

**MITFORD PARISH COUNCIL**

Minutes of the electronic Parish Council meeting held at 7.30pm on Wednesday 2 December 2020

**Present:**

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

**Also present:**

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**

County Councillor Glen Sanderson

PC A Teasdale

Rev A Lamb

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

| <b>Councillor</b> | <b>Item</b> | <b>Reason</b>                                       |
|-------------------|-------------|---|
| Mrs E Ridley      | 17          | Parish Council representative on the hall committee |

**5: Coronavirus**

5.1 The Chairman has spoken to the Rev A Lamb to see if she was aware of any parishioners in need of assistance. Like Parish Councillors she was not currently aware of such parishioners. It is known that some smaller communities within the parish have organised self-support groups for mutual assistance.

5. 2 The Council agreed to establish a new budget head, Covid Recovery Fund, and to set aside £2000 for that fund.

## 6: Report from the Beat Manager

### 6.1 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. We did uplift a vehicle last night that was stuck in a field poaching and had been abandoned so phoning in does work!

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.

6.2 The Chairman reported that he had been approached by a resident living close to Scotch Gill Woods. Anti-Social Behaviour was occurring, examples being potential bonfires near the nature reserve. As a result, a “Friends of Scotch Gill Woods is being formed with the idea of assisting in maintaining the reserve and encouraging visitors. The Council welcomed such an initiative and, if requested, will see if a Councillor can act as liaison point with the group.

6.3 The clerk will recirculate the link to the Police & Crime Commissioner’s survey as she spoke at the NALC AGM and was particularly keen to have responses from the rural areas.

### **Action SER**

## 7: Report from the County Councillor

Cllr Sanderson had sent his apologies and the following report

I hope to be able to make it to your meeting but I am not sure I will be able to - so here is a quick summary but please let me know if I can help with anything.

My life and an increasing proportion of the County Council’s time and effort is being taken up with Covid as you’ll not be surprised to read.

The decision I took to work with our Council neighbours in September was entirely based upon advice from Public Health officials supported by the County’s MPs and almost every councillor - and that first few weeks showed it was the right thing to do slowing cases and keeping pressure off NHS beds.

Unfortunately some areas in the County saw rising cases around the boundary with North Tyneside especially. They are still high and other parts are rising to the same level as the other Councils so Tier 3 was inevitable - even if the County had been on its own.

I had a virtual meeting with Matt Hancock yesterday - my ask is Tier 2 at the December 16th review but only if case levels are safe to do so.

I know one or two are finding fault and using social media and the Press but this issue is too important and serious for that I think

And anyone who has had COVID or cared for someone infected or lost a loved one totally understand and fully support the need for caution.

Today I have had meetings about the roll out of the vaccine and increased testing which will bring some real challenges for us especially in our more rural areas.

Elsewhere we are still getting on with the very large roads programme, and beginning work on the new Morpeth Leisure Centre.

The new car park at Goosehill is almost ready to start but we still have some archaeological digging to do - so far there has been no bones or anything of interest found.

We are just beginning a new Budget process and all that entails but this year I want to make it easier for residents to have their say so we will be launching this on the website next week.

I hope you are happy with the work that we plan to do on St Leonards Lane and Tranwell - the sign is on order I understand. Please let me know if you need any input into this

And as usual please get in touch if I don't make it and I'll happily pick up any problems

#### 8: Minutes of the meeting held on 7 October 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 is awaiting repainting and Cllr Mrs Ridley will speak to the Warden. The Council noted that the seats are generally nearing the end of the life and replacements be needed within the next few years. **Action ER**

## 10: Planning

The following applications were considered

- 20/02841/FELTPO Tall Trees Gubeon Wood Tranwell Woods – Removal of a diseased silver birch – no objections but two replacement trees should be planted
- Application 20/03614/FUL - The Old Farmhouse, High House Road - Various minor works – No matters to draw to the LPAs attention

## 11: Highways

11.1 The County Council had sent the following update

Further to your request for an update please find information below.

1) 30mph speed limit extension on St Leonard's - this has been designed and I believe is with the Parish for comment. This will be implemented in due course in conjunction with the interactive sign that Cllr Sanderson is funding.

