

## Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council held in Matfen Village Hall on Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> May 2024

**Present:** Mrs S Greaves, Chair of the Council together with Justin Dempsey and Thomas Webb

**In attendance:** Mrs Mandy Senior (Clerk)  
Mrs Veronica Jones (County Councillor)  
2 Residents

0524.01 **ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN.** It was proposed by Cllr J Dempsey, seconded by Cllr T Webb and RESOLVED to re-elect Sarah Greaves as Chairman of the Council. Cllr Mrs S Greave accepted and took the Chair.

0524.02 **TO RECEIVE CHAIRMAN'S DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE.** Cllr Mrs S Greaves gave and signed her Declaration of Acceptance of Office in the presence of the Clerk to the Council, Mrs M Senior.

0524.03 **ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN.** It was proposed by Cllr Mrs S Greaves, seconded by Cllr T Webb and RESOLVED to re-elect Cllr J Dempsey as Vice Chairman. Cllr J Dempsey accepted.

0524.04 **TO RECEIVE QUESTIONS FROM RESIDENTS IN RELATION TO MATFEN PARISH.**

- a) **Signs.** It was noted that several road signs were damaged around the Parish including in Matfen and Ryal. All signs had been reported on 'Fix My Street'. It can take a considerable time for signs to be replaced/repared by Northumberland County Council. The situation will be monitored. It was also noted that the wall opposite The Oaks has been knocked down. Matfen Estates will check to see if the wall is their responsibility.
- b) **Public Toilets.** It was noted the sign on the toilet door asking cars not to park needs to be replaced. This will be arranged.
- c) **Roadside Verges.** Cllr Mrs S Greaves had met with Paul Lowes, Northumberland County Council last week to discuss the cutting of the roadside verges and rewilding. He advised the verges are cut every month. He agreed not to use herbicide and leave patches around trees and various other areas uncut. He is to instruct the grass cutting contractors to just cut 1m along the verge in Ingoe. He wants a clear policy regarding the areas to be cut and those which should be left. He is looking to align the grass cutting and verges policy to fit in with the Government's Climate Change policy. The consultation is ongoing.
- d) **Black Bull.** First Gazette Notice had appeared in the London Gazette advising that the Black Bull Matfen Ltd will be struck off the register and dissolved not less than 2 months from the date shown, which is 30<sup>th</sup> April 2024. An update from one of the owners of the Black Bull had been given at the January meeting. Registering the Black Bull as an Asset of Community Value remains an option however this relies on the community raising the money to buy the asset. The Parish Council had applied to register the pub as an asset however had been rejected due to the lack of community interest in purchasing the pub. Reassurances were given from the owner in January that there was no intention to change the use of the pub to residential however the building needed to be refurbished and no timescales could be given. Cllr J Dempsey will try and get an update for the next meeting in July.

524.05 **APOLOGIES** received and accepted from Cllrs F Robson, K George and J Barber. It was noted that Cllr J Barber had resigned. Northumberland County Council will be advised, and the casual vacancy notice displayed.

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0524.06 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST. None.

0524.07 **MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 26<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2024.** It was proposed by Cllr J Dempsey seconded by Cllr T Webb and RESOLVED to accept the minutes as an accurate record.

0524.08 **ACTIONS TAKEN FOLLOWING THE MEETINGS HELD ON 26<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2024.**

- a) **Public Toilets.** Work had been carried out to repair the public toilets. Quotes are still needed for the redecorating and repairs to the tiles. Cllr T Webb will follow this up.
- b) **Gov.uk website/emails.** The website has now been transferred to the gov.uk domain and Councillors have been set up with new dedicated email addresses.

0524.09 **COUNTY COUNCILLOR’S REPORT.** County Councillor Mrs V Jones gave her verbal report on matters relating to Northumberland County Council and the parish of Matfen.

0524.10 **FINANCE**

- a) **Accounts for payment.** It was proposed by Cllr J Dempsey, seconded by Cllr T Webb and RESOLVED to approve the payments on the list attached.
- b) **To consider donation towards the setting up of the Village Fete.** It was RESOLVED to donate £350 towards the setting up of the Village Fete. The clerk will arrange the payment.
- c) **To consider and adopt the Model Code of Conduct, as amended 2020.** It was RESOLVED to adopt the Model Code of Conduct, as amended 2020.
- d) **To review and adopted updated Standing Orders and Financial Regulations.** It was RESOLVED to adopt the updated Standing Orders and Financial Regulations.
- e) **To review and approve the Risk Assessment.** It was RESOLVED to approve the Risk Assessment.

