

Corsenside Parish Council Meeting

Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 2nd November 2020

Via video link at 7.30pm

Present: - **Councillors:** C. Hamilton (Chair), C. Hawman, R. Robson, A. Harding & A. Wilson, **Clerk:** K. Traill

Members of the Public: None

1) Apologies for absence: - Cllrs C. Currie & G. Scott

2) Declarations of interest: - Cllrs C. Hamilton & A. Wilson in respect of The Gun at Ridsdale, Cllr C. Hawman in respect of Revitalising Redesdale, North Tyne Youth and The Gun at Ridsdale and Cllr A. Harding in respect of The Ray Wind Fund.

3) Opportunities for members of the public to raise issues: None raised.

4) Minutes of the Corsenside Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 7th of September 2020: KT explained that she had made two changes to the draft minutes by adding Cllr C. Currie to the Declarations of Interest and including D. Longcake's contact details for BANTR enquiries. All Cllrs agreed that September minutes could be signed by Cllr C. Hamilton, when appropriate, as a true and accurate record.

5) Matters arising from the minutes not dealt with elsewhere on the agenda: KT informed all that she had contacted the local quarry regarding their blasting procedures. The quarry had sent out a document explaining the procedure they follow. The quarry also explained that they did not need to fly a red flag when blasting as the type of blasting carried out does not create shrapnel. KT stated that all trees, shrubs and weeding discussed at the September meeting, had been reported to NCC.

6) Notification of any other business for discussion, at the chairman's discretion, under item 24 below: - KT had matters to discuss.

7) County Councillors Report: - None

8) Update on adopting & signing of new policies, regulations & risk assessments: - KT informed all that she had updated the Banking Mandate to now include Cllr A. Wilson.

9) Action point list: - 80. Armstrong St – KT stated that works had been carried out from Armstrong Street to Hindhaugh during the summer though councillors expressed disappointment that their request to include passing places was not taken up. Action Complete.

91. Traffic calming measures West Woodburn A68 – KT stated that she had submitted CPC's Local Transport Priorities (L.T.P) which included the build out features within the 30mph zone. KT also stated that she had been in touch several times with NCC regarding the flashing 20m.p.h speed signs, see point 11 below.

95. Goal Posts & Nets – Cllr C. Hawman explained that the Football Association (FA) had recently released new guidance to community groups regarding goal posts and nets which related to injuries due to inappropriate goal posts. Cllr C. Hawman informed all that guidelines stated that if nets are used then they must be removed immediately after use to avoid accidents to children and wildlife. Cllr C. Hawman also queried the suitability of our goal posts and whether they would meet current regulations. Cllrs discussed how historically they had been advised against fixed goal posts as these tended to cause bald patches all around the goal areas. Instead CPC had opted for large, heavy goal posts which were pinned down (with specially made heavy duty pins) for safety reasons. Any organisations wishing to move the posts had to first seek permission from CPC so that CPC could regulate the correct refixing of the posts.

Cllrs discussed the responsibility involved regarding goal posts and netting. All Cllrs agreed that they could only be responsible for the goal posts they owned and not goal posts supplied and used by residents. All agreed

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that there would be too much responsibility involved with the purchase of nets as someone would have to remove and refix them daily. Cllr C. Hawman will check with the FA that our goal posts meet current regulations and if not will investigate the most appropriate replacements including costs involved.

96. Resurfacing of the lonnen – West Woodburn, KT informed all that this had been added to our L.T. P's for consideration next year.

10) Play Area – West Woodburn: - Cllr C. Hamilton explained that all works to the play area including snagging from the initial installation, had now been completed and all Playdale invoices now paid in full after initially withholding 10% until all issues had been made good. KT informed all that she had received no further reports of misuse or of defective equipment. Cllr C Hamilton will carry out a play area inspection before the January meeting.

