showing signs of collapse and would exacerbate flooding. It was agreed that it would be helpful for the Parish Council's position on applications to be noted in the list as 'Objects/Supports/Neutral'.

Resolved: To add the Parish Council's position to the list of planning applications in future agenda.

176. Items for the Next Agenda – None

177. Casual Vacancy

A casual vacancy has arisen following the resignation of Mrs Barbara Dickson. The Clerk has notified this to NCC and published the Notice of Vacancy. An election can be called by ten electors making a request to NCC by 28 February. If no election is called, the Parish Council will be notified that it may co-opt to fill the vacancy.

178. Date of Next Ordinary Meeting – 7:15pm on Monday 7 March 2022 at Felton Village Hall.

Chairman closed the meeting at 9:29pm.

After the meeting, the Chairman received an update from Northumbria Police, confirming that no crimes were reported during the period November 2021 to February 2022. This has been added to the Minutes for the purpose of informing the community.