

MITFORD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the electronic Parish Council meeting held at 7.30pm on Wednesday 10 February 2021 (deferred from 3 February because of internet problems)

Present:

Councillors Mrs S Hudson, Mrs E Ridley, T Rodger, M Sharp (Chairman – presiding), M Skillen and Mrs A Young

Also present:

NCC Cllr G Sanderson who left after item 7

SE Rickitt – Clerk

NB: “NCC” means “Northumberland County Council”

1: Chairman’s opening remarks

The Chairman welcomed all to this electronic meeting of the Parish Council.

2: Public Participation

The clerk reported that there had been no questions emailed to the Council’s email address and no parishioners had requested log-in details.

3: Apologies for absence

PC A Teasdale

Rev A Lamb

4: Declaration of any interests and the grant of any dispensations

Councillor	Item	Reason
M Skillen	10 (as shown below)	Employee of Mitford Estates
Mrs E Ridley	17	Parish Council representative on the hall committee

5: Coronavirus

Councillors were not aware of any parishioners requiring assistance which was not already being provided.

6: Report from the Beat Manager

PC Teasdale had sent her apologies and the following report

There continues to be reports of poaching across the area. Numerous cars have been sighted driving over fields and other reports of males with lurchers walking across fields. These reports are coming

in both throughout the day and night. If you see anything like this please phone in straight away– use 999 if you cannot get through on the 101 system as this is very dangerous to the livestock and anyone trying to intervene. Operation Hawkeye is running which is the rural crime team that look into all of these complaints. If you suspect there have been poachers on the land please let us know via 101 or a web submission on the Northumbria Police website so we know where people have been and we can focus our resources to the area.

Northumbria Police now have a COVID taskforce working every shift to address and breaches in the current regulations. You can report breaches via 101 or a web submission. If this is something you have witnessed you may be asked to provide a statement to police to assist with a prosecution. At the moment most people appear to be adhering to the rules and regulations and the taskforce carries out patrols to ensure compliance by shops and licensed premises as well.

I am aware that some people in the area host “Shoots” – and we have had several complaints about gatherings after these events. Please be mindful of the COVID regulation as one such Shooting Party were all fined at the weekend for breaching the regulations by meeting up after the event.

I hope you are keeping well and COVID free!

7: Report from the County Councillor

7.1 Cllr Sanderson had sent his provisional apologies with the following report

We are currently working on the Budget for the coming year - this year I wanted to do the consultation in a different way so we had a Q and A online as well as a "Have your say" webpage and hundreds of residents gave us their views. We are not making any compulsory redundancies and have tried to avoid any increase in charges leaving services like green waste, bulky waste and burial charges unaltered.

If there any questions about the budget please get in touch.

We launched our new Climate Change Action plan yesterday which covers a wide range of new initiatives including a pilot around pavement EV chargers and large schemes around heat pumps.

The recent weather has proved pretty challenging with melted snow turning to ice which then gets a covering of snow. The teams and contractors are doing a great job but we know that there is disruption as a result of the weather.

Great news recently was the announcement of over £30million of Government funding for the Northumberland Line which should be up and running in two years or so with trains every 30 minutes from Ashington, Blyth, Bedlington and others to the centre of Newcastle.

We are also hoping to land a major new investor in the County which could provide thousands of new jobs.

The vaccine programme has gone well in the County but there is still a question around the date of lockdown easing.

Locally, I hope that the new interactive sign might be in place in a few months - jobs like this have slipped because of Covid sadly.

In the LTP there is some funding for Tranwell Village and Tranwell Woods and I look forward to moving these on in due course.

Finally, I hope you will get in touch if I can help with anything and best wishes

7.2 Councillors were pleased to welcome Cllr Sanderson to the meeting who elaborated on the above. He confirmed the County Council's decision not to agree to the boundary change with Morpeth Town Council. Councillors thanked him for his assistance.

7.3 Councillors welcomed the news regarding LTPP funding for Tranwell Village and Tranwell Woods.

8: Minutes of the meeting held on 2 December 2020

The minutes of the previous Parish Council Meeting were approved as a true record and will be signed by the Chairman.

