

# NEWTON ON THE MOOR AND SWARLAND PARISH COUNCIL

## FEBRUARY 2014

### Minutes of a Parish Council meeting held on Wednesday 26 February 2014 in Swarland Village Hall

**Present:** Cllrs G Anderson, R Brotherton, Mrs L Fahy, D Francis, Mrs Handyside, Mrs D Lewney, A Lisle, N Mansfield, Mrs Preston, Mrs Richardson, Mrs E Sells, Mrs S Stanley.  
The Parish Clerk in attendance.

#### ACTIONS

#### 1 PAUL MCKENNA – NCC RE SPEEDING ISSUES IN THE PARISH

Despite his promising to attend the February meeting the Clerk was informed this morning that no one was available. Clerk to raise with NCC that the Councillors are not happy with the non attendance and state a representative must attend the March meeting.

Due to this issue being on the agenda the Clerk received from a local resident photographic evidence of long skid marks on The Avenue from an agricultural vehicle. A suggestion was made that The Avenue should be made 20mph. Cllr Mrs Stanley stated that a door knock had been undertaken in Studley Drive and Kenmore Road about implementing a 20mph limit in those streets. At the time NCC had stated that 20mph limits could only be implemented in residential streets and The Avenue is not classed as a residential street. The majority of residents were in favour of a 20mph limit though there were concerns about how this would be enforced. The Clerk asked CC Thorne where NCC was with regard to the current trialing of 20mph zones and CC Thorne stated this is ongoing, also he is aware that the speed awareness courses are stating that 20mph limits are enforceable.

Suggestions were then raised that a chicane or flashing speed sign or dummy speed box be installed. The Clerk to seek costs from NCC on these suggestions.

Clerk

#### 2 PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND POLICE REPRESENTATION

Police reported a burglary on Park Road in January from a garage. A welding unit and hammer drill were stolen and another outer building was also entered. The motorbike stolen from this property was recovered.

At Aln View, Old Swarland a lock at a workshop was damaged.

Mrs Vaggs stated that with regard to the burglary on Park Road a letter had been received by the victim from victim support which was not signed. The letter also stated that if any information could be given to the police they would investigate. Information was given to the police however they did not investigate as they stated they did not have a warrant.

Mrs Vaggs raised the issue whether, if the Post Office is going to proceed in the Club, the Post Office is aware that this will also service Longframlington residents and they may not be aware of the number of customers they may receive. Mrs Vaggs also asked if the Parish Council had sent a letter of thanks to the volunteers for running the shop. It was agreed a letter would be sent.

Clerk

Mrs Vaggs asked if there was going to be any commemoration by the Parish Council at the War Memorials on August 4<sup>th</sup> as this was the start date of the First World War. It was agreed this should go on the agenda for March meeting.

Agenda

Mrs Vaggs asked CC Thorne if any arrangements were being made by NCC should Scotland vote for independence. CC Thorne did not know of any but would ask NCC.

Mr Lewney asked what the situation was with the cross roads signage at Leamington Lane which is still lying in the ditch. The Clerk reported that NCC is processing an insurance claim for this sign damage and this will be replaced once the claim is agreed. The Clerk has requested a number of times that the debris from the original sign is removed as this is blocking the ditch which could cause issues with flooding. Clerk to pursue with NCC.

