

MITFORD PARISH COUNCIL

The digital Parish Council Meeting was held at 7.30 pm on Thursday 8 July 2021

Present:

Parish Councillors Mrs Sheena Hudson, Mrs Esther Ridley, Ted Rodger, Mike Sharp (Chairman in the chair) and Mrs Alison Young

County Cllr Glen Sanderson (who left after item 7)

Stephen Rickitt – Clerk

1: Welcome

The Chairman welcomed all to the meeting, expressing regret that the worsening pandemic case figures meant that this was being held digitally.

2: Public Participation

No parishioners were present nor had any questions been emailed to the clerk.

3: Apologies for Absence

Cllr Matt Skillen and PC Andrea Teasdale had presented their apologies. The Rev. Alyson Lamb had tendered her apologies and indicated that she would be leaving the parish. The Council wished her well for the future.

4: Declarations and Grant of Dispensations

Cllr Mrs Ridley declared her membership of the village hall committee.

5: Coronavirus

Councillors were not aware of any new issues affecting parishioners.

6: Report from the Beat Manager

PC Teasdale had sent the following report:

We are aware of the anti-social behaviour issues around Mitford Castle and we are carrying out regular patrols in the area to address this. Due to the fact the weather has been very nice and the fact the schools are finishing soon we expect an increase in youths being out and about – especially when the restrictions are lifted. Please contact Northumbria Police on 101 if you have any issues to report of this nature.

Operation Hawkeye continues to run to address issues with rural crime. We have not had many reports of poaching in the area but if you do have issues on your land or in the area please let us know either by 101 or through a web submission on the Northumbria Police website so that we are fully aware of the issues so we can direct our resources to those areas.

Hopefully the covid restrictions will be lifted on the 19th July but if you are aware of any breaches prior to that date please let us know so it can be dealt with.

7: Report from the County Councillor

7.1 Cllr Sanderson was congratulated on his re-election as the Leader of the County Council. He reported on several matters including

- His intention that every parish council is visited by a Cabinet Member within the next four years
- The new Corporate Plan is being prepared with the objective of enabling the county to move out of Covid with more opportunities, and he made special mention of the planning permission for the Giga-factory at East Sleekburn
- The need to address the health and poverty issues highlighted during the pandemic
- The high number of new Covid cases in the county mainly in the 17-24 ages group.

7.2 The Council was concerned to hear of the plans to drastically reduce the number of rail services available at Morpeth station. The Council agreed to support Cllr Sanderson's campaign to stop these. **Action SER**

8: Minutes of the meeting held on 19 May 2021

These were approved as a true record and will be signed by the Chairman.

9: Any Matters Arising from the Minutes, not reported elsewhere

9.1 A new Seat for installation at the entrance to Fontside

The Council confirmed that a new oak bench seat should be ordered from Twists 'N' Turns Woodcrafts. Although oak was more expensive, it should last longer and require less maintenance. **Action SER**

9.2 The main noticeboard

The refurbishment is awaited. **Action Cllr Skillen and the Village Warden**

10: Planning

10.1 The Council considered the following applications and commented as shown

20/03654/COU - N1 Golf Centre Ponteland Road - change of use of land from golf course to tourism site comprising up to 20no. pitches – On the basis that these were not pitches for touring caravans but are to be static pods, the Council agreed to raise no objection but to strongly support the comments and conditions proposed by the Highways Development Management Team ensuring that the site could not be used for touring caravans without seeking a further permission because of dangers involved with the existing access.

21/00086/FUL - Land East of The Whynting Tranwell Woods Northumberland - New dwelling house and outbuildings including parking and hard and soft landscaping The Council continued its objection to this proposal on the ground that this is over-development, with the proposed building being too large for the plot and thus detracting from the character of the area which is within the Green Belt.

21/02367/FUL - Acorn Lodge Gubeon Wood Tranwell Woods – Outbuilding / Garage – The Council resolved to object to this proposal as it constitutes over-development of a site within the Green Belt.

21/02527/FUL - The Old Farmhouse Track from High House Road to West High House Farm Morpeth NE61 2YT - Installation of summerhouse on moveable dry-base system No matters to draw to the attention of the local planning authority.

10.2 18/03394/REM | *Reserved Matters Application relating to 16/00078/OUT - Land West of Lancaster Park Pinewood Drive Lancaster Park – Housing Development.* The clerk reported an approach from the developer's agents seeking view on the style of bus shelter. The Council do not see a need for a shelter and would not accept any maintenance liability being passed to the Parish Council.

11: Erosion of the Riverbank at the foot of the Allotment

Cllr Sharp has discussed the erosion with Alastair Lafferty from the Environment Agency and was to have a site meeting soon with a local contractor. The current estimate costs would be in the order of £4000 for live willow which was agreed as the preferred option. If the local contractor can insert the live willow stakes in terracing, the Council will then need to explore potential sources of funding. Cllr Sharp will report back to the next meeting. **Action Cllr Sharp**

12: Highways

12.1 Equestrian Safety – Tranwell Village

The clerk reported that there was to be a site visit with a design engineer from the County Council on Monday 12 July which Cllr Mrs Hudson would endeavour to attend.

