

**MINUTES OF THE ONLINE MEETING OF MATFEN PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON
TUESDAY 30 MARCH 2021 AT 7.00PM**

PRESENT: Cllr Stuart Mills, Chairman of the Council together with Mrs Ann Gregory Smith, Keith Mavin, Frank Robson, Kevin George and Justin Dempsey.

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

Cllr Stuart Mills opened the meeting and advised that Robin Douglass had sadly passed away a short while ago. Robin had been chairman of Matfen Parish Council for many years serving the Council and the Community. Condolences were expressed to his family and friends.

0321.01 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC. None.

0321.02 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE – None

0321.03 DECLARATION OF INTEREST. None

0321.04 COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT – Cllr Mrs Jones gave her verbal report in matters relating to Northumberland County Council and Matfen Parish.

- a) **Street Lighting.** The additional posts should be installed by mid April and the existing posts are to be painted. Complaints had been received over the LED conversion. It was noted that NCC can install filters onto any lights which are shining into properties. **Action: Cllr Mrs A Gregory Smith to contact Gavin Barlow, NCC.**
- b) **Broadband.** Northumberland had had success with the Gigabit Scheme with significant funding to get fibre to the premise. It was noted there are still some areas with poor reception within the Parish.
- c) **Member Funding.** Cllr Mrs Jones advised that she would like her future member funding to be spent on Community projects instead of propping up the NCC, Highways budgets. Cllr J Dempsey enquired whether the funding of a new shed for Stamfordham After School Club would be possible. There is a minimum spend of £2000
- d) **Road repairs.** Repairs had been carried out on the Bog House Farm road however the road is still in a poor state. Burnside Road is also still in a poor state.
- e) **Elections 2021.** The elections are still going ahead in May and further information will be available in the next few weeks.

0321.05 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 26 JANUARY 2021. It was proposed by Cllr F Robson, seconded by Cllr Mrs Gregory-Smith and AGREED that the minutes of the meeting held on **26TH JANUARY 2021** as an accurate record.

0321.06 ACTIONS ARISING FROM THE MEETING HELD ON 26th JANUARY 2021

- a) **STREET LIGHTING.** Minute 121.04a refers. It was noted that the light outside the Village Shop was still not working. Cllr Mrs A Gregory-Smith will report this to Gavin Barlow, NCC.
- b) **NOTICE BOARDS AND PICNIC BENCHES.** Minute 121.06b refers. Ian from Go Local had kindly offered the use of his trailer to assist with the moving of the benches from Ingoe and delivered them to the Village Green. Cllrs J Dempsey and K George installed the benches on Matfen Village Green. Matfen Hall Cricket Club supplied the tools to do the job. Letters of thanks will be sent to Ian and the Cricket Club.
- c) **WEBSITE** Minute 121.06c refers. The new website is currently being put together and will be live within the next week or so. The existing domain will be transferred to the new website. Anyone who would like any information placed on the website should contact the clerk.
- d) **WHITE BRIDGE REPAIRS.** Minute 121.06e refers. Cllrs J Dempsey and K George had made a temporary repair to the railing by the little white bridge. The clerk continues to pursue Northumbrian Water for a permanent repair. It was noted that some self-seeding cherry trees were growing by the watercourse wall which would need to be removed. **Action: The clerk will contact Northumbrian Water.**
- e) **PUBLIC TOILETS.** Minute 121.10c refers. The public toilets had been closed since March 2020. It was suggested that they could be opened once the current restrictions are lifted. The clerk will check the current government guidance and refer back to the Council.

0121.07 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.
- b) **TO CONSIDER TRANSFERRING BANK ACCOUNTS TO UNITY TRUST BANK.** The Parish Council currently banks with Barclays Bank. All payments are made by cheque and signed by 2 councillors. This has been problematic during the current restrictions. Problems had been experienced with Barclays Bank in the past when trying to change signatories, addresses or other details. It was felt with the upcoming elections and a potential change of council that this was the appropriate time to consider transferring bank accounts to Unity Trust. Unity Trust Bank provide bank

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accounts specifically for Parish Councils and allows payments to be made via electronic banking using a triple authority system. It was proposed by Cllr S Mills, seconded by Cllr K Mavin and AGREED to transfer the accounts from Barclays Bank to Unity Trust. This will be done once the statement of persons nominated has been published. **Action: The clerk to make the necessary arrangements to open the new bank accounts and set up internet banking.**

- c) **TO CONSIDER DONATION TO GREAT NORTH AIR AMBULANCE ON BEHALF OF GO LOCAL.** Ian from Go Local had kindly assisted with the installation of the seats and would not take any payment. It was proposed by Cllr J Dempsey, seconded by Cllr S Mills and AGREED to donate £25 to the Great North Air Ambulance on behalf of Go Local.

