

Minutes of the Meeting of Hexhamshire Parish Council held on Thursday 14th October 2021
in the Malcolm Caisley Meeting Rooms, Whitley Chapel Parish Hall.

- 10.1 Apologies for Absence - Alison Tweddle, Nicola Matthews (Vice Chair), Edward Parker.
Present – Marge Rastall (Chair), Hilary Kristensen, Greg Finch, Gill Whatmough, Roger Rutherford, Davy Short, Councillor - Colin Horncastle. Clerk - Gaynor Scandle
We welcomed new Councillor Lee Riley
- 10.2 Minutes of the previous meeting of the Parish Council held on Thursday 9th September 2021
It was agreed the minutes were a true record of the meeting.
- 10.3 Declarations of interest
Greg Finch and Gill Whatmough regarding planning applications.
- 10.4 Matters Arising
- 2.8.2 Rushwood – Chair has emailed Glen Sanderson
- 12.4.2 Lilswood Caravan Site –The drainage on the site has now been completed. Planning application at full planning committee in Sept.
- 12.14 Lighting at the Church Gates – still ongoing.
- 6.13.2 The Ammunition store - more investigation needed on the history.
- 10.5 Neighborhood Plan – No meeting has taken place recently and Cllr Horncastle urged the Steering Group to be more proactive. If a meeting was arranged with Jenny Ludman then Cllr Horncastle would like to attend.
- 10.6 Public Participation – A presentation was given by Christopher Porter (Mire House) on a revised proposal for the Wetlands Area (full presentation attached).
- 10.7 Correspondence
- 10.8 Finance
- 10.8.1 Next month Councilor's to look at 2022 percept
- 10.8.2 Balances as at 11th Oct 2021
- | | |
|---------------------|-----------|
| Treasurer's Account | £15610.10 |
| Sportsfield Account | £3663.37 |
| Dukesfield Account | £13555.15 |
| Wetlands Account | £672.48 |
- 10.9 Matters for discussion with the Unitary Councilor - Cllr Horncastle suggested that as we have many highways issue to ask Cllr John Riddle to attend a Parish Meeting.
Northumberland CC have recently housed 27 Afgan Refugees (10 Adults and 17 Children).
Cllr Horncastle queried why there has not been a Neighbourhood Plan Meeting recently and urged some progress with this project.
Cllr Colin Horncastle suggested we look at other Parish Plans, especially regarding wording for caravans. An example is Thirston, it looks like they have a much larger problem than we do, but certainly worth a look.
<https://northumberlandparishes.uk/sites/default/files/parish-councils/news/2021/August/Thirston-NP-Referendum-Version-Final.pdf>
NCC have got to find £18m of savings.
Planning applications are now 3 times higher than pre COVID & NCC dealing with 1440 outstanding cases.
- 10.10 Planning –
21/04020/FUL | Extension to annexe of Dotland Farmhouse to include raised roof over existing annexe and garage, internal alterations, and installation of roof windows and dormer windows | Dotland Farm Hexham Northumberland NE46 2JY | SUPPORTED

21/04010/FUL | Construction of timber outbuilding | 1 Linnels Cottages Hexham Northumberland NE46 1SD | SUPPORTED

21/03671/FUL | Proposed single storey extension to the south elevation incorporating flat roof with parapet upstand and 2 sets of French doors; enlargement of the existing south window opening and installation of French doors | Mire Meadows Steel Hexham NE47 0HA | SUPPORTED

10.11 Highways, footpaths and BOATS

10.11.1 Pot Holes at Dipton Mill and Lambshield, which have previously been reported, need another remainder as they are in a very poor state.

10.11.2 Meeting with Police, Council, off-road vehicle groups and public is to be held on 18th October at 7pm in Whitley Chapel Village Hall.

10.12 Reports

Wetlands – present were Christopher & Ann Porter and Emma Wright (NPAONB), Peter Gill Community Environmental Group, Debra Taylor – Slaley Environmental Group and Contact to NCC
Christopher Porter outlined the NEW proposal which is to put in 3 scrapes instead of a large pond in the wetland for which funding could be available from the AONB FIPL project.

Emma Wright gave a resume of the project (attached to minutes) and explained that FIPL timescales have now been adjusted and are over a longer period. She explained there were 2 options

1. Do nothing and area would turn into scrub land.
2. Do something that will benefit the community, school and environment.

Funding from other grant sources would still be required. To gain funding the steering group would require a constitution and a bank account, Christopher prepared to write a constitution and Slaley Environmental Group would allow their bank account to be used.

Concerns raised that raising the water table may affect the spring, therefore the cost of a hydrologist would need to be written into the scope of works.

One of major issues that would involve the Parish Council would be the cost of the fencing as FIPL only pay stewardship prices which leaves a gap in the cost.

A member of the Parish Council would need to be on the Wetlands Steering Group

Cllr Horncastle strongly approved the project. It could be a great example of Parish and Community working together on a project that supports the environment and children.

SUMMARY -

After the Steering Group had left the Parish Councillors had a long discussion and there was a very mixed response. There remains a concern that since the area and bird-hide had barely been used since 2006 this could well continue, although it seems fairly clear that there is active interest from the school at present. In general, it was agreed that we needed to do something, and that use of the wetland should be permitted to allow the steering group to go ahead with their project. The Council will contribute to the difference between stewardship and actual rates for the cost of the fencing, but does not support the option of building an internal fence within the original boundaries of the field, and will expect to see quotes for fencing before taking part in a final decision on this. Marge Rastall agreed to sit on the project's steering group. PC support is also subject to confirmation that the project's proposals do not affect the spring. The proposal for conservation grazing, possibly for as little as two week per year, remains a concern to the Council, particularly in respect of potential extra costs for additional fencing, gates and a water trough.

Dukesfield Arches – The remedial work deferred to 2022. Greg looking into grants with Henry Bell Trust and Sir James Knott.

Hall – Field hedges next to the village hall have been trimmed

- 13th Nov - Quiz Night to raise fund for Hall
- 5th Dec - Xmas Fair.
- Main Hall Closed January for toilet refurbishment

Sportsfield – Equipment still needs to be viewed and inspected by Cllrs – GS assessed the equipment but it still needs other PC opinions on the state of the equipment.

10.13 Any Other Business

- 10.13.1 WI have asked permission if they can plant a tree in the Sportsfield? Everyone in agreement but location and type of tree need to be arranged with WI.
- 10.13.2 Request for a seat to be positioned at the end of Leazes Lane, past the end of the Sportsfield. Can anyone think of another place to put a seat as more beneficial to buy a few seats than just one?
- 10.13.3 Still waiting to hear from NCC regarding the requested for 90 trees as part of the NCC 'Free Trees'
- 10.13.4 A local gentleman has offered to donate £500 to the Parish to buy trees, Gill and Marge to visit to discuss.
- 10.13.5 Jenny Stirling still has Oak Samplings to be planted.

The meeting closed at 9.50