9: Any matters arising from the minutes if not already on the agenda

It was reported that the seat at Stable Green has been repainted but would need replacing within the next few years. It was agreed to ask the warden to assess the condition of each seat so that a programme could be devised to replace one of the seats each year. **Action**
AYER

10: Planning

The following applications were considered

- *18/03339/DISCON – Land West of Lancaster Park – Revised phasing* (Cllr Skillen took no part in the discussion) – The Council noted that some of the housing was to commence in 2021 and agreed to ask the Planning Authority to ensure that the footpath link to Mitford was constructed as part of the first phase.
- *20/03654/COU – N1 Golf Centre – Change of Use to twenty touring sites* – Councillors were advised that copies of the masterplan had not been provided. The Council was unable to provide meaningful comments as the documentation was unclear if the sites were to be used for touring caravans, static caravans or chalets. The clerk was asked to seek further information from the Planning Authority and the application was deferred to the next meeting.
- *20/04301/VARYCO – Land south east of Lightwater Lodge – retention of hard standing* (Cllr Skillen took no part in the discussion) – No objections were raised but the bunding should be removed as it shields anti-social behaviour from public view.
- *20/0388/FUL – East Coldside – change of use – steading to 4 houses and extension of existing farmhouse* (Cllr Skillen took no part in the discussion) – No objections were raised but the plans indicated that four well-established trees close to the hedges were to be removed. These are very close to the hedge line and thus should be retained as providing screening with appropriate conditions to protect their roots during construction works
- *20/04393/VARYCO -4 Ashford Grove Mitford – amendment of plans* – No objections were raised

- 21/00060/FUL – Font Ford Lodge – Conversion and extension to form annexe – No objections were raised.
- 21/00144/FUL – Celtic Manor, Gubeon Wood – Ground floor extension - No objections were raised

11: Highways

11.1 Councillors remain concerned at the pothole at the Fontside entrance and the continuing water problems on Spittal Hill and flooding in the dip by Wansbeck Cottage. The Chairman will contact the Area Manager for an update. **Action MSh**

11.2 Councillors asked the clerk to follow-up the enquiry about the proposed location of the speed indicator sign on Spittal Hill. **Action SER**

11.3 Councillors are concerned that Spittal Hill is not on the precautionary salting route as this was promised whilst the drainage issue was outstanding. The clerk was asked to locate the correspondence setting this out. **Action SER**

12: Fibre Broadband

Cllr Mrs Young updated the Council as 73 properties have expressed interest. Both Openreach and another provider have indicated they are preparing estimates ahead of the closure of the voucher scheme on 31 March 2021.

13: The Boundary Review

As stated in 7.2 above, Councillors were delighted that the variation in the boundary with Morpeth was not to proceed.

14: Financial Matters

14.1 The Council noted the current accounts for 2020/2021 [A copy is attached to the signed minutes] and approved the changes to their style.

14.2 The Council gave approval to the following payments

- HMRC – PAYE Q4 - £112.50
- SE Rickitt – Clerks expenses for Calendar Year 2020 - £67.97 (to be paid by cheque)

14.3 The Council authorised the clerk to release the grant of £900.00 to Mitford Village Hall as a contribution towards the reflooring on receipt of evidence of expenditure.

15: The Website

Cllr Mrs Young had no new issues to report.

16: The Village Warden

The Council was pleased with the works being carried out by the Warden although there was little which could be done at this time of year. Cllr Skillen urged Councillors to let him know of any items for the spring. Cllr Young noted that the noticeboard will need refurbishing. **Action All Cllrs**

17: The Village Hall

Cllr Mrs Ridley reported that the installation of the new floor was due to commence in February.

18. Time and date of next meeting

The Council noted correspondence from the Rev. Lamb and agreed to revert to meetings normally being held on the first Wednesday in each month. That said, it was agreed to hold the next meeting on 31 March 2021 to avoid a clash of commitments on 7 April.

- 6 May 2021 – any contested parish council elections in Northumberland
- 19 May 2021 – The usual date would be prior to the elections. The Council must hold its annual meeting no later than 24 May 2021. The intention is to hold the Annual Parish Meeting immediately before the Parish Council Meeting.

Meetings may be cancelled if there is insufficient business

Confirmed as a true record at the meeting held on.....

and signed by the Chairman..... Date.....