PAYEE	DESCRIPTION	NET OF VAT	VAT	CHEQUE AMOUNT	CHEQUE NO
Northumberland CC	Additional grass cutting	369.88	61.65	308.23	101155
Netwise UK	New website & 1 year hosting	749.00		749.00	101156
Mrs A Senior	Clerical services	469.23		469.23	101157
HM Revenue and Customs	PAYE	117.20		117.20	101158
Mrs A Senior	Play area inspections	75.00		75.00	101159
J Dempsey	Seat installation materials	10.00		10.00	101160
Parkinsons UK (M Cook)	Mole trapping on village green	20.00		20.00	101161
Northumberland CC	Public toilet non domestic rates	329.34		329.34	101162
Matfen Village Hall	Cheque number 101107 cancelled	-£10.00		-£10.00	101107
GJP Services	Cheque number 101088 cancelled	-£75.00		-£75.00	101088
Income					
Barclays Bank	Bank account interest	0.32		0.32	08.03.21

0321.08 CORRESPONDENCE received since the January meeting had been circulated to all councillors by email and noted.

- Age UK Northumberland – request for donation.
- NALC – eNews weekly
- National Association of Local Councils – Chief Executive Bulletin
- Residents' views on the parking in Ingoe.
- Damage to verges on Southside. An email had been received advising of the damage to the verges around Southside and the entrance to East Close by vehicles driving and parking on the verge. The email will be passed to NCC Highways to see if anything can be done.
- Request for permission to hold an event on Village Green in June. After the success of the music evening ran last year in the Black Bull car park, the organisers would like to repeat the event when government regulations allow after 21st June. This would take place on Sunday 27th June from 4pm – 7pm on the Village Green. The Parish Council was supportive of this suggestion and had no objection.

0321.09 PLANNING MATTERS. All applications received since the last meeting are listed below together with the decisions on outstanding applications.

Reference Number	Address	Description
20/02774/FUL	Land to North of High House Farm Brewery	Construction of services building to serve tents, provision of decking for tents, erection of tents for camping and mixed use of land for agriculture and campsite. GRANTED
21/00017/FUL	Land South West of Tongues Barn, Kirkheaton	Installation of 3no glamping pods with paths, parking area and associated ground works for drainage. Pods for the purpose of short-term holiday lets.
20/04051/FUL	West End, Matfen	Single storey porch and dayroom extensions to existing dwelling.
21/00471/VARYCO	West Fenwick Farm, Fenwick	Variation of condition 2 (approved plans) on approved application CM/20090477 to vary design.
20/04116/FUL	Stonecroft, Ingoe	Extension of front gable to create enlarged kitchen area to accommodate dining space and to improve layout, relocate porch. GRANTED
20/04144/FUL 20/04145/LBC	Matfen Hall, Matfen Hall Drive, Matfen	Construct a pair of gateposts to existing entrance and build low level stone walls with black cast iron railings above to connect the existing posts to the boundary wall stone piers. GRANTED

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0321.10 VILLAGE ISSUES

- a) **TO CONSIDER PURCHASE OF REFURBISHED BENCH.** A resident had removed the bench by the War Memorial as it was in a poor state. This bench had been refurbished and the Parish Council given first refusal to purchase the bench at a cost of £35.00. It was AGREED to purchase the bench which will be placed on the village green.
- b) **INGOE PARKING.** Since the letters had been sent to the residents of Ingoe requesting them not to park on the Village Green in Ingoe several emails had been received. Some very different views were expressed. It is hoped that a resident of Ingoe will join the Parish Council and members will encourage residents in Ingoe to become a Parish Councillor. Once restrictions allow it was suggested that a meeting with the residents of Ingoe take place to discuss parking.
- c) **JUBILEE GARDEN** The community group had met with Matfen Estates to discuss improving the appearance of the Jubilee Garden. There are several problems with the site including; weed ridden, dying trees and self-seeding trees too close to the watercourse wall. On a positive note, there are two jubilee stones in the garden which is located in the heart of the village and could offer a quiet space away from the children's play area. There are willing volunteers who would like to rejuvenate the area. Several requests were made for assistance from the Parish Council and this will be placed on the agenda for the next meeting.

0321.11 ELECTION ARRANGEMENTS. The period of nomination opens on 26th March 2021 and will run until 8th April 2021. Nomination forms must be completed, and hand delivered to a nominated centre to be checked. Cllrs S Mills and Mrs A Gregory-Smith advised that they would not be standing in the coming elections and thanked the Councillors and the clerk for their contribution during their time on the Council.

0321.12 ANY URGENT ISSUES (FOR INFORMATION ONLY). Nothing to report.

0321.13 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING. The next meeting of the Parish Council will be held on Tuesday 11th May 2021. This will be the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council.

Signed as an accurate record