11) West Woodburn First School Closure- KT discussed the communications she had had with NCC regarding the removal of the school flashing speed signs, (as a result of WWFS closure) and CPC's request to keep these signs in place in order to protect those children using the school buses. KT explained that NCC had responded stating that the flashing 20mph signs would be removed as they were only in place as a regulatory measure due to the location of West Woodburn First School. KT informed NCC that there were no safety measures in place for the children using the school buses and that the three different buses collected and dropped the children off at different locations on the side of the A68. KT informed all that NCC had responded stating that they would add it to CPC's Local Transport Priorities (L.T.P) for 2021. KT explained to Councillors that she had replied stating that we had already submitted our three priorities, that it was not her place to give the authorisation and that it felt as if this issue would therefore not be considered until sometime after April 2021, if indeed it even met NCC's criteria. NCC responded stating that it would come under our traffic calming measures. Cllrs discussed this and felt it was an immediate priority and not one to be added to the L.T. P's for consideration next year. Councillors felt that the children using the school transport should be afforded the same safety measures applied to the children who had attended WWFS. Cllrs wish to reinforce their position of prevention rather than cure and see no reason why the flashing speed signs should be removed. Cllrs asked KT to contact County Councillor J. Riddle to request his support on this matter and to respond to NCC with the points outlined above stating that we wished the speed signs to remain in place despite the closure of WWFS. KT explained that she was still in contact with an electrician regarding the relocation of the defibrillator however the electrician was behind due to the current situation and now probably more so with the current lockdown. KT stated that she had asked NCC if they had an electrician they could use, NCC replied that they did however as the defibrillator was being installed on a non-council building, they would prefer that CPC instruct their own electrician. KT to inform NCC that it may now be December sometime.

Cllrs discussed the recent advert in the Hexham Courant (HC) regarding live-in guardians for the school. Cllr C. Hamilton explained that this was the first CPC had heard about the live-in guardian scheme for WWFS. CPC were later contacted by the HC asking for a quote on the matter. Cllr C. Hamilton informed all that he provided a quote stating that CPC had been unaware of any scheme in the first place. Cllr C. Hamilton commented that this issue perfectly highlighted the lack of communication CPC experience with NCC in general.

12) Wind Power Stations & BANTR update:- Cllr A. Harding stated that Vattenfall have informed the

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Community Interest Company that there were too many Directors. Cllr A Harding explained that according to Vattenfall and the Edinburgh consultancy firm employed by them, each of the six parishes should have a Director with an additional two spare giving a total of eight. Cllr A. Harding stated that there had been some Director resignations after the last meeting meaning they were now down to ten. Cllr A. Harding explained that VF had wanted more diversity within the board of Directors however the C.I.C believed this would prove difficult with only two spare places to fill and believed that there should be a total of ten Directors. Cllr A. Harding stated that there was more information on The Ray Wind Farm Funding page should anyone be interested in a Director role. Cllr A. Harding reminded all that when his time on the board came to an end then Corsenside would need to appoint another core Director.

Cllr A. Harding explained that the main focus of funding had been directed towards supporting businesses and parishioners throughout the Covid 19 situation. This therefore limiting the amount of money available to other ventures as £100,000 was still going to The Community Foundation for smaller funding awards.

Cllr A. Harding stated that all public presentation meetings had had to be cancelled due to Covid. These meetings were a good way to present what the C.I.C were doing, what they had accomplished and also a good way of getting future funding ideas from those within the six parishes.

Cllr A. Harding explained that there was not many updates to give regarding BANTR within Corsenside. The representatives are continuing to work behind the scenes. Cllr A. Harding believed work in Birtley had started however was unsure what would happen during the current lockdown.

13) Parish Hall: - Nothing further to report, the parish hall remains closed. Cllr C. Hamilton asked all to continue to approach any parishioners they feel may want to represent CPC on the Parish Hall Committee.

