

## **MITFORD PARISH COUNCIL**

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held at 7.30pm on Wednesday 4 September 2019 in The Village Hall, Mitford.

### **Present:**

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

### **Also present:**

PC A Teasdale - who left after item 5

NCC Cllr G Sanderson - 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

Cllrs W Rodger and M Skillen

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	15	Parish Council representative on the hall committee

#### 5: Report from the Beat Manager

5.1 PC Teasdale reported that there was an increase in reports of poaching. She strongly advised that possible poachers must not be challenged as there have been serious incidents of violence. Any suspicions should be reported to the police.

5.2 With the approach of the autumn, fuel thefts were rising again and parishioners were asked to keep supplies under lock and key. Trailers and quad bikes are continuing targets for organised criminals.

## 6: Report from the County Councillor

### 6.1 Cllr Sanderson had emailed in advance of the meeting as follows

August tends to be a quieter month for the Council and so I don't have anything specific to add to my last update.

It is good to see the new Goose Hill school ready for children and parents whilst we hope to get onto the site of the old school to prepare for a new car park all being well.

The surface dressing programme is almost complete for this year and we are now on with resurfacing schemes.

Weeds have been a problem this year with the combination of windy and wet weather but we are going back to places where there are problems. Please report any and we will deal with them.

As always, let me know if there are any issues I can help with -

I am not sure if you have received the traffic count below but here it is. You may have some views on this. Possibly a follow up meeting with David Laux may be useful and I will be happy to arrange this.

#### **St. Leonard's Lane**

Comparative traffic flows - 7 day average

	Southbound			Northbound		
	AM Peak	PM Peak	12 hr	AM Peak	PM Peak	12 hr
Oct-13	17	18	164	32	20	202
Apr-15	16	20	105	30	20	126
Jun-17	39	48	347	49	40	349
Jun-19	68	60	530	45	62	478

6.2 Cllr Sanderson gave further information on the likely steps being taken by NCC regarding climate action, together with ideas for investment within Morpeth.

6.3 He was asked if he had had any further information about the speed surveys in Tranwell. *Following the meeting Cllr Sanderson advised that monitoring equipment was scheduled to be in place within the next two weeks.*

6.4 Cllrs Mrs Ridley and Mrs Hudson drew his attention to the issue regarding signs at Tranwell Village and Tranwell Woods. The clerk was asked to email the relevant NCC officers with a copy to Cllr Sanderson.

**Action SER**

6.5 In response to comments about the potential boundary review (see item 9 below), Cllr Sanderson offered to facilitate a meeting with the appropriate officers at NCC. *This took place on 11 September.*

7: Minutes of the meeting held on 3 July 2019

7.1 The minutes of the previous 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  
*(Items numbers are those in the minutes)*

8.1 - Item 8.2 – The Chairman is to write letters of appreciation in connection with the defibrillator. **Action MSh**

8.2 – Item 8.2 – Councillor Skillen will contact the Warden about a modest fence under the A1 flyover. **Action MSk**

9: The Boundary Review being suggested by Morpeth Town Council

The Council approved and endorsed the joint letter sent by the Chairman and the Chairman of Hepscoth Parish Council which had been published in the Morpeth Herald. A copy is in the annex to these minutes.

10: To consider the outcome of the two workshops seeking ideas for improving the Parish environment

10.1 Cllr Rodger had produced a report, a copy of which is attached to the signed minutes.

10.2 In discussion, Councillors present agreed to pursue the following

- Gateway signs/features and markers to show the parish boundaries
- Seats
- Different treatments for some verges at gateways to assist in moderating vehicle speeds
- To consider approaching Karbon Homes with a view to the grassed area at the entrance to Fontside being maintained by the Parish Council

10.3 There will be further discussion at the next meeting of the Council and items are likely to feature in the budget for 2020/2021. The clerk will circulate links to commercial providers of gateway features. **Action SER**

11: To consider what steps can be taken to alleviate the incidents of fly-tipping especially in the Tranwell area

Item 6.4 above refers to the need for a number of "No Tipping" signs, especially those indicating the possible use of CCTV. The clerk advised the meeting that the NCC website has a map-based link to report incidents of fly-tipping. The letter of concern from a resident was appreciated and shared by the Council.

