

## Corsenside Parish Council Meeting

Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 5<sup>th</sup> of July 2021

Corsenside Parish Hall at 7.30pm

Present: - **Councillors:** C. Hamilton (Chair), C. Hawman (Vice Chair), A. Wilson, A. Harding S. Smith & J. Fenwick  
**Clerk:** K. Traill **Members of the Public:** None

1) Apologies for absence: - None

2) Councillor Vacancy: - Cllr C. Hamilton informed all that KT had sought advice from the Northumberland Association of Local Councils (NALC) who have stated that CPC are still free to co-opt a seventh councillor as any parishioner wanting to take up a councillor position would have put themselves forward at the recent elections. Cllr C. Hamilton asked Councillors if they were aware of any parishioners, ideally in the East Woodburn area so that the parish was evenly represented, who would be interested. Cllrs & KT to approach anyone they feel may like to fill the position.

3) Code of Conduct (Declarations of Interests): -Cllrs C. Hamilton in respect of The Gun at Ridsdale & the Corsenside Flood Resilience team, Cllr C. Hawman in respect of Revitalising Redesdale, North Tyne Youth and The Gun at Ridsdale, Cllr A. Wilson in respect of The Gun at Ridsdale & The Green Rigg Steering Group, Cllr A Harding in respect of The Ray Wind Farm C.I.C & Cllr S. Smith in respect of Bellingham Middle School Parents, Teachers and Community Association & the Corsenside Flood Resilience team.

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

5) Minutes of the Corsenside Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 7<sup>th</sup> of June 2021: Signed as a true and accurate record.

6) Matters arising from the minutes not dealt with elsewhere on the agenda: KT informed all that she had been in touch with NALC enquiring as to whether CPC were able to fundraise for such things as acquiring and purchasing additional land. NALC had stated that this was something a PC could legally do. Cllr S. Smith wished to acknowledge County Councillor John Riddles speed in organising a meeting with Bellingham Middle School parents and the NCC cabinet member responsible for education, to discuss the issue of transport for children in years 5 & 6 of Bellingham Middle School. Free transport to BMS for years 5 & 6 had previously been withdrawn by NCC when local first schools became primary schools. NCC insisted that BMS no longer had a catchment area and therefore children would not qualify for free transport should they choose to attend BMS. It is hoped that NCC will reconsider their decision and reinstate free transport to BMS thereby giving parents and children a choice of schools rather than having that choice taken away. Cllr S. Smith stated that parents felt more positive after the meeting, that a solution could be reached.

7) Notification of any other business for discussion, at the chairman's discretion, under item 18 below: - Cllrs A. Harding & C. Hamilton & KT had matters to discuss.

8) County Councillors Report: - None

9) Action point list: - 91. Traffic calming measures West Woodburn A68 – KT explained to all that she had contacted NCC to seek permission to install a third pole and flashing speed sign in Ridsdale at the north end of the village. NCC had stated that they saw no problems with this. KT asked NCC to quote for the installation of a pole however NCC first need to know the pole specifications from all 3 companies. KT to collate the information to send to NCC. KT explained that she has also contacted all 3 companies and asked them to requote based on 4 signs, all with data collecting ability and all with extended warranty. KT stated that she had also requested prices for Automatic Number Plate Recognition cameras. Northumbria Police do not currently

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support the use of these however several councils are challenging this decision. KT explained that one company would not quote unless the county police force approved of the use of ANPR cameras and one company stated that they would be more than £20,000. Cllrs discussed this and agreed that KT should continuing seeking prices for 4 signs however hold back on the ANPR cameras until we had a definitive answer on whether Northumbria Police would support their use. KT to meet with Cllr C. Hamilton once all quotes are collated.

95. Goal Posts & Nets West Woodburn – KT explained that she had spoken with CPC’s landscaper C. Mowatt regarding the fixing of the goalposts. KT stated that CM had told KT that it would be ok to have the posts delivered to his address. KT and Cllrs C. Hawman & C. Hamilton met on-site to discuss the best location for the new goal posts. KT to order the goal posts.

