

**Minutes of ordinary meeting of Kirkwhelpington Parish Council held at 730pm on Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> July 2022 in Kirkwhelpington Memorial Hall**

**Those Present:** R Thornton, (Chairman), E Rogerson, A Purves, M Neale, K Fortune, A Palmer, C Miller (Clerk), six members of the public.

**2022/57 Apologies for Absence**

There were no apologies for absence.

**2022/58 Declarations of Interest**

- Cllr R Thornton declared an interest in Planning Application NO: 22/01909/CCMEIA: Land at Northside, Harle – Proposed extraction of 4 million tonnes of dolerite, importation of infill material and associated highway and landscape works

**2022/59 Public questions**

There were no public questions.

**2022/60 Minutes of previous meeting held Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2022**

It was resolved that the minutes of the previous meeting held on Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2022 be accepted as a true record.

**2022/61 To receive update on B4RN rural broadband**

Rural broadband installation at Barrasford planned and would take approximately 8 months. Kirkwhelpington to be upgraded after this.

**2022/62 To consider commemorative plaque for oak tree offered to the village**

It was resolved to purchase a low maintenance metal plaque in commemoration of Isaac Elliot, with dates to be inscribed. M Neale to contact local contractor and request quote.

**2022/63 Reinstatement of village entrances**

Developer had vacated the construction site with development left unfinished. Until this issue was resolved there was no likelihood of reinstatement of the village entrances.

**2022/64 Environmental proposals**

A Palmer and two parishioners were considering environmental proposals for verges to be left unmown to encourage wildlife and a diversity of flora within the parish, which would need to be in areas that would not cause traffic hazards. The play area would not be suitable due to health and safety issues for users in leaving grass too long. It was acknowledged that it was too late to do anything this year and would be considered further in 2023.

**2022/65 Fence repairs**

Materials had been previously purchased and it was agreed A Purves would contact the contractor who was to carry out patio works at the Village Hall, and request a quote for the work.

**2022/66 Knowesgate Hotel, speeding traffic**

County Cllr J Riddle had advised he would look into white lining on each side of the junction with R Thornton to follow this up.

**2022/67 Problems with dog fouling**

Dog fouling warning signage to be placed. There were increasing problems with fouling and residents needed to take personal responsibility for their animals.

**2022/68 To consider issues with overgrown honeysuckle at Albion Terrace**

Honeysuckle had been attended to but remained overgrown and it was resolved the parish gardener would be asked to remove 3 to 4 feet of shrubbery.

**2022/69 To consider ROSPA annual play area inspection report**

Advisories raised and noted as follows: Staining of picnic bench; degradation on basketball post should be monitored; bolt cap damaged, lower bearing cap missing, bolt thread protruding on carousel; dismantle and inspect basket regularly; raise swings to help prevent surface wear – swings had previously been raised and plastic protective ground material placed.

**2022/70 To consider proposals for patio on village green**

The Village Hall Committee had provided documentation the playing field was registered in the name of Kirkwhelpington Parish Council, and advised the patio would encompass 14square feet. The Parish Council were in support of the proposals which the Village Hall Committee would finance.

**2022/71 Finance**

**2022/71/01 Bank Balance: £20184.16 as at 31/05/22**

**2022/71/02 The following payments are to be authorised:**

- Kirkwhelpington Memorial Hall – W/C maintenance - £255.50
- C Miller – May, June, salary/expenses - £385.02
- HMRC – PAYE on above - £63.40
- Robson & Cowan – fuel – £86.96 (May); and additional payment for fuel of £66.44 (June, not on agenda)
- Playsafety – annual play area inspection - £109.20

It was resolved to approve the payments.

**2022/72 Planning Matters**

**2022/72/01 Planning Applications received**

- **22/01267/FUL: New Forest access road to The Plantation 800m Due East of Ottercops Farm** – A Palmer had previously asked the Clerk to obtain a clearer map of the proposals, which had not been forthcoming from Development Control, and was therefore not happy to approve the proposal. There here had been no other objections from Parish Cllr's, and it was noted the time for commenting on the application had expired several weeks ago.
- **22/00814/FUL: Windcote – demolition of existing dwelling & erection of replacement dwelling** – no objections
- **22/01909/CCMEIA: Land at Northside, Harle – Proposed extraction of 4 million tonnes of dolerite, importation of infill material and associated highway and landscape works**

A Purves, Vice Chairman, temporarily took over as Chairman.