14) Six Parishes Youth Engagement Project: - Cllr C. Hawman informed all that North Tyne Youth Group had successfully recruited a new youth worker Lisa Robinson and that her first priority was to get the engagement project started. Cllr C. Hawman explained that three drop-in sessions in West Woodburn, Ridsdale and Otterburn had been organised during the half term break to collect ideas and the views of children between the ages of 8 -18 years. Cllr C. Hawman stated that unfortunately no one attended the West Woodburn session however Lisa would continue to seek the views of children within West Woodburn using other methods. Cllr C. Hawman informed all that there was a good turnout of children within Ridsdale and that Lisa had been very impressed with how respectful and none demanding the children were as well as their ideas and the support she received and wished to thank all those involved. Lisa will try to keep the momentum up with follow-up posters and Facebook messages. Cllr C. Hawman explained that due to the current lockdown there would now be a delay in holding sessions within the three other parishes. Cllr C. Hawman stated that once all the information had been collected from all six parishes then a report would be published. Cllr C. Hawman stated that information gathered so far had indicated that a lot was about enabling children to access groups/events that already existed.

15) Community Volunteers & Spending: - KT stated that she had spoken with The Redesdale Ramblers and currently they had enough leaflets. KT explained that she had mentioned the sanding and repainting of the play area seats to a parishioner who seemed happy to take this on, KT will wait to hear back from them regarding when this could be done. KT had initially asked parishioners if they would like to continue to care for the planters. KT believes she has volunteers who will take care/maintain the planters. KT hoped that when life returned to normal then CPC could make good use of those who had kindly volunteered and that the small jobs around the parish could be worked on.

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Cllrs discussed CPC's current funds, what had been spent recently, (mostly parts for the defibrillator, additional play area repairs and grants) and whether there were current funds available for more community spending. All agreed CPC could look at other small-scale community funding such as new goal posts.

16) Revitalising Redesdale & Heritage Fund update: - Cllr C. Hawman explained that currently there was little to report however grants were still being awarded. Cllr C Hawman informed all that Nick Lightfoot a senior member of the team had left Natural England & therefore Revitalising Redesdale and had been replaced by Katie Bridger.

17) Environment agency Flood Resilience: - Cllr C. Hamilton informed all that himself and KT had met with a Colin Hall from the Environment Agency on the 23rd of October to discuss a Flood Resilience Plan for the parish. Cllr C. Hamilton explained that there were various plans in place throughout the country and that Colin would like to work with CPC to create a plan to help our community. Cllr C. Hamilton explained that we had discussed the role of The Environment Agency within the plan and what the role Flood Wardens would play. Cllr C. Hamilton explained that we discussed the areas which were prone to flooding around the River Rede however also the areas/properties which flooded due to surface run off and poor drainage. Cllr C. Hamilton informed all that they had visited various locations to discuss what could be done. Cllr C. Hamilton stated that C. Hall had already began work on a pre-plan however everything hinged on volunteers coming forward to fill the flood warden roles. Cllr C. Hamilton stated that the plan already included three flood wardens however more were needed. Cllr C. Hamilton stated that it was recommended flood wardens were not those who were actually at risk of flooding themselves. Cllr C. Hamilton read out the flood warden's role which included reporting the latest river levels to the Environment Agency to offer advice and information to the public about a current flooding situation, to liaise with all organisations involved in the response as appropriate, to report vital information such as property flooding or blockages in a watercourse to the Environment Agency and to co-operate with the emergency services at all times. Cllr C. Hamilton explained that training would be given by the Environment Agency beforehand. Cllr C. Hamilton went on to read out what a Flood Warden's role should not include such as not assisting with evacuation of residents, unless specified in Emergency flood plan, not helping residents to move their belonging, not helping the Environment Agency operate or repair flood defences, unless trained and instructed on how to do so and not entering flood water.

Cllrs discussed a flood resilience plan, and all agreed that if CPC had the volunteers, it was something CPC should put in place in conjunction with the Environment Agency. Cllr C. Hawman stated that CPC should emphasise that it is not just those living by rivers that flood, flooding can occur anywhere due to other factors and therefore it is an issue that affects all three villages of the parish. Flood wardens do not just have to therefore live close to the rivers but can be located anywhere within the parish.

