Mitford Parish Council

Meeting Minutes

The Parish Council met at 7.30pm, on Monday, 3rd October 2022 at the Village Hall, Mitford.

**Present:**

Councillors: Chair - Alison Young (A.Y.), Mike Sharpe (M.S.), Ted Rodger (T.R.)

Damian McEnroe (D.M.) - Clerk

**1: Chairs Opening Remarks.**

The chair welcomed all to the meeting, including a large number of parishioners, and explained that to accommodate their interests with respect to planning application 22/03226/COU, the published agenda would be slightly rearranged.

**2: Public Participation.**

14 parishioners.

**3: Apologies for absence.**

Matt Skillen (M.S.), Sheena Hudson (S.H.), County Councillor Glen Sanderson (G.S.).

**4: Declaration of any interests and the grants of any dispensations.**

T.R. as a member of the Village Hall Committee.

**5: Report from the Police.**

None had been received. There is expected to be a chance to meet with the local policing team at a time and date yet to be determined.

**6: Report from the County Councillor.**

Councillor Sandersons’ report had previously been circulated to the committee.

*“It has been a very sad two weeks but we have honoured Her Majesty well in Northumberland. I have attended a large number of Church Services and I have been pleased with the way NCC have facilitated the Books of Remembrance, organised street closures, and organised a large number of civic functions including the Proclamation in Morpeth.*

*You will have read in the press about the difficulties we have had in respect of some HR issues at the Council - these are now resolved and things are very much improved. We have had a very good response to our advert for a new CE and we will be recruiting one soon. We also have a new management structure agreed and will be advertising for those roles shortly as well.*

*Despite the internal problems we have still continued to provide good services and our education results are improving every year.*

*Our Ofsted results show that in 2017 76% of our schools were Outstanding or Good compared to a national average of 86% while in 2022 we are at 89% compared to the national average of 86% thus moving from lower quartile to higher quartile in five years.*

*The Morpeth Leisure Centre is looking good and the new car park at Goose hill will be ready in a few months.*

*Our Budget process has begun - like Newcastle which has a budget Shortfall of £30million we are around £17 million as things currently stand. This is entirely down to pay, fuel, and general inflation.*

*So, in plenty of time, we are working hard now looking at how we can manage this.*

*Despite the budget issue we will continue to invest in roads including the Todstead landslip which is going to cost around £10 million but we feel we must just get on and do it once and for all along with keeping up our higher level of roads spending which has been undertaken over the past few years.*

*As always please let me know if I can help with anything however small and I will be glad to.”*

**7: Planning Application 22/3226/COU.**

Again, the chair welcomed all parishioners and established they were all present to discuss the application for up to 20 holiday structures to be situated at the Morpeth Archers site, Tranwell Woods. All agreed that was the reason for their presence and there then followed a lengthy, frank, free and open discussion. The parishioners were all allowed to speak and many did so.

They thought a large number of potentially affected residents had not been yet informed of the application, or might not be included in the consultation process and were concerned about this.

Talking specifically about the application they stated they considered it was inappropriate to the residential area, that it would affect the greenspace on which it would be situated, that it would have a detrimental effect on local wildlife, the proposed drainage solutions were inappropriate for the amount of foul water, the infrastructure of the local area was not developed for an increase in holiday makers (and there was already a campsite nearby), noise levels would be significantly increased, and unfenced boundary lines would potentially be breached.

They also complained of late-night racing from motorists on the Saltwick Rd and noise from a nearby residence, Turnberry House, which was owned by the applicant to this application, and used as an Air B ‘n’ B, predominantly for Stag and Hen parties.

The chair responded by explaining the Northumberland Local Plan and how this may affect the application.

M.S. stated that the applicant had previously mentioned a master plan for the area who when pressed was unco-operative in discussing. M.S. would also like to see an Ecology report.

He went on to say that it would be appropriate for the application to be called in so that everyone could make their concerns known. The P.C. agreed they would oppose the application.

The matter of vehicular racing would be reported to the Police, **ACTION D.M.**, and all parishioners were encouraged to report all such matters themselves to the police. Additionally, they were advised to avail themselves of the N.C.C. planning portal to record their opinions.

At 8.28pm the meeting was adjourned for a short break at which point the parishioners left.

At 8.31pm the meeting reconvened.

**8: Minutes of the Meetings held on 5th Sept and 9th Sept 2022.**

The minutes were read and accepted as accurate.

