

MITFORD PARISH COUNCIL

The Parish Council met at 7.30 pm on Monday 4 April 2022 in The Village Hall, Mitford.

Present:

Parish Councillors Mrs Sheena Hudson, Mrs Esther Ridley, Ted Rodger, Mike Sharp (Chairman in the chair), Matt Skillen and Mrs Alison Young

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

1: Welcome

The Chairman welcomed all his fellow Councillors to the meeting.

2: Public Participation

No parishioners were present nor had any questions been emailed to the clerk.

3: Apologies for Absence

County Cllr Glen Sanderson

4: Declarations and Grant of Dispensations

Cllr Mrs Ridley declared her membership of the village hall committee.

5: Coronavirus

Councillors were not aware of any new issues affecting parishioners.

6: HM The Queen's Platinum Jubilee

6.1 Councillors confirmed the actions of the Chairman and clerk in applying for a grant from the County Council's Queen's Platinum Jubilee Fund to go towards the cost of a Jubilee Party on the Fontside Village Greens.

6.2 The Council further authorised the Chairman to acquire a flowering cherry tree at a maximum cost of £250. It was accepted this might not be planted until the autumn. The clerk will make enquiries about the cost of a substantial metal tree guard. **Actions Cllr Sharp & SER**

6.3 The clerk was asked to obtain a Jubilee Flag to be flown at the party. **Action SER**

6.4 The Council also considered seeking funding for trees from the County Council, but it was unclear whether their offer was restricted only to plots exceeding 0.5 hectare or whether a number of separate plots could be aggregated together and whether planting on the wide verge on the B6343 east of the viaduct was possible or whether services are within that verge. The clerk will endeavour to seek further details. **Action SER**

7: Police Report

Cllr Skillen advised that the Rural Crime Team was now operational and seems to have effect in targeting crime in parishes such as Mitford. Cllr Skillen will make discreet enquiries to see if an officer from the team was available to come to a future meeting. **Action Cllr Skillen**

8: Report from the County Councillor

Cllr Sanderson had presented his apologies as he was attending a parish council some distance from Mitford but had sent the following report

I presented the Budget at the end of last month - the key point in it was to confirm that we were not going to cut any front-line staff - this is because we feel Northumberland is looking well thanks to our staff and it was a way of saying thank you to all of them for working through months of Covid and then helping deal with Storm Arwen.

Included in the budget is a ringfenced sum of £48 million for affordable housing - something that is a priority for us as well as committed sums for new schools in Berwick, Amble and Seaton Valley.

In Morpeth the new complex is around a year away from opening and the new car park in Goosehill is underway and due to open in August.

We have committed to retaining free car parking in our town centres. This does cost a lot in terms of lost revenue, but we feel we need to keep this policy whilst we can, to encourage town centre shopping and trade.

We have introduced new funding for a Climate Change Community Fund which I hope will be as successful as our £70,000 Jubilee Fund has been and there is new funding for public toilets (with better signage) and for our Parks.

There is funding for our Climate Change Action Plan through more EV charger installation as well as more home insulation.

And an additional £2.2 million for U and C class roads on top of the LTP funding.

We are also committed to doing all we can to support those who most need help and we are producing an action plan to do this over the period of the administration.

Finally, the response to the Ukrainian disaster has been brilliant - now we are lobbying Government to speed up the refugee programme.

9: Minutes of the meeting held on 7 February 2022

These were approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

10: Any Matters Arising from the Minutes

The Chairman is awaiting better weather before refurbishing the main noticeboard at Fontside. **Action Cllr Sharp**

11: Planning

11. The Council considered the following applications and commented as shown

Application	Resolution or Action
22/00856/FELTPO - 1 Old Sawmill Mitford – Tree Preservation Order	The Council had no objection to the proposed works but asked that a condition be imposed seeking that a tree is planted on the property to replace any tree that it is felled. The Council would be content if any trees planted were of other species than leylandii.
22/00817/FUL - Land At South West Of Gubeon Farm - Conversion, alteration and extension of agricultural building to residential use	The Council had no issues with this application. One Councillor was concerned that there did not seem to be any reference to sewage disposal and asked this be drawn to the attention of the local planning authority.

11.2 Cllr Mrs Ridley had drawn attention to a dilapidated boundary in Tranwell Woods. The clerk will make enquiries of the managing agents to see if repairs can be put in hand. **Action SER**

12: Erosion of the Riverbank at the foot of the Allotment

The Village Warden will be planting the willow whips on the bank by the allotment within the following week or so. **Action Cllr Skillen**

13: Parking at Fontside

The Council was advised that only two responses had been received to the consultation on possible extra parking provision. In the light of the lack of support, the Council agreed not to progress this concept. The clerk was asked to contact Karbon Homes (owner of the site) to

endeavour to arrange a meeting to discuss whether social housing would be provided on the site and to consider relaxing their apparent prohibition on the conversion of the front gardens to parking. **Action SER**

14: Highways

14.1 Ongoing Issues

The clerk will continue to press the County Council and Highways Agency for action on

- Potential Safety Improvements at Tranwell Village and Tranwell Woods
- Installation of gateway features in Mitford
- The graffiti on the A1 flyover
- Missing signs

14.2 Resurfacing of the B6343

Councillors were delighted with the works on the road through the village and had spoken to the workers concerned.

14.3 Fence along the B6343

Councillors asked the clerk to report the dangerous fence, leaning over the footpath, along the B6343 by the river at Abbey Mills. **Action SER**

14.4 Councillors had noted a speed survey or vehicle count being undertaken on Spital Hill / St Leonard's Land ask asked to clerk to obtain the results. **Action SER**

15: Possible First Aid Training

Cllr Mrs Young had distributed a note of training available from the Stephen Carey Fund, a copy of which is attached to the signed minutes. Councillors endorsed the idea of arranging such training for parishioners and agreed that a donation of £250 should be given to the Fund following the session.

16: Finance

16.1 The Council authorised the following BACS payments

- Widescope Web Design – Hosting website - £228.00 (retrospective)
- Gavin Christie – Village Warden (March) - £221.00 (retrospective)
- Ian Sharp – Balance due for seat - £450.00 (retrospective)

16.2 The Council approved the provisional draft final accounts for 2021/2022 in preparation for the internal audit. A copy is attached to the signed minutes.

17: The Website

Cllr Rodger will assist Cllr Mrs Young with the website going forward. **Action Cllrs Rodger and Mrs Young**

18: The Village Warden and other Environmental Matters

Cllr Skillen asked that his fellow Councillors contact him if there are items of work required.

Action All Cllrs

19: The Village Hall

Cllr Mrs Ridley reported that the Village Hall Committee have not met to consider the issues raised at the previous meeting of the Council which was a matter of concern. Cllrs Sharp and Mrs Young indicated their willingness to attend a meeting of the Hall Committee. **Action**

Cllr Mrs Ridley

20: Correspondence

The clerk had circulated items of possible interest as they arrived via email.

21: Any other urgent business

Cllr Mrs Ridley drew attention to the state of the pull-in by the post box in Tranwell Woods. The clerk will report this to the Highways Dept. **Action SER**

19: Time and date of next meeting

The Council agreed the following schedule of meetings after the Annual Meetings on 9 May 2022

- 6 June 2022
- 4 July 2022
- *1 August – unlikely to be held*
- 5 September 2022
- 3 October 2022
- 7 November 2022
- 5 December 2022

Meetings will commence at 7.30 pm.

Confirmed as a true record

and signed by the Chairman Date