Clerk

#### 3 APOLOGIES - None

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- 4 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST ON THE AGENDA** - Cllr Brotherton in relation to Planning Application 14/00368/PRUTPO.
- 5 **MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 22 JANUARY 2014** were agreed as a true record.
- 6 **MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MEETING ON 22 JANUARY 2014**
- **Sign at Overgrass Road End** – This sign was repaired but within days it was blown off again. The Clerk has contacted NCC and requested this is once again repaired using more robust fixings.
  - **Pot Holes at Overgrass** – These have not been repaired and the Clerk has submitted another request as a matter of urgency. CC Thorne stated that Mr Rumney of NCC has promised to deliver planings to Mr Rogerson of Overgrass so that he could undertake repairs. Clerk to ascertain if this has been done. Clerk
  - **Repairs to B6345 from Old Swarland to Felton** – No response has been received in relation to this request and the Clerk has chased this up with NCC. Clerk
  - **Play Area Complaint to RoSPA** – The new RoSPA report has been submitted, along with an invoice. The Clerk has requested a credit note as this was due to be a free report. The report is more comprehensive than the original RoSPA report but not as detailed as the Playdale report. Clerk to liaise with Cllr Anderson on any issues arising from the reports. Cllr Anderson & Clerk
  - **Pot Holes on Coast View** – Some repair works have been undertaken to the pot holes along Coast View, filling in the larger of the holes.
  - **Yellow Lines outside the School** – The Clerk is waiting to hear back from NCC re a meeting on site to discuss the length of the lines. Dates were suggested however no response has been received. Clerk to pursue with NCC. Clerk
  - **Dog Waste Bin in Vyner Park – emptying of** – This was reported to NCC and was emptied immediately. A new operative was on the route and had not been aware of the bin.
  - **Golf Club Driving Range lights on all night** – The Enforcement Officer has written to the owners following the Clerk giving them the information on the planning conditions as NCC did not have them available. The planning approval states that the lights must be limited to use between 9.00 am and 9.15 pm. The Enforcement Officer stated that if the situation continues the Parish Council should inform her and she will undertake a site visit. Cllr Mrs Lewney reported the lights were now being switched off. Clerk to inform NCC. Clerk
- 7 **REQUESTED AGENDA ITEMS**
- FOI Request and Data Protection Request** – A FOI request was received from Mr Howarth in relation to all emails between Councillors in relation to Planning Application 13/03556/FUL – 14 Kenmore Road. The Clerk supplied all the emails that had been received along with the hard copy comments from the circulation sheet. Mr Howarth then requested any emails that had been circulated between Councillors that the Clerk may not have been party to. The Clerk sought advice on this and was informed that any emails between Councillors are not the property of the Parish Council (ie they are not in the Clerk's possession) therefore these cannot be requested from the Councillors under FOI. Mr Howarth requested the November and January minutes which were supplied stating the January minutes are still classed as draft until approved at the February meeting. Mr Howarth then requested under Data Protection for all emails between Councillors. Again the Clerk sought advice on this issue and was informed by ICO and NALC that Mr Howarth is entitled to see emails which include his name under the Data Protection Act – this does not cover emails that only stipulate his address. The only email that has been circulated including his name is the update sent to all Councillors informing them of the FOI request and this was copied to Mr Howarth.
- Swarland Sports and Recreation Club (SSRC)** - Cllr Brotherton briefed the Councillors on the background to the SSRC. In 1947 Vyner Park was handed over to the PC for £50 to be managed by the PC. In 2001 the PC leased part of the land to SSRC to develop the pavilion; funding was also put in by the PC for this.

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There has been a steady downward trend of members and users and in September 2013 the SSRC approached the PC with their financial concerns and requested assistance from the PC. A loan of £750 was given with specific conditions. Some of this money was paid back following the firework night leaving a residual balance of £429.52. The Treasurer of SSRC resigned and it was agreed an AGM be called. This meeting was inconclusive with no volunteers stepped forward to join the committee. The PC therefore set up a Steering Group to work with SSRC to find a way forward. The Insurance is due at the end of this month and the existing broker is happy to set up a new policy for the PC. The Steering Group will take over the management of SSRC and a new Governance will need to be drawn up. Engagement with the Community will be undertaken to see how the SSRC should progress in the future.

There are various issues with the account that have been submitted to Companies House and the Charity Commission up to April 2013 which need to be addressed and the final accounts need to be drawn up; the Steering Group will help with this. Cllr Lisle raised concerns as to whether this can be made to work. -The Steering Group stated they hope it can be but not in its current format. The original lease makes the SSRC the responsibility of the PC should it not be able to fulfil the lease conditions and it will be incorporated into the whole context of Vyner Park.