18) Planning Matters: - a) For decision – None that have not already been commented on in-between meetings.
b) Decisions from NCC – a) – None

19) Other correspondence: - i. Thank you letter from The Great North Air Ambulance for the £200 donation. ii, Age UK – Information and puzzle packs issued to be handed out to help combat isolation. iii, Hexham Courant request for CPC's comments on WWFS live-in guardians

20) Finances: - a) Invoices for payment - None

b) Bank Balance - £12,591.75

c) Monies received – None

d) Clerks Pay Award Arrears – Cllr C. Hamilton reminded all that at our June meeting he had stated that the clerk's annual appraisal was due early July however at the time there was no cost of living increase for 2020 as it was still being consulted on by the unions. Cllr C. Hamilton stated that he had received notification in mid-October that a pay award had been agreed upon in late August and was to be backdated to 1st April 2020. Cllr

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C. Hamilton had explained that due to KT's increase from scale point 13 to scale point 14 at her appraisal in July, that this meant there were two different pay award amounts. Cllr C. Hamilton informed all that he had sent KT a letter informing her of the pay award results and instructing her to record how many hours she had worked in April, May and June under scale point 13 (an additional 31p/hour) and then how many hours worked in July, August, September and October under her current scale point 14 (an additional 33p/hour). Cllr C. Hamilton stated that he had created a chart to record this information which KT had used to make the additional payment on the October pay run.

e) Request for Assistance – Corsenside Parochial Church Council request for assistance – churchyard grass cutting costs – an award of £300 agreed by all.

f) Annual Audit Results – KT informed all that after our September meeting she had received the results of our 2019-2020 external financial audit. KT explained that the external auditors had signed the certificate and had reported that the information provided was in accordance with proper practices and that no other matters had come to their attention giving cause for concern. KT explained that the external auditors had further commented that no evidence had been obtained by the internal auditor regarding the public rights period provided. KT explained that this refers to the information KT must display on the noticeboards and website during specific dates which advertise the public's right to view the financial paperwork. KT stated that these posters are displayed correctly and for the required length of time however the internal auditor could not verify this. Cllrs suggested that in future KT take a photo of the displayed posters which may act as the evidence needed. Cllr C. Hamilton thanked KT for the work she had carried out on this year's external audit which followed a different procedure to usual due to the large grant CPC received from The Ray Wind fund.

g) Precept – KT explained that she had received a letter from NCC regarding next year's precept and that ideally NCC would like this in by the 29th of January 2021. Cllr C. Hamilton explained that usually this is something that previously Cllr C. Hamilton, Cllr D. Carrington and KT had gotten together in December to go over the budget and then present the information to the full parish council for their approval before submission to NCC. Cllr C. Hamilton asked Cllr A. Wilson if he would mind stepping into the role D. Carrington had carried out and suggested we aim to physically get together early January if the Government guidelines permit it and that approval by the whole parish council can be sought in the January meeting. Cllr A. Wilson and KT both agreed.

21) Matters for discussion at the Chairman's discretion: - KT stated that just after the last meeting she had been contacted by residents on Armstrong Street regarding the increased speed that traffic was travelling down Armstrong Street. Residents believed that the issue had worsened throughout lockdown and that the majority of vehicles were believed to be delivery drivers although not all. One resident had also requested the help of County Councillor John Riddle. KT explained that she had contacted N. Snowden the Safety officer for NCC to inform him of the issue and to ask what could be done. NS had stated that he could request a speed survey to be carried out. KT explained that NS then contacted her to say that CPC could add this to their Local Transport Priorities for 2021. KT had replied stating that CPC had already submitted their L.T. P's for 2021. KT explained that NS replied saying that it was ok to add a fourth and he had requested that this be added on. KT had subsequently responded to inform NS that she would have to put this to Councillors as it was not her decision to make. KT had also asked if by adding it to CPC's L.T. P's whether this meant nothing would be considered until after April 2021 and where it may not meet NCC's L.T. P's criteria and therefore may not be investigated at all anyway. KT has not received any response to this query despite requesting a response three times. Councillors asked KT to contact County Councillor J. Riddle and ask for his support with this issue. Councillors also asked KT to post this on the local Facebook page requesting that parishioners stick to a safe speed limit on Armstrong Street and to encourage anyone with concerns to write to their local County Councillor for help.

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22) Next Meeting: - Monday 11th of January 2021 – CPC will continue to monitor advice and guidance from the Government and the Northumberland Association of Local Councils and decide nearer the time as to the location/type of meeting to hold.

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