

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF CRASTER PARISH
Monday 26th July 2021– 6.00pm in Craster Play park

Councillors present:

Chair: Martin Smith

Parish Council members: Steven Bagley, Margaret Brooks, Michael Craster, Mark Green, Michael Doherty and Elizabeth Pearson.

In attendance: 27 members of the public and 2 police officers

Clerk: Adam Shanley

1. Confirmation of Minutes of last Parish meeting

Residents in attendance unanimously agreed the minutes of the Parish meeting held on Monday 25th November 2019 as a true and accurate record of proceedings.

2. Chair's update on the Parish Council

The Chair of the Parish Council Councillor Martin Smith provided an update on the work of the Parish Council since the meeting of 25th November 2019.

Councillor Smith began by thanking the community for their amazing efforts over the Covid-19 pandemic. Councillor Smith advised that this has been a terribly difficult time for all concerned and it is great to see the community come together in such a positive and helping way.

Councillor Smith advised that the Parish Council's Craster trail is open and has proven itself to be hugely popular with visitors and residents and this is connecting the two villages of Craster and Dunstan in a really positive and safer way than previously. Councillor Smith advised that the Parish Council is currently finalising the details of the map and hoped to host an official unveiling of the trail in the coming months, with Lord Howick doing the official opening.

Councillor Smith also advised that the Parish Council is continuing to fund the cutting of some of the grass verges and, through contributions raised from holiday lets in the parish, had funded bulbs for the community for Spring time in order to keep the parish lovely and green.

Councillor Smith thanked all those involved in the "adopt a barrel" project and added that, despite complaints about the barrels and the new parking scheme, the planting of the barrels had produced some beautiful flowers for the village this year.

Councillor Smith reminded residents that Craster Parish Council is a co-owner of the Cemetery House in Spitalford and is also an active member of the Embelton Joint Burial Committee (EJBC) as a result. Councillor Smith advised that, following a joint project of all the parishes on the EJBC, the house has now been professionally renovated and there is now a tenant occupying the property with the rental income going towards paying off the renovation costs for the house.

Councillor Smith reminded residents that the big project for the Parish Council this year was the adoption of the Neighbourhood Plan and he was pleased to see

that this had now been adopted and now forms part of the statutory development plan for the area.

3. Discussion with Northumbria Police

Northumbria Police attended the meeting and advised that Craster and Dunstan remained very safe places to live and visit, with very few crimes reported to Northumbria Police in the area.

The Police advised that they are currently looking for information regarding a number of incidents which have taken place in Craster village recently, whereby four visitor vehicles had permanent marker smeared across them. The Police advised that they are currently looking for witnesses/ any information around this.

4. Update on the work of Craster Community Trust

Mrs Jackie Reeves provided a report to the meeting on the work of the Community Trust.

Mrs Jackie Reeves advised that Trustees were continuing to monitor and adhere to the latest Covid-19 guidance in relation to the use of the Hall and thanked all those in attendance for their patience.

Mrs Jackie Reeves also advised that the renovation and upkeep of the Hall is a main part of the Trust's work as well as the upkeep of the very popular playpark.

Mrs Jackie Reeves reminded all those in attendance that the Trust's AGM would be taking place on Saturday 31st July 2021 and all were welcome to attend.

5. Proposals on resident only car parking

Residents expressed their unhappiness at the current parking arrangements in Craster and advised that they felt that the scheme in place at present was dangerous, ineffective and had actually exacerbated the issue of parking in the village.

Residents advised that they felt let down by NCC, who had originally agreed for the Parish Council to carry out a consultation to introduce a Residents' Permit Parking scheme and, having gained majority acceptance of such a scheme, had subsequently revoked the offer of a Permit Parking scheme for the village.

Residents advised that they felt that this had created a terrible atmosphere in the village with hostility between local businesses and residents as well as towards visitors.

Residents also expressed their unhappiness that there appeared to be no enforcement of the scheme taking place in the village.

The Parish Clerk highlighted that NCC insist that the current scheme is working as it should do but also advised that the Parish Council acknowledges that residents were unhappy at the current scheme.

The Clerk advised that it might be worthwhile the Parish Council employing an independent third party consultant to review the scheme and to offer their own

assessment of how this is functioning as well as some options for how to resolve parking issues in the village. The Clerk advised that he had looked into this and the initial costs were approximately. £1,800 (ex VAT).

The Chair proposed that the Parish Council looks to engage such a consultant and all in attendance **agreed** that this should be done and also **agreed** to accept whatever the findings of the independent consultant were in this report.

6. Neighbourhood Plan

The Parish Clerk thanked all those in attendance who had contributed to and voted at the Referendum on the Craster Neighbourhood Plan.

The Clerk advised that the main driving force behind the decision of the Parish Council to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan was concern at the level of second and holiday homes across the parish. During the summer of 2019 the parish council conducted a survey which was sent to all residential properties in the parish. The Clerk advised that this survey had sought feedback on an approach to limit any new build residential development within the parish to that which would be permanently occupied.

The Clerk advised that the survey had indicated that residents who responded have concerns regarding the impact of second homes on the vitality of the community and agree with the proposed approach to introduce a principal residency restriction to any new development.

The Clerk advised that the Neighbourhood Plan had now been formally adopted following the referendum where just under 90% of the community had voted in favour of the Plan.

The Clerk advised that the Neighbourhood Plan sets down guidance for development within the Craster Parish area over the next 15 years and restricts all new development so that it must be occupied by a permanent resident in perpetuity.

All those in attendance thanked the Parish Clerk for all his tremendous work on this Plan.

7. AOB

None received.

There being no further business, the Chair thanked all those in attendance for their contributions and closed the meeting.

Signed,

Chair of the Parish Council