**Firework Safety Training** – The Company who provide the fireworks also provide free firework training and information on this will be received with the catalogue in June. Volunteers are required to undertake the training and Cllr Brotherton to contact Ken Walters to see if he would be willing as he has undertaken the training in the past and been heavily involved with the fireworks.

**Update on replacement 813 service** – This is now up and running with the new provider and working well. Unfortunately in the first week 4 people had to be turned away due to high demand.

**Community Resilience Plan** – It was agreed that a Plan was worth looking at as rural communities are generally not a priority for emergency services when there is a large scale issue involving many communities, and towns tend to take priority. A sub-group of Cllrs Brotherton, Francis and Mansfield to progress this issue.

Cllrs  
Brotherton,  
Francis &  
Mansfield

### 8 REPORTS BY COUNTY COUNCILLOR AND OTHER MEETINGS

CC Thorne reported that the annual Local Transport Plan meeting is to take place to detail the expenditure in the Council. Resurfacing on the road in Newton on the Moor is on the plan and hopefully it will be confirmed at tomorrow's meeting that this will take place.

NCC is quickly filling up pot holes in the County with their new machines as the Leader has stated by the end of June all pot holes will be filled.

NCC's budget has been passed with huge savings again this year – there will be tough times ahead and there will be a small increase in the Council Tax this year.

Cllr Mansfield asked if there were more information on the Transport Plan – CC Thorne stated he would forward the details to the Clerk after the meeting but there is nothing available at present.

CC Thorne

Cllr Brotherton asked if there was someone in NCC who could give advice on running the Sports Club. CC Thorne would provide names. Cllr Francis stated one contact is John Maud at NCC. Cllr Lisle stated he may be able to provide names from the private sector who may be able to help.

CC Thorne

### 9 FINANCE

a. Bank statements: Lloyds TSB current £507.69, Instant Access £6,340.08, Treasury £15,000

b. Clerks' salary and expenses: Salary £352.66 plus expenses £58.85 = £411.51

c. Other receipts and payments:

i) Receipts: Bank Interest £23.48

ii) Payments: Northumberland Community Enterprise Ltd (The Column printing) £75.00, Mr L Welch (Christmas Tree) £135.00, Information Commissioners

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Officer (Data Protection) £35.00. It was agreed that this would be set up as an annual direct debit payment.

Clerk

### 10 **PLANNING**

#### **a. To report on any planning decisions:**

12/02228/RENE – Land North of Old Felton – Erection of 67m wind turbine – objections – WITHDRAWN

#### **b. To consider any planning matters:**

13/03556/FUL – 14 Kenmore Road – Resubmission of 13/01308/FUL, Extension to rear, and into roof to form one and a half storey dwelling – Objections submitted - In summary the scale of the proposed dwelling is not in keeping with the size and style of existing dwellings on Kenmore Road, compounded by its dominant position at the top of this road, it would create an imbalance and a building out of proportion with the sites around it. It would also impact on the light and privacy to existing dwellings in its proximity.

13/03931/OUT – Land North West Of The Larches, Nelson Drive - Change of use of land to residential – No Objections

14/00193/FUL - Ash Cottage, NotM - Proposed Mansard Roof – No Objections

14/00279/FUL - 2 The Avenue - New pitched roof to existing flat roof bungalow – No Objections

14/00368/PRUTPO - 3 Low Chesters - Tree works - removing ivy, deadwood trees & crown – on circulation

14/00426/FUL – The Old School, NotM – conversion of double garage to one bed holiday let – on circulation

14/00541/FUL – 11 Low Wood – Side Extension to form new garden/family and media/cinema rooms – on circulation. Cllr Lisle reported that he could not open the documents on line as it would appear they needed a specific IT application. Clerk to investigate.