2) Gateway Features - These are being considered within the process for scheme prioritisation for determining next years LTP programme, taking account of the priorities put forward by the Parish council. as you would perhaps expect, we will not be able to confirm whether or not any scheme has been successful in being included in the 21/22 LTP programme until the final programme is approved in the spring.

3) No Tipping signs Tranwell Woods - The Highways Programme team are going to be liaising with the area office to have these erected.

4) Parking on the path at A1 flyover - The Highways Programme team are going to ask the area office if they can put some bollards in the prevent this.

5) St Leonards lane bends signs - Area office are liaising with Highways Programme to progress agreement of location.

6) St Leonards Lane drainage - Area Office are undertaking further investigations of water sources, with a view to seeing if surface run off water can be intercepted before it hits the highway.

7) B6343 potholes between Wansbeck Cottage and Fontside - any actionable defects identified are being repaired. Wider area being kept under review for patching / surfacing.

8) Gully outside Blacksmith's Cottage - this has now been attended and cleaned out.

9) Post box Tranwell Woods - area in front of post box now hardened.

11.2 Councillors were grateful for the information and asked the clerk to raise some issues of clarification as follows

Item 1) The Council were content with the scheme design but wished to know the location of the speed indicator sign

Item 2) The Council wished to remind the Highways Dept of the offer to assist with funding the other gateway features in Mitford, Tranwell Village and Tranwell Woods

Item 9) Cllr Mrs Ridley reported that the works did not appear to have been completed and will supply the clerk with a photograph.

## **Actions ER & SER**

### 12: Fibre Broadband

Cllr Mrs Young updated the Council on the efforts to have parishioners express an interest in acquiring fibre broadband as any scheme was dependent on viability being assessed by a supplier. Costs can be offset by up to £3,000 per household from the Rural Gigabyte Scheme (national scheme) and the Borderlands Top-up Scheme. As at the time of the meeting, Cllr Mrs Young was aware of 32 households having expressed an interest. Fellow Councillors indicated their gratitude for the work she was undertaking.

### 13: The Boundary Review

The clerk had no further information to report.

### 14: Financial Matters

14.1 The Council noted the current accounts for 2020/2021 [A copy is attached to the signed minutes] and gave retrospective approval to the following payments

- HMRC – PAYE Q3 - £112.50
- G Christie – Village Warden (oct & Nov) - £876.00

14.2 The Council considered the clerk's report on the budget and precept for 2021/2022, a copy of which is attached to the signed minutes.

14.3 Having regard to their decision to establish a Covid Recovery Fund (see item 5.2 above), the Council resolved to set a precept of £8500 [Eight Thousand Five Hundred Pounds] which was no change from the current year and to agree the following budget

| <b>Budget Head and Number</b>       | <b>Budget for 2021/20221</b> |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Clerks Costs including PAYE [1]     | 2300.00                      |
| Misc. Expense & Fees [2]            | 100.00                       |
| Insurance [3]                       | 400.00                       |
| Legal /Audit /Subscriptions [4]     | 300.00                       |
| Village Warden [5]                  | 2000.00                      |
| Hall Hire [6]                       | 200.00                       |
| Support Payments [7]                | 500.00                       |
| Village Hall or Community Works [8] | 5000.00                      |
| Contingency [9]                     | 250.00                       |
| Website [10]                        | 300.00                       |
| Covid Recovery Fund [11]            | 1500.00                      |
| <b>Totals</b>                       | <b>12850.00</b>              |
| <b>Precept</b>                      | <b>8500.00</b>               |
| <i>Balance from reserves</i>        | <b>(4350.00)</b>             |

15: The Website

Cllr Mrs Young had no new issues to report.

16: The Village Warden

Issues ad been discussed under item 9 above

17: The Village Hall

Cllr Mrs Ridley reported that the installation of the new floor as been delayed by Covid issues at the flooring company.

18. Time and date of next meeting

The Council noted that the next meeting was to be an electronic one held on Wednesday 3 February 2021.

Future meetings are likely to be changed to the third Wednesday of the month, i.e.

- 17 March 2021

Draft Three – Subject to ratification by the Parish Council

- 21 April 2021
- 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.

The clerk will circulate a full calendar for 2021. **Action SER**

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.....

DRAFT