

**MINUTES OF THE ONLINE MEETING OF MATFEN PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON
TUESDAY 19 MAY 2020 AT 7.00PM
(Draft Minutes Subject to Council Approval)**

PRESENT: Cllr Stuart Mills, Chairman of the Council together with Mrs Ann Gregory Smith, Chris Austin, Keith Mavin and Frank Robson.

In attendance: Mrs M Senior, Clerk to the Council
County Councillor Veronica Jones

520.01 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC.

- a) **Welcome by Chairman.** Cllr S Mills commented on the positive things around the Community during the current Covid 19 crisis and in particular Reverend Rachel Scheffer who had set up the Community Support Project to assist those in need. It was AGREED to donate £350 to the Support Project to assist in paying for some of the packaging and the extra cleaning of Stamfordham Village Hall where the volunteers are helping with the packaging of items to help the community. Cllr Mills advised that if anyone was aware of any residents needing assistance to pass the details to Rachel who would deal with the requests in strictest confidence.
- b) **Play area consultation.** Email received requesting date when the consultation was agreed, the cost of the consultation and how the Ingoe play area consultation was carried out. The consultation was agreed at the meeting held on 28 January 2020. The cost of printing and postage totalled £208.11. The Ingoe consultation forms were only sent to the residents of Ingoe.
- c) **Response by residents to the meeting on 28 January 2020.** Two residents had contacted the Parish Council following the January meeting to highlight several points which included the lack of action by the Parish Council on the play area; failure to engage with the play area project; failure to address all issues raised in a professional manner; incorrect information stated during the meeting on the various equipment and why it takes the Parish Council so long to get anything done. The Parish Council agreed that responsibility was not taken to complete tasks, and these had dragged on. The Parish Council's lack of clerk for several months had meant that action was not taken on some of the items however this should not have happened. It was agreed that the Parish Council need to improve things in the future and utilise the help of residents who were willing to carry out tasks on the Parish Council's behalf. Individual Parish Councillor's will take responsibility and ensure they take the lead on specified tasks. No one was given the task of taking the lead initially on the proposed play area to drive it through and no direction was given. The Parish Council will take a strong lead on any future projects.
- d) **Taping of the village green seats.** The Parish Council had taped the village green seats at the request of Northumberland County Council and Northumbria Police. This was due to the number of complaints both had received from residents about cyclists congregating in this area. Following the latest government advice which advised that people could sit on benches, the Police were contacted again. Their advice was to leave the tape in place for the time being. The Parish Council AGREED, and the tape has been left in place.

520.02 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE – Cllr Keith Irving

520.03 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST – None

520.04 COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT – Cllr Mrs Jones gave her verbal update on matters relating to NCC and Matfen Parish.

- **NCC's Covid 19 Response.** Cllr Jones gave an update on NCC's response to the Covid 19 crisis. Community Hub had been set up however at a local level hasn't had to do a lot. Most queries had been passed to the hubs set up by the local communities. Stamfordham and Matfen's hub had been set up and was being co-ordinated by the church parishes. NCC has a small fund to support volunteers. There is also a Business Hub which is giving specialist advice and financial support. NCC is the 4th best Council in the country for delivery the Business Support Grants.
- **Roads/Local Services.** Some work around the county has been able to continue on the roads with further work being done when able. The Household Waste Recovery Sites, which are ran by a private company, have now reopened after pressure from NCC. There had been an increase in fly tipping. The LTP is on hold however work was continuing when capacity allowed. NCC is easing the restrictions on some of the public car parks around the county.

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Ward 1 – Fenwick, Ingoe, Ryal. Ward 2 – Matfen

520.05 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 28TH JANUARY 2020. It was proposed by Cllr C Austin, seconded by Cllr Mrs A Gregory Smith and AGREED that the minutes of the meeting held on **28th January 2020** be signed as an accurate record.

520.06 ACTIONS ARISING FROM THE MEETING HELD ON 28TH JANUARY 2020.

- a) **Defibrillator.** Minute 120.01f refers. Cllr Mrs Gregory Smith had contact the Stephen Carey Fund who advised that children’s pads are not needed for the defibrillator. There is a switch on the defibrillator which is selected when the defibrillator is used on a child
- b) **Benches/Notice Boards.** Minute 120.06d refers. Due to the current restrictions the seats and notice board are still to be installed. Due to the weight of both the seats and notice board it is a 2 person job to move them into position. This cannot be carried out due to the social distancing measures in place. Once these are lifted then Cllr Austin will see to the installation.
- c) **Suggested improvements from Matfen residents.** Minute 120.10e refers. Following the receipt of the suggested improvements for Matfen, a meeting will be arranged with all interested parties, when it is safe to do so, to discuss what can and can’t be done and the costs involved.

