

MITFORD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held at 7.30pm on Wednesday 6 February 2019 in The Village Hall, Mitford.

Present:

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

Also present:

PC A Teasdale – who left after item 6

SE Rickitt – Clerk

NB: "NCC" means "Northumberland County Council"

1: Chairman's opening remarks

All were welcomed to the meeting.

2: Public Participation

No parishioners were present

3: Apologies for absence

Cllr Mrs S Hudson

NCC Cllr G Sanderson

Rev. A Lamb

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

Councillor	Item	Reason
M Sharp	11.1	President of the Cricket Club
Mrs E Ridley	15	Parish Council representative on the hall committee

5: Report from the County Councillor

5.1 Cllr Sanderson had emailed Councillors to confirm that a speed survey will be undertaken in Tranwell to get a better understanding of the situation before looking at possible remedies in terms of traffic calming.

5.2 The clerk was asked to contact Cllr Sanderson to see if he had had any contact from the concerned parishioner regarding Spital Hill (See Feb. 2019). The clerk had not received any email from the parishioner. **Action SER**

6: Report from the Beat Manager

6.1 PC Teasdale reported several issues including

- The continuing anti-poaching operations
- Thefts from unlocked sheds, outbuildings and garages
- The number of accidents caused by drivers travelling too fast on wet or icy roads.

6.2 Councillors discussed the resources which are allocated to rural crime and resolved to ask NALC to contact the Police & Crime Commissioner to seek more resources, particularly given the 21.8% increase in the police precept for 2019/2020. **Action SER**

7: Minutes of the meeting held on 6 February 2019

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

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

8.1 - Item 8.3 – Fontside Garages – the clerk has emailed Karbon Homes and will continue to press for a response. **Action SER**

8.2 – Item 14 – Former post for dog waste bin – This requires removal. **Action MSh & MSk**

8.3 The defibrillator is now operational, and it was agreed to write a formal letter of thanks to Mr Shepherd. **Action MSh & SER**

9: The Boundary Review being suggested by Morpeth Town Council

The Chairman advised the Council that no further information had been received from the Town Council. He had monitored their minutes, but these are uninformative. The Council agreed to take no further action until contacted by Morpeth Town Council.

10: Planning

10.1 The Council considered Application *19/00729/FUL - Abbey Farm Mitford - 2 no. holiday cottages (C3 use)* and resolved to object for the following reasons

1. The applicant claims that the extent of the green belt around Morpeth is not defined. The Saved Policy S5 defined the general extent of the Green Belt (GB) around Morpeth, it did not define the detailed outer boundaries but did provide a detailed description of where the boundary should be approximately defined. This site lies within the GB boundary defined in Policy S5. There is no ambiguity that the application site falls within the Green Belt.
2. The application site is a field to the west of Abbey Farm and west of a block of stables constructed 2 years ago, it is not a garden as described in the application. The site is not between existing buildings, cannot be considered as infill, and is therefore in the open countryside.
3. The proposed development is described as holiday cottages, given the scale of the proposed structures a more accurate description would be 5-bedroom executive homes. The Council is concerned that this is the true intent.
4. Policy Env-1 Landscape and Wildlife Corridors - of the Morpeth Neighbourhood Plan requires that the green approaches to Morpeth be maintained, the Morpeth/Mitford corridor is one of those approaches. Approval of this application would open-up the entire corridor for development leading to the coalescence of Mitford and Morpeth.
5. Proposed development in a field to the east side of the Abbey Mills community has been refused twice on the grounds of inappropriate development in the Green Belt.
6. The applicant argues that the proposed development will support the growing tourist industry in Northumberland and bring tourists and jobs to the area. There is no shortage of disused and under-utilized farm buildings in Mitford and surrounding parishes many of which are suitable for development to support the tourist industry, there is no justification to build in the green belt when brown field sites are available.

10.2 The Council noted *Application 19/00249/VARYCO – Mitford Water Treatment Works – Variations* and made no observations.

10.3 The Council was informed of the permitted development rights given to a surprising number of organisations for temporary touring caravan sites in relation to the possible site in Tranwell.

10.4 The Council confirmed the clerk's action in supporting the Northumberland & Newcastle Society's wind-farm objection to the draft

Northumberland Local Plan. The closing date had been prior to the meeting and all Councillors had been circulated with details.

11: Highways and Street Lighting

11.1 Mitford Cricket Club had asked the Council for consent to allow a banner to be attached to the fence at the entrance to Fontside advertising the 2019 All Stars program. This is aimed at 5 to 8-year olds and has been run for the last 2 years at the club attracting over 20 youngsters each year. The banner measures about 10ft by 2 ft and would be in place until mid-May when the All Stars program starts. Councillors had no objection to this request but asked the clerk to draft a policy for consideration at the next meeting dealing with future requests. The Cricket Club banner would be a test to gauge parishioner's views. The draft policy should include

- Maximum time and size
- Permission would only be given to non-profit making organisations within the Parish
- It would only be for events within the Parish or at the Village Hall

11.2 Councillors asked the clerk to report that Street Light MF 24 is now completely out. The dark alley is a safety hazard in icy or wet conditions.

11.3 The clerk reported that he had reminded NCC of the request for the following signs, hopefully for action in the new financial year

- The "No Tipping" signs
- The "Private Road" sign at Tranwell Court

11.4 Speeding in Tranwell – see item 5 above.

11.5 Two traffic signs are down – the Give-Way sign on Church Bank approaching the Mitford Road Junction and the nearside 30 mph sign on the eastern approach to Mitford along the Mitford Road.

All items Action SER

12: Financial Matters

12.1 The Council approved the draft final accounts for 2018/2019, a copy of which is attached to the signed minutes.

12.2 The following BACS payments were retrospectively approved

- Widescope Web Design – Website - £228.00
- Gavin Christie – Village Warden - £582.00

12.3 Mr Pieter Vermaas was appointed the internal auditor for 2018/2019 and onwards.

13: The Website

Cllr Mrs Young reported on actions to refresh the website including

- An updated header and drop-down menus
- An image-slider rather than static images
- A darker text to enhance readability
- A different style of News and/or What's On section
- The potential for a scrolling news ticker

Councillors endorsed these suggestions and thanked Cllr Mrs Young for her on-going work. **Action AY**

14: The Village Warden

14.1 The Council agreed to ask the Warden to increase the number of cuts given to grass within the parish. **Action MSk**

14.2 Following discussion it was agreed that the theme of the Annual Parish Meeting would be to see what further environmental work could be done within the parish. **Action MSh & SER**

15: The Village Hall

15.1 Cllr Mrs Ridley updated the Council on the progress of the funding application for the improvement work. She will remind the Committee of the need to invoice the Council for room hire.

15.2 The Hall's AGM is on Monday 3 June 2019 at 7.00 pm and all Parish Councillors are invited. **Action All Cllrs**

16: Correspondence

The clerk drew attention to a few items for Councillors to take away. Cllr Mrs Young commented favourably on the NALC email concerning the meeting with the new NCC Director of Planning.

17: Any Other Urgent Business

None

18. Time and date of next meeting

The next meeting will be on Wednesday 1 May 2019 – this will be the Annual Parish Council Meeting and will be preceded by the Annual Parish Meeting.

Future meetings are

- 5 June
- 3 July
- *7 August – unlikely to be required*
- 4 September
- 2 October
- 6 November
- 4 December

Meetings may be cancelled if there is insufficient business

Confirmed as a true record

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