

WARK PARISH COUNCIL

Contact: clerk.wark@gmail.com

Meeting held 28th May 2024, 7,30pm in Wark Town Hall

DRAFT MINUTES FOR ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

1. **Welcome and Apologies for Absence:**

Present: Councillor and Chairman Edward Jeffrey (EJ) Councillor Brenda Murray (BM), Councillor Annie Hutchinson (AH), Councillor Jason Riches (JR), Councillor Lisa Lorraine (LL), Councillor Steve Batey (SB). County Councillor Nick Morphet (NM), 5 MOP's present.

Apologies: Councillor Judith Wier (JW).

2. **Nomination for Chairman and Vice Chairman:** Chairman, AH proposed EJ, BM seconded. Vice Chairman, Steve Batey finding it difficult to get to meetings, BM proposed as Vice Chairman by AH and JR seconded.

3. **Chairman and Vice Chairman acceptance:** EJ accepted as did BM as Vice Chairman – Declaration of Acceptance signed.

4. **Public Participation:**

- a) MOP queried about parking near doctors, Plans shared with those present, with JR confirming capacity for five cars.
- b) MOP raised issue of daffodils being replanted where kerb needs dropped near to new development/hedge removed. Quite difficult to see up the hill (EJ) MOP said going to be relandscaped, fear that daffodils will be lost. EJ wondering if Monday Club could dig up. EJ to go and see site manager seconded by JR.
- c) MOP raised query relating to boundaries around land that is owned at Stonehaugh, where is parish boundary. AH confirmed that it is amenity land and it is the forestry commission that needs contacted. MOP to contact Hayley Lee at Forestry Commission – SB confirmed that Parish boundary is the fence line, buildings belong to Scotty.
- d) Query relating to Wark Village Plan, noted that Village Open Public Meeting is scheduled to be held by Forestry Commission, discussion followed, outcome being that there is a need to ascertain whether there is any overlap before PC progresses with Village Open Plan Meeting. AH to liaise with forestry commission and JR will chase up as links to Town Hall.

- e) MOP raised issue relating to house just before Wark Bridge and gungy mess that is running down Betty's Bank– noted there are ongoing building works and fellow MOP (Mr Healy) acknowledged issue and advised it is being cleared now.
- f) MOP email received, Email read out, relates to state of grounds following building works by Cussins – EJ to approach Cussins and see if they can return to state that it was in before developer intervened. AH querying whether the land is PC's and whether PC should intervene. EJ to follow up with Cussins.
- g) MOP, Mr Healy gave update on Post Office – shared some background in that he had been negotiating since Oct 23, had been advised in writing that PO in jeopardy and could close. They have persevered in their negotiations and feel confident that they will continue to have PO, they have presented a document as to reasons why PO is viable and preferable. Mr Healy was pleased to share that yesterday they were issued a contract to state that PO will continue, PO will award a licence, Mr Healey advised that PO must be supported or risk losing it. Also shared that two containers will be removed, move to left, increase parking for short term parking for anyone who wishes to use for one hour, have it re- tarmacked. Café/Bistro – refurb is nearly complete – looking for someone to run it now. Hope to have open in next 6-10weeks. Shop is trading quite nicely – will be a Tesco one stop. Plans for Cash Machine and some banking facilities – Mr Healy stressed he is keen to ensure that village thrives.

5. Declarations of Conflicts of Interest: None

6. Approval of Minutes (30th April 2024): Signed by EJ, Proposed by SB and seconded JR.

7. Report from County Councillor – NM shared and answered questions posed.

- a) EJ asking if bridge will be closed for the works – NM will let us know.
- b) C205 – to be closed for resurfacing. Strengthen edges.
- c) Discussion relating to measures to manage traffic speed throughout the village and location of signage. Complaint that sign to North is impinged by hedge – to be trimmed back. Discussion that 20 lights flash signs and new interactive speed sign affect each other, CC happy to install if PC are happy to pay £1000 towards cost, River Meadow residents consulted by EJ on location – NM confirmed that is where it is going, not going to obscure view. Moving Vehicle signage ordered at significant cost to Parish Council – 1 of 3 and first installation planned for road entering village from Stonehaugh.
- d) Road to Little Latterford has been scraped down. Could request local transport plan. Typo in my last report – 25/26 LTP.
- e) Climate Change Team Leader – interviewed and appointed.

f) CC launched a new Climate Change website – NM to share link for draft website.