**9: Matter arising in the minutes not previously discussed.**

It was agreed that the heading “Coronavirus” would be removed from future agendas and the funds set aside under the Coronavirus heading be moved into Contingency Funding **ACTION D.M.**

The new vicar, Reverend Elaine Jones and her husband Andy will be in place by 28th November 2022.

The noticeboard refurbishment will start imminently **ACTION M.S.**

T.R reported that he had not yet received a response from Karbon Homes regarding the Fontside land. He will pursue this **ACTION T.R.**

Willow whips will be planted later in the year on the river bank **ACTION M.S.**

**10: Planning.**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Application** | Resolution |
| 19/01362/REM Land west of Lancaster Park | An issue regarding car parking on the verge of Mitford Road, adjacent to the lower entrance to the country park, and in the immediate vicinity of where the Platinum trees were proposed to be planted had been identified. It was proposed that the chair would approach the land owner regarding this. **ACTION A.Y.** |
| 22/02540/FUL Land East of Abbey Mill | A formal decision is still awaited, but the P.C. would still monitor future usage |
| 22/03226/COU Morpeth Archers Site | See above comments at Para 8. |
| 22/03211/FUL Agricultural House | The PC had no concerns to raise. **ACTION D.M.** to submit to N.C.C Portal |

**11: Highways.**

An answer to all the issues previously raised by Stephen Rickitt, previous clerk, had been received from N.C.C. highways. Concern was drawn to the mention that funding for the gateway features at Tranwell had not yet been identified. The P.C. stated that funding had already been previously agreed with N.C.C., set aside and that a project start and completion dates were now the only issues. Clarification with Neil Snowdon, Highways to be sought. **ACTION D.M.**

The outstanding matters would be considered at a future date.

**12: Financial Matters.**

It was discussed that the invoices for work, from the village warden would be more helpful for the purposes of work management, and expenditure auditing if they included a description and location of the work performed. **ACTION A.Y. to liaise with M.S.**

Payment of £552.50 was authorised to be paid to the Village Warden.

Payment of 33.94 was authorised to be paid to the Chair for purchase of a Book of Condolence.

Payment of £475.00 was authorised to be paid to Twists ‘n’ Turns as a 50% deposit for the purchase of a new public bench.

It was agreed that £250.00 be donated to the Stephen Carey fund who recently provided first aid training. **ACTION x 4 D.M.**

The Coronavirus funds to be merged into the contingency funds. **ACTION D.M.**

**13: First Aid training.**

The presentation given was of a very high standard and the presenter had been thanked for his help. He thanked the P.C. for the donation.

Response to the training was lower than hoped and consideration needs to be given as to how positive engagement with parishioners can be increased.

**14: London Bridge.**

The requisite flag raising and lowering were conducted as required. The book of condolence open to the public at times previously identified, was now closed and archived at County Hall.

**15: The Website.**

The chair stated she now had the ability to access the websites’ analytics and a future project would be to develop the website further.

**16: The Village Hall.**

The village hall has a new committee, and it has been requested that two members from the P.C. be asked to assist with and help drive the Northern Powergrid initiative. T.R. was tasked to speak with Oliver Hamilton, the Village Hall secretary, with a view to the P.C. assuming responsibility for arranging meetings with Northern Powergrid and “Northumberland Community Together”. **ACTION T.R.**

The chair shared details of the recent resilience meeting she attended and how there was fund of circa £100,000 to be accessed, to create a resilience hub which would require a well written application to be submitted asap. T.R. suggested the P.C. formulate an action plan for the project. **ACTIONS T.R. and committee members.**

There was no update on the proposed installation of A/V equipment.

**17: The Village Warden and other Environmental Matters.**

The warden to be asked to provide insurance details for public and employee liability and certificates for any work performed which required such a certificate. **ACTION A.Y. to liaise with M.S.**

N.C.C. are content with the proposed site of the Platinum tree planting scheme on the verge. A 20 Kv cable run in the verge will be identified before planting. The trees are on order but will require tree guards which are about £40 each. These will require purchasing once numbers required are confirmed. Any trees which cannot be planted at the site will be planted elsewhere.

D.M. was authorised to purchase cost effective 5ft x 3ft flags as follows:

2 x Northumberland / 2 x Union / 1 x Scottish saltire / 1 x Welsh dragon / 1 x St Georges’

M.S. will look into the purchase of a new Mitford flag

**18: Correspondence.**

None.

**19: Any other Urgent Business.**

None.

There being no further business, the meeting concluded at 10.05 pm.

**20: Time and date of next Meeting.**

7.30pm, Monday 7th November 2022 at Mitford Village Hall.

Confirmed as a true record and signed by the chair

……………………………………………………………… Date…………………………….