96. Lonnen West Woodburn – Nothing further to report.

97. Armstrong Street Speeding Traffic – KT received a proposed traffic calming measures design for Armstrong Street from NCC and had forwarded it on to Councillors prior to the meeting. Cllrs discussed the proposals put forward by NCC which included new signage, gateway features, speed humps, 30m.p.h roundels and dragon teeth marking. Cllrs in general were pleased with the proposals however discussed the potential issues regarding the suggested location of some of the features primarily concerning whether these would hamper resident parking. Cllrs have asked KT to firstly thank R. McKenzie of NCC for responding to CPC’s concerns positively. Cllrs also asked KT to request a site visit so that the issues could be viewed by NCC, and the features correctly placed. KT to also enquire as to the difference between the two speed humps and if one was quieter than the other. Cllrs also discussed the location on Armstrong Street of what appeared to be a speed survey. CPC had requested a speed survey several months ago when they were first contacted by a parishioner. Cllrs believe that the location of the survey will not give a true representation of the speeding issue due to it being located too close to the A68 junction. It would have given a more accurate picture of the issue had it have been located further down Armstrong Street. KT to enquire as to whether this is a speed survey or some other form of data collection.

Cllr C. Hamilton discussed whether this would be an appropriate time to discuss future parking solution layouts for Armstrong Street so that if this were a possibility in the future, the traffic calming scheme would not hamper any access. Cllrs discussed potential layouts and hoped that this could be worked around the traffic calming measures. Cllrs asked KT to approach NCC to see what the appropriate steps were to start enquiries regarding the acquisition of land for additional parking.

10) Play Area – West Woodburn: - Cllr C. Hamilton had collated the information from the ROSPA report carried out in June and this information had been distributed to Cllrs prior to the meeting a long with potential costs involved for replacement parts. Cllr C. Hamilton stated that he thought the findings from the ROSPA report were frustrating as these issues were not reported in the 2019 or 2020 report. If they had been then CPC could have made the repairs at the same time all the updating works were being carried out. The findings highlighted various remedial/maintenance work to keep an eye on. In the year since the last report several wooden stepping-stones and striding stilts are now showing evidence of rot, probably exacerbated by previous strimmer damage. There are also comments regarding the use of weed killer around the base of the poles and how this is not considered to be best practice. Cllrs once again discussed how to solve this issue. Playdale do not manufacture anything to protect wooden posts from such trauma and do not authorise any additions made to the equipment installed. KT to contact CPC’s landscaper to request that they stop the use of weed

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killer and come up with a solution to protect the equipment from strimmer damage for example placing a board against the equipment whilst strimming or setting a guard on the strimmer. Cllrs discussed replacing pieces of equipment and the costs involved. Cllr C. Hawman has researched grant giving bodies who specifically fund play area schemes. Cllr C. Hawman stated that she had sourced a company who make play equipment out of recycled plastic and the equipment itself is recyclable at the end of its useful life. Cllr C. Hawman explained that initially she was not keen on the idea of replacing wood for plastic however upon researching this, she believes that it is more environmentally friendly than the need to repeatedly replace rotten wood. Cllrs discussed monitoring the situation and looking at potentially replacing the wood for recycled plastic, as and when the equipment needed replacing, and that this would likely have to be funded via grant applications. Cllrs C. Hamilton & C. Hawman to collate prices for comparison between recycled plastic and wooden replacements. Cllr C. Hamilton also explained that the ROSPA report had found the newly fitted spinner to be loose underground and in need of correction. KT has contacted Playdale to inform them of this and to ask that they repair this asap. KT stated that initially Playdale had said they could not guarantee the safety surface that they would have to replace, would bond to the surface laid the year before. KT had contacted them to say this was not acceptable. Playdale have since stated that they will guarantee it for the length of the original safety surface guarantee i.e. up until 2024.

11) Volunteers & Community Spending: - KT stated that two volunteers had carried out vital maintenance on seats and tables within West Woodburn, this work was very much appreciated. KT has ordered some additional wooden slats so that a seat located close to the parish hall could be repaired. Cllr J. Fenwick stated that two ladies in Ridsdale had been maintaining the barrel planters and were happy to continue with this however have asked for some bedding plants. KT stated that she believed two ladies in West Woodburn were happy to look after the four there and that a lady in East Woodburn was taking care of the barrel there. A big thanks go to all those who have volunteered for these. Cllr J. Fenwick to purchase bedding plants for all planters an initial fund of £50 was agreed for this. KT still to purchase two barrel planters for the bottom of Armstrong Street.