8. Matters Arising

Wark

8.1 Road around Village Green – brought forward from meeting of 30th April 2024.

JR shared that Manager for West Northumberland Highways agrees road is in terrible state, needs scraping and dropping before resurfacing, doesn't want tarmac or hardcore as washes away – JR awaiting response and if nothing after 4-5 weeks will email him. In terms of ownership and responsibility JR confirmed that he got in touch with Alnwick Castle, archives Chief Archivist, she sent information dated 20's and 30's about poor surface condition, ownership is an emotive issue with financial implications, EJ called order as discussion became heightened – AH clear that it is not registered for the village green and PC are not in a position to take on more responsibility. JR to share the information he has obtained, confirmed that CC have indicated that they are not willing to adopt it, but they are willing to help as needs resurfaced. JR has consulted all the residents who want a smooth road.

8.2 Bin relocation in village– update from EJ and NM to liaise with CC re: location and refuse collections.

8.3 Low Kerb on path to new estate – follow up from meeting of 30th April 2024. NM updated confirming that installation is as per approved drawings. MOP saying it is more about vehicles over-riding footpath and running into people. Second MOP also concerned about traffic and safety of pedestrians. Someone must have given approval for the dropped kerbs – MOP wants to know why that was approved in that way as he believes it is a deviation from standards – NM hasn't asked that question. MOP shared young children, parents and pushchairs walking down, traffic is taking the branches off of trees which evidence how close the traffic is. NM affirmed like all present that safety is a priority and want whatever is best for pedestrians. MOP will email NM directly for further follow up with CC.

8.4 Post on Village Green - EJ advised efforts being made to get a ground level chamber to house electrics – continues to follow it up. PC willing to pay for chamber if they sort installation.

8.5 Walkway accessibility Audit – NM provided update. 18th May completed audit, 5 residents and JR. Drawn up plans and made a rough list of improvements that could be asked for. Suggest that plans be passed around, NM to share report with councillors, ask for improvements and anything big we will need to request through LTP.

Stonehaugh

8.6 Celebration for 100 years of Kielder Forest – SB shared that there is ongoing liaison with Forestry Commission. If meeting on 8th is public, can ask questions then (JR). Another contact

which Steve will follow up.

9. Financial Matters

1. Accounts, Approve Payment Schedule – Payroll, shared and approved.
2. Bank Account – Balance as at 8 May 2024 – £22,225.32
3. Noted that Sale of toilets in Wark has been completed, discrepancy on payment amount, discussion followed, agreement reached on £1500 outstanding as £500 paid for contribution to legal fees, acceptance of £1500 proposed and seconded JR and SB.

10. Reports from Representatives to Other Bodies (Wark Town Hall, Stonehaugh Community Hall and Giles Heron Trust).

1. JR provided update on Town Hall, confirmed that the Hall is being well used, Feasibility study for solar panels is progressing, see how many panels we can get, bat survey would be next. Broadband for Free – two tablets, after first year can evaluate use and whether Town Hall continue with cost. Karbon homes provided contribution for decoration (£1500).
2. Stonehaugh Community Hall – BM advised that she is no longer representative but shared that 25th June – celebrations planned. Complaints that there is a big machine coming into village, parking up and when leaves the village is cutting up the green. Need letters/notice from PC that residents are not use the bonfire site. Grass is being cut.
3. Giles Heron – JW not present to provide update. To be provided at next meeting.

11. Other Business – Not for Decision.

- 11.1 Much pride in the village, raised by MOP and JR whether could improve further by addressing some areas which are overgrown (including the village sign as you enter) and others that could benefit from planters (Self- watering). Could this be addressed as part of Wark Plan?
12. Items for Discussion at Future Meetings. Footway Audit, Wark Plan,
13. Agree dates for forthcoming meetings. – 18th June 7pm.

Clerk to Wark Parish Council