

ULGHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Parish Council held in the Women's Institute Hall on Monday 19 February 2018

Councillor J Scott (in the Chair)

Councillors G Brown, Mrs L Newman and Mrs H Shaw

Also in attendance 4 parishioners.

An apology for absence was received from Councillor D Towns

66/17 QUESTIONS FROM PARISHIONERS

It was reported that the dog waste bin at Manor Farm was full.

There had also been some fly tipping at the layby at the Meadows, next to the litter bin.

Mr Warlow wished to express sincere thanks to the Parish Council for their efforts in relation to the recent appeal for the Stables application. The thanks were from all the people who had signed his petition.

Mr Athey was in attendance to make a presentation in relation to woodland for sale in Ulgham. He had first noticed this some time ago but had not raised it with anyone. He now felt it would be an excellent extension to the Ulgham Meadows.

Mr Athey had carried out extensive research regarding ownership of the various plots together with the costs of purchasing them. He had also met with some of the owners of plots. He stressed that he done this research of his volition.

Owners have claimed that the plots are for recreational use only.

He expressed his concerns about some of the sites such as security and possible future use. Some plots had their own fishing rights however the EA would still have an interest in the river.

The covenants on these plots did state that 'their use should not cause upset to the neighbours' and he queried whether this meant the villagers who backed onto the site.

He hoped that someone such as the Church or Parish Council would be willing to buy some or all the sites.

He had a query about whether there were any TPOs on the site and he suggested that the condition of the trees should be examined. The NCC tree officer had confirmed that the woodland had no status currently and he had been asked to check on the trees although he was not sure this would happen.

Mr Athey stated that he was keen to get involved in this item officially and he would be happy to do any necessary work.

Mr Athey was thanked for all of the information he had produced and for the time he had taken on this particular issue.

The Chairman stated that he did not believe that the Parish Council could purchase any of the plots as they did not have the funds to do so or any particular interest in the land. However, Councillors would give the matter due consideration and report back to Mr Athey.

67/17 MINUTES

Members were asked to approve the notes of the Parish Council meeting held on 15 January 2018.

Further to Minute 58/17 Councillor Brown stated that he had noticed the dogs barking at various hours of the day and night.

In relation to Minute 59/17 the Chairman reported that cutting back of the tree obscuring the light had been carried out as stated.

He also reported that he would be attending a further meeting of the Wind Farm Community Benefits meeting on 20 February when the group would be considering 'practice' applications. The first meeting to discuss the first round of applications would be held on 22 March.

Further to minute 60/17(iv), the Chairman reported that three parish councillors had attended the NCC Planning training on 30 January. The issue of communication between parish and town councils and the Planning Department was discussed at length.

In relation to Minute 64/17 the Chairman and Mr Champion had examined the information sign at the Meadows and they would look at whether the sign could be repaired

RESOLVED – The minutes be approved.

68/17 CORRESPONDENCE

(i) Update re War Memorial

It was reported that the application to the Community Benefit Fund had been submitted.

In relation to the Leader application, the Clerk and Councillor Brown had met with the project officer from the Leader fund in order to get some assistance with certain elements of the form.

This was now complete and would be submitted as soon as possible. The meeting to decide on applications was to be held on 17 March.

Councillor Brown Stated that a further quote was required and he was following this up with Scotts of Seaham.

RESOLVED – The information be received.

(ii) Request for grant – Morpeth Northumbrian Gathering Committee

A request for a grant towards the costs of holding the 51st Morpeth Northumbrian Gathering Committee had been received.

RESOLVED – A grant of £75 be approved.

(iii) Audit Arrangements for 2017-18

The Clerk reported that information had been received stating that new external auditors had been appointed for all parish and town councils in Northumberland for the next 5 years. The auditors were PKF Littlejohn who were based in Canary Wharf, London.

She informed Councillors that from this year, parish councils with income or expenditure under £25,000 could claim exemption. They still had to have an internal audit carried out and complete a form claiming their exemption which had to be sent to the external auditors. The information also still had to be publicised on the website.

RESOLVED – The information be received.

(iv) General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)

The Clerk reported on new Regulations that were being introduced with effect from 25th May 2018. This would have an impact on all parish and town councils who had to ensure that they complied with this legislation. All local councils had to appoint a Data Protection Officer (DPO) and it was unclear as yet whether the appointment could be made from within the organisation. Both the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) and the Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC) were currently working on assisting local councils and organising training.

The Clerk briefly outlined the possible impact on parish and town councils as well as small organisations and businesses. Parish and town councils would have to pay a fee to the Information Commissioners Office which was currently £35 but could increase.

She agreed to submit a further report as soon as possible

It was suggested that contact should be made with the local MP to express concern regarding the impact of this legislation on small organisations.

RESOLVED – The information be received and a letter be sent to the MP as set out above.

(v) Appeal decision – application 17/00772/OUT

The Clerk reported on the above decision which had been circulated to Councillors for information. The appeal for this application had been dismissed by the Planning Inspectorate.

RESOLVED – The information be noted.

(vi) Newsletter contribution

The Clerk reported that she had received a request from the UVA for a contribution from the Parish Council towards the cost of providing the village newsletter.

RESOLVED – A contribution of £108 be approved which represented a 50% contribution.

(vii) Speed restriction proposal

The Chairman reported that every household in the Parish had received a letter about the speed limit reduction scheme. Councillor Towns had received a letter from a resident of Ulgham Grange thanking him and the Parish Council for formulating the proposal.

RESOLVED – The information be noted.

(viii) Northumberland Local Plan update and 'Call for Sites'

A letter had been received from NCC which invited recipients to submit potential development sites for consideration. The letter had been sent to landowners, agents, local residents and other interested parties.

It was suggested that this Council should submit a response stating that there were no suitable sites in the parish area and refer to the unsustainability of the village.

RESOLVED – A response be sent to NCC by the deadline date of 12 March 2018.

69/17 REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES

(i) Ulgham Village Committee

It was reported that the UVA Christmas dinner had been held recently and it was a very pleasant and well attended event.

70/17 ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT

It was noted that the following accounts were now due for payment:

- (a) Clerk, February salary, expenses, mileage £225.00
- (b) HMRC – paye payment, Clerk - £91.60
- (c) JM Champion – cutting back of tree - £60 (the homeowner would be asked to contribute £30 towards this cost).
- (d) UVA – 50% contribution towards village newsletter - £108

71/17 REPORTS FROM CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS

It was reported that three Parish Councillors had attended the planning training event held on 30 January. A discussion had been held with an officer after the event regarding the recent complaint made relating to an application.

Councillor Brown had been asked to raise the cutting of the churchyard for the forthcoming financial year and he stated that there had been no increase in the cost per cut. The Parish Council agreed to continue with their usual contribution towards these costs.

Councillor Brown also mentioned that it had been suggested to him that perhaps one of the Parish Councillors could be responsible for all matters relating to planning and for looking on the website for anything relating to the Parish.

The Clerk reported that she was informed whenever there was a planning application received and she notified Councillors immediately.

The Parish Council did not believe that this proposal was necessary.

Councillor Mrs Newman stated that the tree in the Ford was still there.

The Clerk stated that she had been informed by NCC that this would be reported to the Environment Agency. She agreed to follow this up.

72/17 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting would be held on Monday 19 March 2018 in the WI Hall, Ulgham at 7.00 p.m.