

**MINUTES OF MEETING OF CRASTER PARISH COUNCIL**  
**Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> October 2022 – 7.00pm in the Hall**

**Councillors present:**

**Chair:** Martin Smith

**Parish Council members:** Margaret Brooks, Michael Craster, Ann Fettis, Alan Gregory and Elizabeth Pearson.

**In attendance:** 3 members of the public.

**Clerk:** Adam Shanley

**1. Welcome and apologies for absence**

Apologies were received from Cllrs R Robson, M Green and W Pattison

**2. Declarations of interest**

None received.

**3. Confirmation of the minutes for the meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> July 2022**

The minutes of the meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> July 2022 were unanimously agreed as a true and accurate record of proceedings.

**4. Matters arising**

None received.

**5. Public participation**

Mrs Jackie Reeves asked for an update on the works to the Craster toilets as markings had appeared on the pavement some time ago but no work had appeared to have commenced. The Clerk advised that the refurb of the toilet block is scheduled for the autumn/winter 2023 in order to avoid the busiest period. The Clerk advised that NCC feel that the facility is in reasonable shape so their priorities for the big toilet refurbishment schemes this year is to improve Alnwick Shambles, Wooler Bus Station, St Marys Wynd Hexham and Berwick Castlegate.

The Clerk advised however that Paul Jones is waiting to hear back from NCC Estates on the work they have been doing to identify a long term solution to resolve the blockage problems which Local Services believe are caused by the inadequate size of the drainage pipework - the installation of macerators has helped reduced the risk/frequency of blockages but may not be a long term 'cure' for the problem. The Clerk advised that the latest update he had on this was that Local Services at NCC were hoping to hear back from them by the end of next week with their findings and agreed to follow up with Paul Jones at NCC on this matter.

Mrs Marion Gallon raised a safety concern at Dunstanburgh Road. She advised that the road is still dangerous with vehicles driving up the Road in spite of the signage. Marion also highlighted that a number of camper vans were parking in the village.

The Clerk advised that he was aware of the problem of camper vans coming in to the village and highlighted that the residents of South Acres were also reporting this as an issue. The Council **agreed** that residents should be encouraged to contact 101 in the event that a camper van does come into the village. It was also **agreed** that NCC should be asked to re-visit the idea of promoting their own car parks as camper van sites for overnight stays, in order to try and deter camper vans entering the village.

**6. Report by County Councillor Wendy Pattison**

The Chair highlighted that County Councillor Wendy Pattison has submitted a written report on work at NCC and advised attendees to direct any queries they may have to Councillor Pattison on this report.

**7. Report from Embleton Joint Burial Committee representative**

Cllrs M Brooks and E Pearson provided a report to Members as EJBC representatives on the Parish Council.

Cllr E Pearson advised that the cemetery house continues to be occupied and the rent continues to be paid by the tenant, which is paying off the loan for the refurbishment.

Cllr M Brooks highlighted that The Net had recently published a history of the cemetery. Cllr E Pearson advised that a risk assessment report had been undertaken by a specialist contractor on behalf of the EJBC to review the condition of headstones. Cllr E Pearson advised that, in cases where there was a need for repair works to be done, the families were being contacted to ask if they could finance the repair works. Cllr E Pearson advised that, where headstones were found to be dangerous and the families couldn't be located, the headstones were being placed respectfully on top of the graves.

Cllrs M Brooks and E Pearson both highlighted that the EJBC had received correspondence in relation to the fence around the cemetery house. The Council reviewed the photos of the fence around the cemetery and agreed to continue to support the project of providing a house at an affordable rent but agreed that the fence should be replaced with some alternative aesthetically sympathetic boundary, e.g. hedging. The Clerk **agreed** to write to the Chair of the EJBC on this matter to let him know Craster Parish Council's position on this.

### **8. Report from Craster Community Trust representative**

Cllr M Craster provided a report to Members as Trust representative on the Parish Council.

Cllr M Craster advised that the pantomime would be returning again this year and the show would be Wind in the Willows.

Cllr M Craster also advised that the Trust had established an internet Café in the Hall on a Saturday morning with 4 laptops and a printer now in the Hall for community use.

Cllr M Craster also advised that the Trust is looking to establish the Hall as one of the Warm Spaces in the County – acutely conscious of the added pressures on local residents with the extra costs of heating and lighting homes.

Cllr M Craster also advised that the Burns Supper would be taking place once more on 4<sup>th</sup> February 2023.

Mrs Marion Gallon advised that she is also looking to establish a community newspaper shop in the Hall but this would depend on the new tenants at the *Moodies* shop. Marion advised that she hoped that someone from Craster might be able to collect the newspapers and these could then be collected from the Hall. The aim of such a project could be to reduce car miles, fuel costs and emissions.

Cllr M Craster also advised that he had a table tennis available and that the Trust were happy to have this in the Hall. Cllr M Craster advised that the project had not yet been able to move forward as the Trust were awaiting Cllr Mark Green taking a look at the tennis table to approve that this would be appropriate.

### **9. Progressing the back-up power to Craster Village Hall**

The Council warmly welcomed the news that the Trust and the Parish Council had been successful in securing grant funding from Northern PowerGrid in order to install solar panels and the Tesla battery.

