

MITFORD PARISH COUNCIL

The Parish Council met at 7.30 pm on Monday 18 July 2022 in The Village Hall, Mitford.

Present:

Parish Councillors Mrs Sheena Hudson, Ted Rodger, Mike Sharp, Matt Skillen and Mrs Alison Young (Chair presiding)

Three Parishioners

Neil Snowden – Highways Improvement Team, Northumberland County Council

Stephen Rickitt – Clerk – actions for the clerk are marked “SER”

1: Welcome

The Chair welcomed all her fellow Councillors, Parishioners and Mr Snowden to the meeting.

2: Public Participation

The Parishioners contributed to the discussion on Highway matters and left at the conclusion of that discussion.

No questions been emailed to the clerk.

3: Apologies for Absence

County Cllr Glen Sanderson

4: Declarations and Grant of Dispensations

Cllr Ted Rodger declared his membership of the village hall committee.

The Council resolved to grant the following dispensations to allow Councillors to speak and vote at meetings until the May 2025 elections

- Cllr Ted Rodger – on village hall matters as the Council’s representative on the Hall Committee
- Cllrs Mike Sharp, Matt Skillen and Ted Rodger on matters concerning the developments on land to the west of Lancaster Park giving their varying connections with Mitford Estate.

5: Highways and Footpaths within the parish

The Chair explained that the main focus of the meeting would be the varying highways matters throughout the Parish and was grateful to Mr Snowden for attending this meeting.

There was a wide-ranging discussion on various issues and for clarity the conclusions are set out below

5.1 Speeding Traffic

It was confirmed that Speed Indicator Signs (SI Signs) are funded by Parish Councils and/or the County Councillors' Small Schemes Allowance. It was suggested that the Council consider the purchase of a solar-powered SI Sign which could be rotated between a number of sites to enhance effectiveness. Ashington Town Council have just installed such a system and Mr Snowden will forward details of the type of equipment being used in Ashington.

Action Mr Snowden

Mr Snowden explained that legislation and DfT Guidance restricts the type of anti-speeding measures that can be installed, especially on B-Roads such as that through Mitford.

5.2 Proposed Safety Schemes in Tranwell Village and Tranwell Woods

It was confirmed that the existing streetlights mean that there is an automatic 30 mph limit on the lit roads within Tranwell Woods.

The Council confirmed it had no issues with the proposed two schemes. Mr Snowden indicated that these should be installed before the end of the current financial year.

It was confirmed that the schemes may require the slight extension of the existing 30 mph limits which would require a traffic regulation order to be made. **Action Mr Snowden**

5.3 Mitford Village

Grave concern was expressed at the danger caused by speeding vehicles and cycles through Mitford.

Parish Councillors explained that the Council was seeking a site visit to discuss the installation of gateway features for Mitford. Councillors were of a view that the recent installation of safety features on St. Leonard's Lane/Spital Hill has noticeably reduced vehicle speeds. Mr Snowden will arrange a site visit and new speed counts for the B6343 through Mitford Village. **Action Mr Snowden**

Parish Councillors were particularly worried at the dangers caused by and to speeding cyclists travelling eastwards at high speed on the B6343 down the bank, rounding the corner and coming upon the entrance to Fontside with little opportunity to stop if there was a vehicle already exiting. It was suggested that the Highway Dept consider devising a warning sign aimed at those cyclists, if necessary seeking DfT approval. **Action NCC Highways Dept.**

5.4 Signs and Streetlights

One of the parishioners had provided both the County & Parish Councils with a report detailing signs which were either broken or obscured by vegetation. Mr Snowden will pass the report onto the Central Area Highways Team for attention. **Action Mr Snowden**

Streetlight MF13 on the B6343 western exit to Mitford is similarly obscured by vegetation which needs trimming. The clerk will report this on the County Council's portal. **Action SER**

5.5 The Mitford Steads Road

Specific mention was made of the enduring damage caused to this road when the Flood Alleviation Scheme was under construction. The damage remains unrepaired, and Councillors were concerned about the effect on the possible new employment site currently being considered on that road. Mr Snowden will draw these issues to his colleagues in the Planning and Area Teams. **Action Mr Snowden**