520.07 FINANCE

- a) **ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT.** It was proposed by Cllr S Mills, seconded by Cllr Mrs A Gregory Smith and AGREED to approve the expenditure on the list circulated.

PAYEE	DESCRIPTION	NET OF VAT	VAT	CHEQUE AMOUNT	CHEQUE NO
Northumbria Pest Control	Mole treatment	144.00	24.00	120.00	101110
Mrs A Senior	Clerical services	455.60		455.60	101111
H M Revenue & Customs	PAYE	113.80		113.80	101112
Mutts Butts	Dog bags dispenser refill	68.15	11.36	56.79	101113
Corbridge Parish Council	Photocopying for play area consultation	55.00		55.00	101114
Northumberland County Council	Annual Non Domestic Rates – Public Conveniences	329.34		329.34	101115
Mrs A Senior	Expenses – Postages/Travel/Stationery	268.14		268.14	101116
HM Revenue & Customs	PAYE – replacement cheque 101101	114.82		114.82	101117
HM Revenue & Customs	PAYE – replacement cheque 101100	114.61		114.61	101118
Ponteland Town Council	Contribution towards Bus Service No 74	600.00		600.00	101119
Income					
HMRC VTR	VAT refund	663.95		663.95	24.02.20
Barclays Bank	Bank Account Interest	2.50		2.50	02.03.20

Payee	Detail	Cheque Issued	VAT	Net of VAT	Cheque Number
Mrs A Senior	Clerical services	455.60		455.60	101121
H M Revenue and Customs	PAYE	113.80		113.80	101122
Northumberland ALC	Subscription 2020	141.20		141.20	101123
Mrs A Senior	Expenses – postages/travel	84.71		84.71	101124
Income					
Northumberland CC	Play area grant – Pocket Park funding	10059.00		10059.00	26.03.20
Northumberland CC	Precept	5250.00		5250.00	08.04.20

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- b) **RISK ASSESSMENT.** The Risk Assessment had been circulated to all with the risks identified and the actions taken thereon. It was proposed by Cllr S Mills, seconded by Cllr Mrs A Gregory Smith and AGREED to accept the Risk Assessment.
- c) **TO REVIEW THE STANDING ORDERS AND AGREE ADDITION OF APPENDIX 1 RE ONLINE MEETINGS.** Following the updated advice from government an appendix had been added to the standing orders which allows the holding of virtual meetings. This was AGREED and adopted. This remains in place until May 2021 when the next Parish Council elections are to take place.
- b) **TO CONSIDER DONATION TO THE LOCAL COMMUNITY HUB.** After discussion, it was proposed by Cllr S Mills, seconded by Cllr A Gregory Smith and AGREED to give a £350.00 contribution to the Stamfordham and Matfen support group. **Action: Cllr S Mills to pass the details to Mrs Senior to issue the cheque.**

520.08 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN FOR 2019/2020

- a) **TO APPROVE THE ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT.** It was AGREED to approve the previously circulated Annual Governance Statement 2019-2020.
- b) **TO APPROVE THE DRAFT ANNUAL ACCOUNTS FOR 2019/2020.** It was AGREED to approve the previously circulated Draft Annual Accounts 2019-2020.
- c) **TO APPROVE THE ACCOUNTING STATEMENT AND EXPLANATION OF VARIANCES.** It was AGREED to approve the previously circulated Accounting Statement and Explanation of Variances.
- d) **TO CONFIRM AND APPROVE THE CERTIFICATION OF EXEMPTION.** It was AGREED to confirm and approve the previously circulated Certification of Exemption.
- e) **TO RECEIVE AND APPROVE THE BANK RECONCILIATION FOR 31 MARCH 2020.** It was AGREED to accept and approve the bank reconciliation for the period ended 31 March 2020.

520.09 CORRESPONDENCE received since the January meeting had been circulated to all councillors by email and noted. There was no action to take.