## 12: Planning

12.1 The Council considered the following applications but had no comments to be given to the planning authority

*19/02778/VARYCO - Truffle House Tranwell Woods - Variation of condition 3 (Approved Plans) pursuant to planning permission 17/00936/FUL for the inclusion of winter garden space and space for storage*

*19/02800/VARYCO - Site 2 Seaton Ryde Tranwell Woods - Variation of condition 3 (Approved Plans) pursuant to planning permission 17/02929/FUL to allow minor alterations to floor plans and elevations*

12.2 The Council debated the proposal by BT to remove the telephone box from outside The Plough Inn. The data provided showed that no calls had been made in the past twelve months. The Council had also sought information regarding 999 calls and had been advised that no such calls had been made in the same period. In these circumstances, and noting the improvements in mobile phone reception, the Council agreed to raise no objection to the removal.

12.2 There were no further applications to consider.

### 13.1: Highways and Street Lighting

The Council considered the request for Local Transport Policy Programme bids for 2020/2021. The Council agreed that improvements to Spital Hill and St Leonards Lane should remain as one of the bids especially given the significant and continuing increase in traffic numbers. Councillors also agreed to submit a bid for funding to investigate ways of reducing vehicle speeds in Tranwell Village and Tranwell Woods. **Action SER**

### 14: Financial Matters

14.1 The Council noted the current accounts for 2019/2020, a copy of which is attached to the signed minutes.

14.2 The following payments were approved

- G Christie – Village Warden (Apr/May/Jun 2019) – £534.00 (retrospective)
- The Village Hall – Room Hire – £370.00
- Riding for the Disabled – Grant - £250.00 (retrospective)

14.3 On the advice of the Northumberland Association of Local Councils, the Council agreed to register as a data controller with the Information Commissioner's Office and authorised the clerk to set up a direct debit to take advantage of the reduced annual fee of £35.00

14.4 The Council was advised that no objections were made to the draft final accounts for 2018/2019 during the period for public examination and the Council thereupon formally adopted them as previously circulated.

14.5 Arising from the adoption of the 2018/2019 accounts, the clerk was asked to bring a report to the next meeting on whether any services should be reviewed and if appropriate new tenders sought. **Action SER**

### 15: The Website

Cllr Mrs Young reported on her continuing work to refresh the website.

### 16: The Village Warden

See item 8 above

17: The Village Hall

Cllr Mrs Ridley updated the Council on the works to the kitchen which are currently in hand.

18: The draft policy on displaying advertising banners

The clerk had circulated a draft which was agreed with amendments. A copy of the adopted policy is attached to the signed minutes.

19: Correspondence

The clerk had circulated significant emails received since the previous meeting and tabled various items of information material for Councillors. He was able to report that the NHS are to seek views on the future of the Whalton Unit (currently at the site of the former Morpeth Cottage Hospital)

20: Any Other Urgent Business

None

21. Time and date of next meeting – see email

The next meeting will be on Wednesday 2 October 2019

Future meetings are

- 6 November
- 4 December

Meetings may be cancelled if there is insufficient business

Confirmed as a true record

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

## **Annex – Letter to the Morpeth Herald**

Dear Editor,

### Morpeth - Possible Boundary Review

We were interested to read the article, based on information from the Town Council. Sadly, but not unexpectedly, the Town Council has not seen fit to inform either Hepscoth or Mitford Parish Councils of the outcome of their debate.

Our two Councils oppose the review for a number of reasons

- There is no discernible benefit to the existing and future residents who will see a significant increase in their council tax bills
- The Town Council provides little by way of direct services to the existing housing estates within their area, their expenditure seems to be concentrated within the town centre
- The effect on the services which are provided economically by the two Parish Councils

The forthcoming review is going to absorb precious time and energy not only from the Town Council and our two Parish Councils, but also from the County Council, and Hebron and Pegswood Parish Councils. In our opinion it will inevitably mean that the existing ward boundaries within Morpeth will have to be examined and most likely altered, perhaps radically.

The effect on the Morpeth Neighbourhood Plan should not be underestimated. Legally it will be unaffected, but the time is fast approaching when its first review is needed. By this action, the Town Council risk destroying the relationships within the plan's area to the detriment of all the inhabitants.

The Town Council has not indicated how the extra revenue from their proposals will be spent. We suspect it will not be used to significantly reduce the Council Tax for Morpeth residents but wonder if it is seen as a substitute for the anticipated funds from the defeated Business Improvement District, i.e. extra money to be spent to assist those very businesses who voted against the BID.

There are far more pressing issues to be dealt with within our area and we are saddened at the actions of the Town Council.

Yours sincerely,

Cllrs Carolyn Reid and Mike Sharp

Chairs of Hepscoth and Mitford Parish Councils