K Fortune asked if it was appropriate for Parish Council members who had expressed an opinion to take part in the discussion. A Palmer clarified she had spoken to the Hexham Courant, objecting to the proposals, in a personal capacity, and had made it clear she was not speaking on behalf of the Parish Council, or in her capacity as a Parish Cllr, and was not described as such in the article. A Palmer did not believe having an opinion on a matter rather than an interest, precluded any Parish Cllr from taking part in discussions.

E Rogerson had spoken to several local farmers who had no objections to the proposals and pointed out that quarrying had historically provided a source of income for many local families.

A Purves had spoken to several older residents who were not against the proposals.

M Neale had received several comments from parishioners who were vehemently against the plans and believed there was no demonstrable need for the quarried product. The proposals were being driven by the commercial interests of the landowner(s) and operators, and would lead to a significant increase in HGV's.

A Palmer stated individuals she had spoken to were overwhelmingly and vehemently against the proposals, acknowledged that some had no views, but thought this was in part because the plans were misleading, with the closest point of the quarry being 700m from the village, not 1,000m as claimed. A Palmer had made further enquiries about the nature of the jobs claimed, and did not think that NEC planned to recruit 20 local people on day one of their operation, and employ them all for the full twenty years of operation. The provision of only twenty jobs for some of the period of operation was not worth desecrating the landscape

K Fortune noted there had been a lot of opinion to the proposals from further afield and had expected a greater number of comments from the local community. He noted the absence of any comments from the National Trust. A Palmer pointed out that as the period for comment had been extended, it should not be assumed that bodies who had not hitherto commented would not ultimately do so.

Five detailed objections had been submitted to the Parish Council (one being received at the Parish Council meeting), and several requests for the Parish Council to object to the proposals. [See footnote.](#)

Concerns had been received relating to the proximity of the site to the village; risk to highly endangered crayfish in the River Wansbeck; concerns due to the increase in traffic, particularly for children going to Belsay school; likely increase in road traffic accidents; air quality for residents; the opinion that adequate public consultation had not been carried out; no strategic requirement for the development; lack of due process in the planning process; proximity of proposed industrial development to a residential and conservation area; nuisance in the form of noise, dust and light pollution; adverse impact on road infrastructure and essential utilities; landfill waste disposal and environmental/heritage vandalism; loss of amenity; County Council's professed environmental policies were being contravened; County Council had a conflict of interest; inadequate public consultation.

Chairman and Clerk advised that two matters raised in objections received were not considered to be material planning considerations.

A Purves advised the Parish Council had no powers to influence Northumberland County Council in relation to planning applications.

A Palmer said that while the Parish Council was not determining the application, it was a statutory consultee, and could lodge an objection, with her opinion being if a statutory consultee objected to an application, it would automatically go to the Strategic Planning Committee, however the Clerk did not agree with this statement.

A Palmer reported the County Council ecologist and archaeologist had objected to the proposals, and to date there were 46 objections and no letters in support of the application on the County Council planning portal. The force of opinion was therefore clear.

M Neale of the opinion the proposals would lead to cost savings in favour to the County Council.

It was proposed and seconded that the Parish Council object to the proposals.

A counter proposal was seconded that the Parish Council do not object to the proposals.

Voting resulted with two Cllrs in favour of objecting, and three Cllrs in favour of not objecting, R Thornton having declared an interest, did not participate in the vote.

R Thornton then resumed the Chair.

**2022/72/02 Approval of Planning Application received**

21/03718/FUL & 21/03719/LBC: The Stable Block, Little Harle Tower – Convert groom’s accommodation and stable into residential apartment, restoration of clocktower/water pump and external work including raised planter and resurfacing of courtyard

- 22/00532/FUL: Ivy Cottage – construction of porch
- 22/00045/FUL: Police Houses – proposed 2 storey extension to rear

**2022/72/03 Keep the Wannies Wild campaign**

Nothing to report – item to be removed from agenda.

