

Mitford Parish Council

Meeting Minutes

The Parish Council met at 7.30pm, on Wednesday 2nd October 2024 at the Village Hall, Mitford.

Present:

Councillors: Chair – Mike Sharp (M.S.), Eric Dodd (E.D.), Matt Skillen (M.Sk.) Michael Jeans (M.J.).

Also: Rev Elaine Jones.

Damian McEnroe (D.M.) - Clerk

1: Chairs Opening Remarks.

The chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, and in particular Cllr Dodd who has resumed his duties.

2: Public Participation.

No members of the public were present.

3: Apologies for absence.

Apologies were received from C. Cllr Glen Sanderson, Cllrs Ted Roger (T.R.) and Carole Burn (C.B.)

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

M.Sk. - Mitford Estate

5: Report from the County Councillor.

The report of the C. Cllr had been circulated and its contents were noted.

6: Report from the Police.

There was no report from the police.

7: Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 4th September 2024.

The minutes were accepted as a true record and signed by the chair.

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

A31/2024 – Cllr M.S. to speak with the site manager of Piramal to try and agree how best to have the shelter, which appears to belong to Piramal, repaired.

A32 – Both designs for the no parking poster were considered and it was agreed that design 1 was preferred. The clerk was instructed to arrange for the signs to be costed. **ACTION 38/2024 D.M.**

A33 – A loan of £750 was made to the village hall which would be repaid once the banking situation was resolved.

A34 – This has been completed and members were advised of new documents which had subsequently been posted onto the Morpeth Council website.

A35 – N.C.C. has been made aware of the road condition and have acknowledged same. Completed.

A36 - This was reported via Fix my Street. A recent inspection suggested the grass may be dying back on its own.

A37 – Cllr M. Sk. Informed everyone that this was in hand with the village warden.

9: Financial matters.

9.1 The accounts and current bank balance, previously circulated, were agreed upon as correct.

9.2 The following payments were approved:

G. Christie	Grounds Maintenance Sept 2024	£328.00
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9.3 There currently exists within the current years budget £7.5k for the village hall and contingency, and also £5k for the village hall and community. The P.C. is currently in the process of obtaining solar panel quotes for the village hall and warm hub to provide resilience in the event of power outages.

Whilst receiving a number of quotes the P.C. has been advised that it would be beneficial to purchase Tesla Power walls to store unused power. If we bought two, these would keep the village hall powered for 1 1/2 – 2 days in winter and up to 3 days in the summer.

1 power wall would cost £16.5k with solar panels.

2 power walls without solar would cost £18k whilst

2 power walls with solar would cost £24.7k.

The power walls are guaranteed for 10 yrs and are expected to lose only 1% efficiency per year.

The P.C. considers that the last option is the most attractive and on that basis the village hall and P.C. would need to contribute £5k to the project, with the rest being finance through a grant application, if successful. If we add a contingency of £2.5K to the project the village hall and P.C. would, together, have to contribute £7.5k.

Payback would be reached after 9 years.

It is intended the solar panels be roof mounted on the pitched sections of the hall roof.

The funding application will be submitted by VH to Northern PowerGrid Foundation next week.

A discussion then took place suggesting that once the Tranwell gateway project was completed, which included the installation of a speed sign funded by N.C.C., there would be a desire to install a second speed sign within Tranwell Woods which would cost the P.C. in the region of £5k, based on previous experience.

Given the anticipated costs for these two capital projects it was agreed that the contingency and community funds be maintained until they are required.

10: Parish Round-up.

The clerk has discussed the bus shelter at Piramal with the site manager, Stewart Fullerton, and Cllr M.S. intends to continue this discussion.

The signage for the village greens has been approved as above.

11: Planning Applications, both current and new.

<u>Ref No.</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>Status</u>	<u>Comments</u>
<u>24/3139/FUL</u>	Birchwood, Tranwell Woods	Application	No objection on the provisor the old entrance ceases to be used by vehicles. Comment submitted.

12: Morpeth Neighbourhood Planning Review.

There was a meeting of the Steering Committed last Wednesday to further discuss this project. A draft framework has been added to the website. A publicity event is being held at the Morpeth Forum on October 17th.

13: Highways.

The chair reported that there is no further update on the Tranwell Gateway project save that it will occur within this financial year.

The chair has been in contact with C. Cllr Sanderson to express concerns regarding the control of traffic once the repairs to the B3464 commence. He was assured that the P.C. would have an input into the management of the traffic, especially as it related to H.G.V.s and other larger vehicles travelling through the village. It was suggested that St Leonards Lane and the Mitford Steads Road may need to become "one way only" routes whilst the works progressed. Cllr M.Sk. also raised his concerns that large vehicles may try to use the church bridge despite it currently having a weight restriction in place.

14: Village Hall.

There is currently little to report, other than the committee is growing in strength again so all the previous issues will hopefully resolve themselves.

The chair reported that the village fayre was very well attended with in excess of 120 people and encouragingly, lots of children present and so it has been agreed that next year's fayre will be held on 6th September 2025. The same caterer has already been booked.

15: The Village Warden and other Environmental Matters.

The bench opposite the Plough P.H. is showing signs of the screws holding the latts in place failing. It was agreed that the warden should repair with stainless steel screws.

Additionally, the warden should weed spray the pathway along by the Millenium trees down to High Ford House as it is becoming overgrown. **ACTION 39/2024 (M.Sk.)**

16: P.C. Website

Cllr E.D. has agreed to resume responsibility for the website. The clerk informed the members that, as a result of recent correspondence he had raised the governments new guidelines on public sector websites (WCAG 2.2) with Richard at Widescope who has stated that this is an issue for a number of P.C.'s and the matter is being considered.

Rev. Jones volunteered to assist Cllr E.D. with his work and this was gratefully received.

17: Correspondence.

None.

19: Any other Urgent Business.

Rev Jones asked the council if it could possibly donate some funding to assist her in funding the warm hub teas and coffees, etc. It was agreed that a donation of £50.00 would benefit the community. **ACTION 40/2024 (D.M.)**

The clerk informed the members that it was his intention to step down from his duties at the end of the financial year Mar 2025. The chair stated a replacement would need to be identified and an advert should be prepared whilst members might wish to approach suitable candidates. **ACTION 41/2024 (D.M.)**

20: Time and dates of next meetings.

7.30pm, Wednesday, 6th November 2024, 4th December 2024 and 5th February 2025.

Confirmed as a true record and signed by the chair.....

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Date.....

ACTION SHEET

<u>Number</u>	<u>Action By</u>	<u>Description</u>
38	D.M.	Obtain quote for "No Parking" signage.
39	M.Sk.	Have bench repaired and grass on path weed sprayed.
40	D.M.	Arrange £50 donation to Rev Jones.
41	D.M.	Prepare advert for roll of clerk.