

ULGHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Parish Council held in the Women's Institute Hall on Monday 21st June 2021

Councillor J Scott (in the Chair)

Councillors G Brown, Mrs L Newman, Mrs H Shaw and Mrs D Wilson

Also in attendance 8 parishioners

An apology for absence was received from County Council D Towns.

12/21 QUESTIONS FROM PARISHIONERS

A resident asked on behalf of the UVA whether the Parish Council had any plans to clean up the stone seat at the end of the village. The Chairman agreed to take a look at this and clean it with the appropriate product.

A resident asked about the possibility of being allowed to put up some temporary signs in the Autumn asking people to be mindful of hedgehogs when driving through the village. These creatures were in decline and needed some help to survive. He asked if permission was needed to place these signs on existing signage and it was felt that as these were temporary, this should be acceptable.

The Clerk offered to produce the signs in a larger format and laminate them.

A resident mentioned his concerns regarding the parking of cars in Longhirst. He felt there would be an accident there in the near future.

The Chairman stated that this was a matter between Longhirst PC and the County Council. There was some discussion about the camping and caravan site. The owner was in attendance at the meeting and he stated that he had received permission to lift the existing covenant early in order to proceed with the scheme.

The Chairman pointed out that concerns had been expressed regarding the access and he asked the owner of the site to adhere to any restrictions in place.

The owner of the site stated that he would adhere to the conditions placed on the site.

It was mentioned that the covenant was in place for 5 years from 2017 so the covenant had another year to run until September 2022.

The neighbouring resident stated that he intended to discuss this with the landowner and request that the covenant was not lifted before 2022.

The Chairman stated that this issue was a matter for discussion between the two parties.

13/21 MINUTES

Members were asked to approve the Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 17 May 2021.

Further to Minute 4/21, the Chairman reported that the anti-littering signs had been purchased and displayed at the park area. It was possible that another bin would be needed.

RESOLVED – The minutes be approved.

14/21 CORRESPONDENCE

(i) Play area inspection report from Playsafety UK

The above report had been received and a copy had been circulated to the Parish Council. The Chairman stated that a couple of issues had been highlighted last year which required attention. The report would be examined, and arrangements made to have the issues addressed.

(ii) Northumberland Local Plan Examination – Proposed main modifications - consultation between 9th June – 4th August 2021.

A copy of the above document had been received from NCC. Comments were required by the 4th August 2021.

There was one issue which may be a matter of concern to the Parish Council. The document would be examined by Councillors and a response formulated.

15/21 REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES

(i) Ulgham Village Committee

A meeting of the UVA had taken place. The main item of discussion was about the Feast. It was hoped that a village event could be held later in the year on the last Bank holiday with live music and a cricket match taking place.

Discussions about opening the WI Hall for village events had also been discussed. The Rendezvous had been held in the Hall for the last two weeks and this had gone well.

A decision would be made in September about whether to hold the annual fireworks event. The hanging baskets had been erected and the UVA and Parish Council were grateful for the work that had gone into them. Tubs at each end of the village had also been planted.

16/21 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN 2020-21

A copy of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) for 2020-21 had been circulated to Councillors together with a report prepared by the Clerk to the Council. Councillors were asked to consider and agree the various sections of the AGAR and to approve the draft annual accounts for 2020-21.

As the Council's income and expenditure was below the limit of £25,000, the Parish Council were asked to decide whether they wished to approve and submit the Certificate of Exemption for 2020-21.

RESOLVED –

- (i)** The Parish Council approved the report of the internal auditor as set out within the AGAR.
- (ii)** The Parish Council approved the Annual Governance Statement as set out within the AGAR.
- (iii)** The Parish Council approved the draft final accounts for 2020-21.
- (iv)** The Parish Council approved the Accounting statement and explanation of variances as circulated.

- (v) The Parish Council confirmed and approved the Certificate of Exemption and agreed that this be submitted to the external Auditors, PKF Littlejohn.
- (vi) The Parish Council agreed the suggested dates for the exercise of public rights which were from 28th June until 6th August 2021

17/21 ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT

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

- (a) Clerk, June 21 salary, litter posters, mileage £169.53
- (b) HMRC – paye payment, Clerk - £91.60
- (c) Playsafety Ltd – Inspection of play area - £103.20
- (d) UVA – Contribution towards village hanging baskets - £100

18/21 REPORTS FROM CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS

The Chairman reported a resident had queried whether the speed sign was working. The latest data had been downloaded covering the period from 27th December to 20th June. The average speed was showing as 28.8 mph. 99.3% of vehicles coming into the village were travelling under 35 mph. The highest speed recorded was at 2.00 a.m. and the vehicle was travelling at 75mph. For the last 6 months some 263,998 vehicles had been logged through the village at an average speed of 20.83 mph and with 94% travelling at less than 30mph.

The Chairman was asked if he could provide this information for inclusion in the newsletter. A copy would also be placed on the notice boards.

Councillor Mrs Wilson stated that she had been appointed to the NALC County Committee and had attended a virtual meeting on 11th June. Areas of concern were the Government White Paper on Planning and also the number of mobile food and drink vans operating in the county, particularly in Ponteland.

Councillor Mrs Shaw reported that she had applied to the Treescaping fund to obtain native trees for the Meadows. She had received a reply stating that the scheme did not meet the criteria. She had queried this as she was uncertain what the criteria actually was, and she was very disappointed that the Ulgham scheme had not been selected. She had asked if there were any other projects coming up that were offering trees.

A query was raised in relation to the field next to the meadows being locked. It was explained that a new gate and stile was going to be erected at the entrance to the field.

A comment had been received about the state of the grass at the entrance to Ulgham Grange. All verge grass cutting was the responsibility of Northumberland County Council. However, the village warden had been asked to cut this back in the interests of safety. It is a dangerous area to cut in view of the speed of traffic travelling into the village. Councillor Brown agreed that it was an extremely dangerous area to work on.

The state of some hedges in the village was becoming a concern. The UVA usually included something in their newsletter asking residents to keep their hedges cut back. Councillor Brown mentioned one in particular which was causing problems for pedestrians. He had already spoken to the occupiers who had stated they would get this done but nothing had happened. He felt that something needed to be done such as a letter through the door or the Parish Council doing the work.

The Clerk mentioned the NCC website where this type of issue could be reported. If the hedge was obstructing a junction, NCC would contact the resident direct and ask for the work to be done and if they didn't do the work, NCC would do it and recharge the occupier.

Councillor Brown mentioned consideration of the minutes at the meeting and asked if it was necessary to go through each item. The Clerk stated that the minutes were there for approval and only matters arising should be raised. Everyone present at the meeting had access to a copy of the last minutes.

Councillor Mrs Newman expressed her sympathy for the residents of Longhirst following the unfortunate accident with their churchyard entrance.

11/21 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting would be held on Monday 19th July 2021 in the WI Hall, Ulgham at 7.00 p.m.