5.6 Other Highway Issues

Meldon Parish Council had written to the Parish Council expressing concern at the parking by Mitford Church when there were large services. It was agreed to write to the Vicar once they were officially in post. **Action SER**

6: The Local Transport Policy Programme 2023/2024

Subject to the discussion in item 5, the Council confirmed their bids as

- The continuing programme of the installation of Gateway features within Mitford, and the completion of the schemes for Tranwell Village and Tranwell Woods.
- The investigation of safety and speed reduction measures on the B6343, including Abbey Mills
- The investigation of safety improvements in Mitford Village including on the Mitford Steads Road, Church Bank and the western entrance to Mitford

In closing this part of the meeting, the Chair thanked the parishioners for their contributions and Mr Snowden for his attendance.

7: Minutes of the meeting held on 6 June 2022

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

8: Any matters arising from the minutes if not recorded elsewhere

- The noticeboard repairs – **Action Cllr Sharp**
- Discussion with Karbon Homes – no response has been received as yet – **Action SER**
- Cllr Sharp was authorised to pre-order Flowering Cherries and Callery Pear trees for planting with the B6343 verge to the east of Mitford up to a maximum cost of £1000. **Action Cllr Sharp**
- Chase up the location of services on the verge to the east of the village – **Action SER**

9: Planning

9.1 The Council considered the following applications and resolved as shown

Application	Resolution or Action
22/02009/FUL - Chandlers, Stable Green, Mitford – Erection of a 2-bay oak frame garage	No matters to draw to the attention of the local planning authority

9.2 Issues arising from previous planning applications

Application Number, Location and Description	Issues
16/00078/OUT - Land West of Lancaster Park – Country Park	Status of the proposal and possible effect on any trees to be planted in B6343 verge – a substantive reply is awaited. The Clerk to chase up. Action SER
22/01621/FUL - Spital Hall, Spital Hill, Mitford – Replacement Access	Question raised regarding effect on gateway feature and 30 mph limit – It was noted that the Highways Dept. had made an objection to the proposal

10: First Aid Training

The Chair reported that this is provisionally arranged for 21 September, with 28 September as an additional session if required.

11: Financial Matters

The Council noted the current accounts, a copy is attached to the signed minutes. The following payment was authorised

- Gavin Christie – Village Warden (April & May 2022) - £676.00

12: Staffing Issues

The Council was advised that no applications had been received for the clerk's position. It was agreed that all Councillors would approach parishioners to see if there was a suitable person. The clerk will retire at the end of August 2022 but is prepared to work through September 2022 to assist in a handover. **Action All Cllrs**

13: Co-option

The Chair was authorised to amend the previous advert for placement on the noticeboards and the website. **Action Cllr Mrs Young**

14: Any other urgent business

14.1 Cllr Rodger reported on a meeting of the Village Hall Committee and the desire to become an emergency refuge. It was suggested that the Hall Committee contact the County Council's Civil Contingencies Team for information. **Action Cllr Rodger**

14.2 In sending his apologies, Cllr Sanderson had said

I am not able to attend your meeting on Monday, but I hope the session with our Highways officers goes well and please let me know if I can help.

Key issues at present are the Homes for Ukraine programme - 255 families are currently in Northumberland with some pressure on school places especially at Kevi and Alwick meaning that transport for some is an issue.

The Council has submitted 2 Levelling Up bids for projects in Ashington and Hexham area.

We have increased the mileage rates for home care providers, and we are seeing a greater demand for home care.

We begin our first pilot of Food Waste Collection soon as well as continuing the Glass Collection Pilots.

Without doubt the biggest test facing residents and the Council is the effect of inflation and increased costs. We are going to have to find some very major savings this coming budget unless we receive a large increase in Government grant which may mean savings of £12 million each year for the next three years.

In the meantime, please get in touch as usual if I can help with anything.

15: Time and date of next meetings

The following schedule of meetings was agreed, all to start at 7.30 pm and be held in Mitford Village Hall.

- 5 September 2022
- 3 October 2022
- 7 November 2022
- 5 December 2022

Meetings may be cancelled if there is insufficient business

Confirmed as a true record

and signed by the Chair Date