SENDER	DETAILS
Northumberland County Council	Notice of Public Spaces Protection Order for the control of dogs
Northumberland County Council	Public Spaces Protection Order for the consumption of alcohol in designated public spaces for Matfen
Northumberland County Council	Planning Services Business Continuity Plan – all applications to be consulted by email.
Northumberland County Council	Planning services continuity message
Northumberland County Council	Northumberland Community Links – Covid 19
Northumberland County Council	Neighbourhood Services Structure Update
Northumberland County Council	HWRCs reopening wef 04.05.20
Northumberland County Council	Notice of Public Spaces Protection Order for the control of dogs
Northumberland County Council	Public Spaces Protection Order for the consumption of alcohol in designated public spaces for Matfen
Northumberland County Council	Planning Services Business Continuity Plan – all applications to be consulted by email.

520.10 PLANNING

- a) **PLANNING DECISIONS.** No planning decisions received.
- b) **PLANNING APPLICATIONS.** No planning applications received.

520.11 VILLAGE ISSUES

a) **REPORTS ON VILLAGE ISSUES AND HIGHWAYS MATTERS**

- **Street Lighting.** Cllr Mrs Gregory Smith had spoken to Gavin Barlow, NCC regarding the replacement of the street lighting columns. The replacement had been pushed back however should be completed by July. There are 4 columns that need replacing and the Parish Council may need to contribute if they would like to replace the existing columns with like for like. This is likely to be in the region of £500 per column. Gavin Barlow is to sent examples of both types of columns to Cllr Mrs Gregory Smith who will circulate around the Parish Councillors once received. Cllr Mrs Jones advised that she may be able to contribute towards the columns from her small members scheme.
- **Overgrown Lane.** Minute 120.06a refers. It was noted that the lane up behind the shop to allotments is the responsibility of Matfen Estates. **Action: Cllr K Mavin to contact James Barber, Matfen Estates to see if they are able to tidy up the area.**
- **Travellers..** Cllr S Mills had spoken to Ken MacDonald, Gypsy and Traveller Liaison Officer, NCC who advised that as Appleby Fair had been cancelled this year, they are not expecting any travellers to stay over in Matfen. If any travellers come to Matfen, Ken asks that he is contacted.

- **Litter bins.** It was noted that the bins around the village green and in particular outside the Village Shop were overflowing recently. Cllr Mrs Gregory Smith advised this is often the case however NCC empty them every week.
- b) **TO CONSIDER REPIARS TO RED TELEPHONE BOX.** Philip Chaffer had advised what work needs to be done to the telephone box and the costs involved. Since then the telephone box has been turned into a book swap and the glass has been lined with colourful paper. **Action: Cllr K Mavin to establish if the glass panes still need to be replaced.**
- c) **TO RECEIVE UPDATE ON THE CONSULTATION FOR PROPOSED PLAY AREA ON THE VILLAGE GREEN AND AGREE NEXT STEPS.** Unfortunately, the Question and Answer session due to be held on 4th April had had to be cancelled due to the current Covid 19 crisis. 262 consultation forms had been sent to every household in the Parish, 62 forms had been returned from 53 households (51 households from Matfen itself). With regards to question 1 – is this the type of equipment you would like to see in the play area? 41 Households in favour, 12 households against; Question 2 – are you happy with the location of the proposed play area? 38 Households in favour, 15 households against. There were lots of valid comments submitted for and against the play area and all consultation forms had been circulated to all Parish Council members. As the Parish Council is unable to hold the Q & A session it was AGREED to ask for final questions from residents by 29th May 2020 and hold an online Parish Council meeting on Tuesday 2nd June at 7pm to make a final decision on the play area. It was noted that the Pocket Parks funding of £10,059 had been received on 26 March 2020 and there is no deadline for the monies to be spend, under the present circumstances. Pocket Parks will be kept up to date with any progress made. **Action: 1) Mrs Senior to update the Village facebook page and website advising of the date of the meeting and asking for questions by 29 May 2020. 2) Cllr S Mills to take feedback to Hugh Blackett between 29 May and 2 June.**

520.12 ANY URGENT ISSUES (FOR INFORMATION ONLY) Nothing to report

520.13 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING. The next meeting of the Parish Council will be held online on Tuesday 2nd June 2020 at 7.00pm to discuss the play area and then the bi-monthly meeting will be held on Tuesday 28th July 2020 at 7.00pm. It is expected that the July meeting will also be held online. The link will be circulated and made available to residents 7 days before the meeting.

Signed as an accurate record