Clerk

Cllr Handyside stated she had read the PC comments sent to NCC on 14 Kenmore Road and was unhappy about the wording of “strongly objecting” to the application as there was only a 6-4 vote against this application. The Clerk explained that this related to the amount of points raised in the objection: if there is only one issue raised then the response is an “objection”; if there are a number of issues raised then the wording “strong objection” is used. Cllr Handyside stated she was still unhappy with the planning application system and that if there are objections or differences of opinion between councillors on applications they should be discussed at the PC meeting or an emergency meeting called. Cllr Fahy stated that she was aware of extensions given to deadlines for submitting comments on applications to NCC. The Clerk confirmed that extensions have been granted by NCC in the past where the deadline date is not too far away from the requested extension, or if the application is very controversial and would have a number of members of the public in attendance at a PC meeting to raise their issues. However it is dependent on the individual Planning Officer and requests have been refused in the past. It was agreed that should there be an issue in future with division of the Councillors on applications then a meeting would be held to discuss it. Cllr Lisle stated that he had reviewed the past comments from the PC and could not find any applications where objections had been submitted with the wording “strongly objects”. The Clerk stated there were a number of applications where objections were raised and Cllr Lisle asked for copies of these. The Clerk will provide them.

Clerk

Cllr Lisle also stated that when Councillors circulated or reply to emails they should check what attachments or strings they include as some show that not all councillors are included when commenting on planning application and other transparent items.. Cllr Handyside stated that Parish Councillors should make sure of their facts when sending out emails as copies can be requested by members of the public.

Cllr Mrs Stanley reminded the meeting that only three current Councillors have

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been on the PC for more than a year, the rest of the twelve joining during the course of the year, two as recently as January. As it is such a new group, she felt it had not developed any complacent or lazy habits as long-established groups sometimes can, and she resented any implication of collusion within the PC which appeared to be felt by some Councillors.

The Clerk has been in contact with NCC to request if any planning training is to take place and NCC stated they intend to hold training in the Spring.

### 11 CORRESPONDENCE

- NCC – Proposed introduction of “Disc Zone Parking Places” – NCC is proposing to introduce a free parking system in Northumberland based on current time limits in car parks using a disk system. The only areas not covered by this are Craster and Newton by the Sea. It was agreed the Parish Council are in support of this proposal and the Clerk to relay this to NCC.
  - NCC – Core Strategy Feedback Sessions – Tuesday 11 March at 6pm, Northumberland Hall, Alnwick – Cllr Francis to attend
  - NCC – Northumberland Residents’ Festival – Publicity materials for the two day festival for residents to benefit from free or reduced fees to enter tourist areas in Northumberland. NCC had asked for Councils to include the booklet on their web sites and in their newsletters however the format it was provided in is not conducive to this.
  - Northumbrian Water – notification of sewer works in Swarland – first stage of essential works is to take place on the sewer network in Kenmore Road and Studley Drive over the forthcoming months. There will be 390 metres of new sewer pipe installed at a cost of £350,000. These works will mean the closure of Kenmore Road, close to the junction with Studley Drive from 3 March to 14 March and closure of Studley Drive from 10 March to 11 April.
  - CPRE – letter re concern about the number of onshore wind farms asking NCC to develop a policy that permits the approval for planning permission of further wind farms in Northumberland only where a need for them can be clearly demonstrated and where the adverse consequences of such developments are clearly demonstrated to be minimal. Letter to be circulated to Councillors. Clerk
  - Email re situation with Coast View road and Email from Mike Shirley and Derek Baugh in relation to roads in general. A resident has contacted the Clerk about getting Coast View adopted by NCC. He has stated that as NCC will not take on the road until it is made up to an adopted standard the legal position would be for residents who have frontages onto the road to bear the cost of the works. However this road is used as a public highway as it gives access to the golf club, social club and village hall so they should also be included in any charges for works. Cllr Handyside stated she would check what her deeds state in relation to the road and the Clerk to contact NCC to ascertain costs of making up Coast View to an adoptable standard. Cllr Handyside Clerk
- It was agreed there is an ongoing issue with adoption of roads and roads not being made up to adoptable standards. A situation has regularly occurred in the past where developers have a condition to make up the roads on completion attached to planning applications. However if the development is not completed ie only 3 out of 4 houses are built, or if the development goes into liquidation then the condition is not met. Cllr Lisle asked if conditions were put on the two plots of land at Kenmore Road – Clerk to check what conditions NCC has put on these applications. Clerk
- Email re damage to Footpath 17 – an email was received about the damage to the bottom of Footpath 17. It appears that it is mainly horse hoof damage. It was reported that NCC and the Forestry Commission (FC) agreed the specification for the footpath, the assumption being made that there was hard surface beneath the length of the existing path. However some areas have been found not to have this hard surface present. The FC has agreed there is a problem with the footpath however there are no further funds available at the moment to undertake more work. Cllr Lisle asked if the rumour was true that this