**2022/73 Update on Ray Fell Wind Farm/Community Interest Company**

On-line market research had been carried out to determine areas that should be supported. The CIC had granted £1,000 to Kirkwhelpington Show. A public meeting had been well attended with frequent events to be organised in future.

**2022/73/01 Proposed bus shelter at Knowesgate**

Nothing to report.

**2022/73/02 Improvement to lighting at bus shelter in Kirkwhelpington**

County Cllr J Riddle had agreed to advise on options with R Thornton to chase up.

**2022/74 To consider parking issues within the parish**

People tended to park too close to the wall, however there was limited parking space in the village for the number of resident vehicles. An article had been placed in Chimes for residents to park with consideration, but more robust comment may be required.

**2022/75 Lane repair to Albion Terrace**

**2022/75/01 Drainage run off from paddock to Albion Terrace**

R Thornton to contact County Cllr J Riddle, with site meeting having been requested. It is generally thought that the problem lies with the drain under the pavement rather than the field drains, but this needs to be ascertained.

**2022/76 To consider County Council Local Transport Plan requests 2023-2024, current requests being safety barriers on both sides of Little Harle corner; further traffic calming measures at Knowesgate; extension of street lighting at Kirkwhelpington bus shelter**

County Council had advised the following relating to LTP requests 2022-2023. There had only been one recorded injury at Little Harle in the last five years; there had been no recorded injury accidents at Knowesgate since 2019; street lighting could be reconsidered for a future programme. It was resolved to retain the 2022-2023 requests for the 2023-2024 LTP programme.

**2022/77 To approve request from Kirkwhelpington Show Committee to use village green**

It was resolved permission would be given for use of the village green.

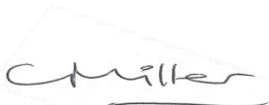
**2022/78 Urgent Business/Items for next agenda**

- The retaining wall at the end of Meadowlands was falling into disrepair – Clerk to report to Karbon Homes who were assumed to be responsible.

- Hedging from the Croft to Eastlands encroaching onto the footpath, with footpath also in need of repair – Clerk to report to Karbon Homes who were assumed to be responsible. A Palmer pointed out that the Parish Council appears hampered in its plans as it is not always aware of who owns various parcels of land, and it would be useful if parish plans could be secured marked with those organisations responsible for land and boundaries. R Thornton to take advice from Northumberland Association of Local Councils as to how these could be obtained.
- Parishioners wished to donate two memorial seats for the patio, with information to be passed to the Village Hall Committee.
- A Palmer enquired about progress with the local bus service improvement scheme, for which she had attended a forum a year ago. Clerk advised no further meetings had been held, however County Council had secured £163m funding through the bus service improvement scheme. A Palmer asked if more detailed information about the initiative, and how it would affect Kirkwhelpington, could be brought to a future Parish Council meeting.
- County Council review into Storm Arwen completed. Clerk to invite County Council Resilience Officer to attend a future meeting to consider the role Parish Council's could undertake during times of Crises.
- A Pharmaceutical Needs Survey had been circulated for individuals to complete.
- The Eastlands developer had pulled off site, there were clearly concerns with a half-finished development and the residents of the estate could be consulted about their views on the matter. A Palmer suggested a representative of the developer be asked to attend a future meeting of the Parish Council to explain their intentions, however R Thornton doubted anyone would agree to attend a Parish Council meeting, and would seek an update from a different source.
- A parishioner reported a new priest had been engaged for the parish.

**2022/79      Date of next Meeting**

The next meeting of Kirkwhelpington Parish Council will be held on Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> September 2022 commencing 730pm in Kirkwhelpington Memorial Hall.



Claire Miller, Parish Clerk  
The meeting closed at 9pm

Footnote: the number relating to "several requests" was not stated in the meeting, however for clarity, there had been eight.