12.2 Safety – Tranwell Woods

Following the site visit to Tranwell Village, the engineer was to visit Tranwell Woods, and Cllr Mrs Ridley will endeavour to attend.

12.3 The Morpeth – Mitford Road at Abbey Mills

The clerk has informed the County Council of the concerns expressed at the last meeting. A reply has been received suggesting this is given as an LTPP bid for 2022/2023. In the interim Cllr Mrs Hudson will see if residents have any photographs of the road showing the removed markings and signs. **Action Cllr Mrs Hudson**

12.4 Parking on the Village Greens at Fontside

There was further discussion about vehicles parking on the Greens, and where a sign or signs should be placed. The Council considered a formal consultation but decided to review the position after the summer to see if problems continue. Councillors were in a dilemma as many of the households are now multi-vehicle with little or no off-street parking and no reasonable alternative place to park. Another factor was enforcement and the fear of raising unachievable expectations. The Council will give this further consideration at its meeting in September. **Action SER**

12.5 Water at the Spital Hill Junction

Councillors noted the response from Martin King set out below

Hi Stephen, our last attempt to redirect the water to the gullies using an upstanding kerb was met with a challenge from the adjacent landowner over ownership. However, we now have works planned for week commencing 5th of July using the adopted highways extents, it will involve the placing of a high kerb tight along the edge of the road to redirect the water to the gullies on the main road. Obviously with the bank road being so narrow we need to ensure that this will not impact on traffic flow.

It is correct that we have undertaken several solutions at the request of the PC and every time we solve a problem at one location it reappears at another. It is worth noting that the gullies all work and remove surface water in line with their design, however there may be a capacity issue within the current system, however this type of upgrade could potentially prove costly. It may be the only solution if we can't stop the surface water running directly onto the Highway. Obviously, this can't be agreed at this moment, without further investigation and a full detailed design.

To assist with the original solution the gullies have been placed on our list of priority gullies and are checked on a higher frequency as well as being checked pre and post heavy weather events. As with all our works the Team will provide updates to Cllr Sanderson and PC prior to any works.

I hope the above meets with your approval, however as always happy to meet on site to discuss works if you think this would be beneficial

NWL have indicated to Cllr Mrs Young that the water is not of a quality which would indicate their pipes have a leak. Councillors agreed to request a site meeting as the roads around the junction are continuing to deteriorate to such an extent that they are posing a safety hazard.

Action SER

Cllr Sharp will contact Martin King to ensure the County Council have received a report from NWL. **Action Cllr Sharp**

12.6 Village Gateways

The clerk reported that the Highways Dept would charge approximately £500 for the installation of the gateway features. This was on the basis that the Parish Council purchases the feature. Councillors agreed to ask the County Council to progress on that basis with a view to the first installation being on the western side of Mitford. **Action SER**

12.7 Street Light MF24

Cllr Mrs Young reported the light was being obscured by vegetation. The clerk has reported it twice to the County Council. Cllr Mrs Young will check the position when dark and if light is still obscured, the clerk will escalate the issue within the County Council. **Action Cllr Mrs Young & SER**

13: Fibre Broadband

ALNCOM are progressing work and it is understood that only properties at Lightwater and Newton Underwood may remain to be connected.

14: Financial Matters

The Council noted and adopted the current accounts and had no payments to approve.

15: The Website

Cllr Mrs Young will be meeting Widescope to discuss modernising the appearance of the site and will be seeking updated content from community groups. **Action Cllr Mrs Young**

16: The Village Warden and other Environmental Matters

Waste Bins

After debate, the Council agreed to purchase two black Glasdon Type Elipsa waste bins and fixing kits for locating by the bench at Stable Green, Mitford and by the post box in Tranwell

Woods. The potential location under the A1 Flyover will be monitored to see if a waste bin is required. The bin for installation by the Church is dependent on the County Council confirming they will empty one in that location. **Action SER**

17: The Village Hall

Cllr Mrs Ridley reported that the Hall's AGM had taken place the previous week. There are a new secretary and treasurer. Bookings will continue to be handled by Mr Hedley.

18: Correspondence

The clerk reported there were no substantive items which had not been distributed to Councillors.

19: Any other business

None, not raised elsewhere

20: Time and date of next meeting

Meetings are provisionally scheduled for the first Wednesday every month.

The next scheduled meeting is on Wednesday 1 September 2021 at 7.30 pm as the Council hopes to use the Village Hall. It was agreed to delay calling the Annual Parish Meeting until the position regarding the pandemic was clearer.

Further possible meetings are scheduled for

- 6 October 2021
- 3 November 2021
- 1 December 2021

Confirmed as a true record

and signed by the Chairman Date