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footpath will have a designation change. Cllr Mansfield confirmed that NCC will be reviewing how the footpath performs and then decide if the designation of a Footpath is to change. Horses have a legal right to use the woods and the pathway as it is FC land and they allow access by horses. The funding was provided for the works on the understanding that this was to be used by different user groups including horses. It will have to be seen if further funding can be sought and Cllr Mrs Stanley suggested an SVA meeting should be held to discuss this. Cllr Lisle stated that in other parts of the woods a number of fences with "V" sections cut into them allowing pedestrian access but deterring horses were in place across some footpaths. He was informed that this was actually Golf Club land not FC land, hence the deterrents.

- Toma Fund – donation request – no donation to be made, letter to be sent stating the Parish Council policy is to make donations to charities that directly benefit the residents of the parish Clerk
- Lloyds Bank – Online banking – Lloyds Bank has written with information on their on-line banking system however at this present time Parish Councils are not able to use this facility but legislation is in the process of being decided as to whether on-line banking can be used in the future. Clerk to investigate the online banking offered by Lloyds. Clerk
- City and County and CPRE Newsletter – to circulate Clerk
- NCC – Consultation document on The Charter – to circulate in hard copy and electronic format Clerk
- NCC – Post-16 Transport Consultation – to circulate in hard copy and electronic format Clerk
- Email copies to Cllr Mrs Stanley from Mr Barry White asking NCC what is being done about the Cattle Sheds. NCC has responded stating that their courses of action are very limited though they are aware of the problems. Cllr Stanley suggested that this issue should be further discussed by Swarland Village Action.

### 12 URGENT ITEMS

- Cllr Lisle asked why the PC website had not been updated and the Clerk confirmed that the site is being transferred to a new domain name and being redesigned. The Clerk had hoped to have this live by the February meeting however her contracted hours had been spent on other issues this month so it had not as yet been completed.
- Cllr Lisle stated concerns from Park Road residents had been raised with him in relation to their rear gardens being opened up due to the work undertaken on the footpath around the lake. As some properties do not have fences along this boundary line they were concerned re security issues and what plans were in place for this. Cllr Mrs Stanley stated this was another reason for SVA to meet to discuss this as it is not a PC issue.
- Cllr Lisle stated the hedgerow which runs adjacent to the footpath by the 10<sup>th</sup> hole of the golf course has been removed and there is concern about the safety of people using this pathway as there is now no protection from wayward golf balls. There is also an issue with motorbikes using the bottom end of this land. Clerk to contact the Golf Club on this issue. Clerk
- Reminder to new councillors that the training is to take place on 5 March in Jubilee Hall – Clerk to send out a reminder to Councillors. Clerk

### 13 REQUESTS FOR NEXT AGENDA

Commemoration event for the start of the First World War

### 14 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

To be held on **26 March 2014** at **7.00pm** in **Jubilee Hall, NotM**

### 15 CLOSED SESSION

**A resolution to exclude the public and the press was then agreed**

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The meeting closed at 10.00 pm.

Dates of Future Meetings: 23/04/14 SVH, 28/05/14 JH, 25/06/14 SVH, 23/07/14 JH,  
27/08/14 SVH, 24/09/14 JH, 22/10/14 SVH, 26/11/14 JH