The Chair of the Parish Council thanked Jackie Reeves and the Clerk for their work on this project which would not only make the Hall more sustainable and its running costs a lot less but also provide much-needed back-up power to the village in times of power outages.

The Clerk advised that Jackie had put in most of the work on this grant submission and expressed his delight that the Trust and the Parish Council could work in partnership on such a brilliant scheme.

The Council also **agreed** to pay the £3,000 from holiday let owners to the Trust who had put down a deposit with the company and to write to all holiday let owners to thank them for their contributions and to highlight the success.

Jackie advised that the solar panels would hopefully be in this side of Christmas and the Tesla battery would follow in the coming months into 2023.

### **10. Providing support to the community during the cost of living/ energy crisis**

The Council expressed its concerns over the increasing costs on local residents to provide power and heat to their homes.

The Clerk highlighted the EPC ratings of all properties in Craster demonstrated that there was a desperate need to better insulate our homes.

The Council advised that the need to provide more support to residents is made more urgent by the Government withdrawing the Energy Price Guarantee in April 2023.

The Clerk advised that this issue had been looked into by the Fundraising Committee and they had suggested that the Council may look to purchase a number of "hotties" – similar to hot water bottles but microwavable wheat bags which residents can heat up and stay warm for hours. The Clerk advised that a number of these could be purchased and placed in the Hall for residents to collect if they needed one. The Council **agreed** to allocate £150 towards the purchase of these hotties for provision within the Hall.

#### **11. Update on the planning application for the mobile phone mast in Craster quarry car park**

The Clerk highlighted that the planning application – originally expected some months ago – had now been stalled due to an internal issue with NCC's legal team who needed to sign off the Heads of Terms for the mast.

The Council highlighted its frustration at this delay and asked the Clerk to make contact with senior personnel within NCC to try and get the project moving forward as soon as possible. The Clerk advised that he would be looking into this as a top priority and keep the Council updated.

#### **12. Report from the Parish Council's Fundraising Committee on community projects**

The Clerk advised that the Parish Council's Fundraising Committee met on 19<sup>th</sup> October in order to discuss the collection boxes and to ascertain where funding could be allocated towards community projects.

The Clerk advised that the collection boxes had been very successful in gaining additional funding for community projects and thanked all those volunteers involved in supporting this project.

The Clerk advised that the Committee wishes to allocate £150 towards "hotties" for the community, £200 towards planters for the parish and £100 for bulbs. The Clerk also highlighted that Jackie needed to be reimbursed for the cost of one of the boxes and reminded Members that 10% of all funding acquired had been agreed to be allocated to the Harbour.

The Council unanimously **agreed** with these proposals and instructed the Clerk to make the necessary arrangements for these projects.

#### **13. Unveiling of the Jubilee bench in Craster and report following the death of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II**

The Chair advised that he had purchased some Queen Elizabeth roses to go alongside the Jubilee bench in Craster. The Chair advised that he and Cllr M Brooks would look into the most appropriate options for this, whether the rose bushes could be installed into the ground and/or in planters.

The Chair took the opportunity to thank the Clerk and everyone involved in arrangements in Craster following the death of Her Majesty – including the Church for the Book of Condolence, Steve Tenant for installing the Jubilee bench so swiftly and those bodies and individuals who had donated flowers to the bench.

#### **14. Planning for the Remembrance Day event on Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> November 2022**

Cllr M Craster advised that he would be purchasing a wreath for the Council once more this year and this would be placed at the Memorial in Craster as usual on Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> November. Cllr M Craster also advised that there would be a Church service in the morning of the 13<sup>th</sup> November in St. Peter's Church in Craster.

#### **15. Planning for Christmas events**

The Council **agreed** to once again fund the Christmas tree from Hobbalow Plants. The Clerk agreed to contact them directly and place the order.

#### **16. Planning Matters:**

**Update on 22/01372/FUL** | Resubmission: Change of use of agricultural grazing land to mixed tourist use and siting of three glamping pods | Land North East Of Howick Scar Craster Northumberland. The Council **noted** that this application had yet to be determined.

**Update on 21/01785/FUL** | Proposed conversion of existing garage to one residential dwelling | Land North Of Waters Edge Haven Hill Craster Northumberland. The Council **noted** that this application had yet to be determined. The Clerk **agreed** to seek an update on the application as this had been undetermined for a significant time.

**Update on 21/02775/FUL** | Construction of 2no houses for rent with associated landscaping | Dunstan House C74 Dunstan Village Main Road Dunstan NE66 3SY. The Committee **agreed** to maintain its objection to this scheme, in spite of the most recent amendments.

**22/03090/PRUTPO** | Tree Preservation Order Application: T1 Ash Tree - Prune overhang back by 2M. | 7 Whin Hill Craster Alnwick Northumberland NE66 3TP. It was **agreed** to note this application.

**17. Items for next Agenda**

The Chair reminded Members to contact the Parish Clerk should they wish to have any items on the Agenda for the November Full Council meeting.

**18. Date and time of next meeting**

17<sup>th</sup> November 2022 – 6:30pm in Craster Memorial Hall.

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

Signed,



**Chair of Craster Parish Council  
(17<sup>th</sup> November 2022)**