Payee	Detail	Gross payment	VAT	Net of VAT	Payment method
Netwise UK Ltd	Website domain renewal – transition period	24.00	4.00	20.00	BACS
Northumberland ALC	Subscription 2024	154.70		154.70	BACS
Mrs A Senior	Clerical services	561.60		561.60	BACS
H M Revenue & Customs	PAYE	140.40		140.40	BACS
Matfen Cricket Club	Play area grass cutting	60.00		60.00	BACS
Heartbeats & Milliseconds	Tornado Crash memorial donation	250.00		250.00	BACS
Matfen Cricket Club	Play area grass cutting	60.00		60.00	BACS
L Paterson	Public toilet cleaning	50.00		50.00	BACS
L Paterson	Public toilet cleaning	50.00		50.00	BACS
L Paterson	Public toilet supplies	24.49		24.49	BACS
HM Revenue & Customs	PAYE underpayment 23-24	0.20		0.20	BACS
Mrs A Senior	Expenses – postages/travel	65.55		65.55	BACS
<b>Income</b>					
Northumberland CC	Precept payment	6000.00		6000.00	10.04.24

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0524.11 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN 2023-2024

- a) **To consider and agree any actions arising from the Internal Auditor.** As there were no actions arising it was RESOLVED to accept the Internal Auditor’s report.
- b) **To approve the Annual Governance Statement 2023-24.** It was RESOLVED to approve the Annual Governance Statement 2023-24.
- c) **To approve the draft annual accounts, bank reconciliation and asset register for 2023-24.** It was RESOLVED to approve the draft annual accounts, bank reconciliation and asset register for 2023-24.
- d) **To approve the Accounting Statement and Explanation of Variances 2023-24.** It was RESOLVED to approve the Accounting Statement and Explanation of Variances 2023-24.
- e) **To confirm and approve the Certificate of Exemption 2023-24.** As the income and expenditure for the financial year 2023-24 were under £25,000, it was RESOLVED to confirm and approve the Certificate of Exemption 2023-24.
- f) **To re-appoint Fiona Ramsey as Internal Auditor for 2024-25.** It was RESOLVED to re-appoint Fiona Ramsey as the Internal Auditor for the financial year 2024-25.

0524.12 PLANNING APPLICATIONS.

Reference Number	Address	Description
24/01116/FUL	Land SW of Tongues Barn, Kirkheaton	Retrospective: Installation of 1no two storey glamping hut with external decking and terrace, plus associated paths, parking area and groundworks for drainage/services
24/01117/FUL	Kearsley Farm, Ingoe	Partial demolition of former poultry building, conversion of remainder to create 3 no dwellings with sewage treatment plans and access track.
24/01201/FUL	Land NE of West Fenwick Farm, Fenwick	Conversion and extension of existing vacant stone field barn into a 3 bedroom self/custom build private dwelling with detached garage.
23/01125/FUL	Burnside Farmhouse, Matfen	Demolition of haybarn and cowshed and change of use of stone barns to holiday accommodation. WITHDRAWN
24/00626/VARYCO	Land to North of Kearsley Farm, Ingoe	Variation of condition 2 (approved plans) on approved application 23/02866/VARYCO in order to provide alterations to floorplans, elevations and associated changes to parking arrangements GRANTED

0524.13 VILLAGE ISSUES AND HIGHWAYS MATTERS.

- a) **To consider replacement litter bin for the village green.** The clerk had received a phone call from NCC advising that the litter bin on the village green had been damaged when the wall had collapsed. It was confirmed that this was not the case and the litter bin had been relocated.
- b) **Update on public toilets.** The tiles have been repaired however redecorating still needs to be done. It was noted that the current cleaner is retiring, and a replacement will need to be found. The clerk will look into appointing a new cleaner.
- c) **To discuss the issues regarding flooding on the roads and action for the Parish Council.** Residents had expressed concern over the state of the roads and in particular the severe flooding during heavy rains. It was RESOLVED that the Parish Council would make strong representation to Northumberland County Council. It was also RESOLVED that improvements to the roads to reduce flooding would be placed as a priority on the Local Transport Plan Programme for 2025.

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0524.14 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING.** The next meeting is to be held on Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> July 2024 at 7.00pm in Matfen Village Hall.