12) Wind Power Stations & BANTR update: - In his report Cllr A. Harding stated that The Ray Wind Fund [RWF] continues to support local initiatives across the area and that the new "Grant Year" restarted in July. The final months of the previous "Grant Year" had been dedicated to the support of those businesses that found themselves experiencing hardship due to COVID-19. Normal grant awards will recommence in July. Cllr A. Harding reported that once restrictions are lifted the RWF would be supporting ADAPT with a pilot bus scheme running from Byrness to Morpeth. This scheme will run for twelve months and details will be forwarded to each Parish in due course. Cllr A. Harding added that a meeting had been scheduled for the 13<sup>th</sup> of July with the Community Foundation to discuss the potential of opening more than two applications a year. The RWF would be adjudicating awards week commencing the 12<sup>th</sup> of July. The RWF continues to support B4RN\ BANTR with the rollout of superfast broadband. However, this has been hampered by the lockdown\ restrictions. Residents can still acknowledge their interest by registering on the website, with no obligation. An open meeting is to be arranged in the near future to advise progress and garner support.

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13) Parish Hall: - Nothing to report

14) Revitalising Redesdale & Heritage Fund update: - Cllr C. Hawman reported the following: -Staff from Revitalising Redesdale held a meeting with volunteers from The Gun committee on 16th June and will be holding one with Hilda at the Bay Horse during the first week of July to discuss the potential location of the new interpretation boards. Thanks to additional funding having been found, information about Redesdale can be sited in both villages while there will also be a specific notice board about the engine house in Ridsdale. The Parish Council will be sent copies of the proposed boards for Corsenside so we can comment. Cllr C. Hawman stated that they had not yet received images of the proposed boards.

15) Planning Matters: - a) For decision – Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 – Review of the definitive map & statement of public rights of way informal pre-order consultation – KT informed all that she had received notification that there were two bridleways and two byways within Corsenside up for review. Cllrs discussed the proposals and felt they would like to submit a comment of ‘No Objection’.

b) Decisions from NCC – a) – Variation of condition:2 (approved plans) on approved application 20/01645/FUL to allow change in orientation of holiday cottage land east of Crag Cottage, Crag Drive, West Woodburn - GRANTED

16) Other correspondence: - i. Eventbrite online event 21<sup>st</sup> July – Introduction to Local Council – KT informed all that this event was open to all Councillors. Should anyone wish to attend KT will arrange the booking. ii. KT informed all that she had been contacted by a parishioner regarding an incident within the parish where the parishioner believed a vehicle to be parked dangerously. Cllr C. Hamilton explained that a large vehicle had been parked in a manner which blocked sightlines for vehicles emerging from a junction onto the A68. Cllr C. Hamilton explained that CPC had no authority in such matters which should be reported to the police however suggested CPC could put a polite notice on the local Corsenside Clarion Facebook page to remind parishioners to always be aware when parking that they do not cause danger to others. Councillors discussed other parking concerns that parishioners had within the Parish. Although CPC cannot enforce any parking restrictions Cllrs will politely request that people park more considerately, and they will investigate the possibility of future parking solutions.

17) Finances: - a) Invoices for payment – i. C. Mowatt 2 cuts @ £108 and weeding @ £70, ii. Playsafety Rospa inspection - £99, iii. K. Traill reimbursed for wood stain, brushes, and cartridges £78.94, iv. K. Traill wages - £198, v. Came & Company Insurance £876.29 – Cllr C. Hamilton explained that KT had requested he read through the insurance documents as the cost was significantly higher than previous years however since the work carried out on the play area, KT had increase the insurance value of this. Cllr C. Hamilton discussed what the cover included and that it was a specific cover for local councils however, a lot of areas covered were related to the ownership of buildings as such he suggested CPC query the insurers to find out if a reduction to the premium could be applied to reflect the lower level of cover required. KT to first enquire with the insurance company to see whether the cost could be reduced given that CPC is not responsible for any buildings or whether this is generic to the policy. If a reduction cannot be applied Cllrs verbally authorised payment. Cllr C. Hamilton read out a statement regarding what the insurers assume regarding the behaviour of Cllrs.

b) Bank Balance – £14,286.80

c) Monies Received – None

d) New banking signatories – Councillors signed the relevant paperwork, KT to submit these to Unity Trust Bank. Cllr J. Fenwick to email KT a scanned copy of her passport and driving license.

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e) Budget Report & Finance Check – KT informed all that Cllr A. Wilson had carried out a quarterly check of the finance folder and was happy all was well. KT & Cllrs discussed the budget report which showed current expenditure and income as well as highlighting future estimated expenditure and income. Cllrs discussed at length what they felt CPC could pay for and what may need grant funding. Cllrs discussed what amount CPC would be left with at the end of the financial year and that perhaps 2022-2023's precept may have to be increased by a small amount. This would be the first increase in 5 years. KT discussed the amount of VAT CPC would have to initially pay if they were successful in applying for funding for new speed signs and whether this would leave CPC's account at a level lower than is practical. Cllrs believe KT could claim VAT back the month after signs were purchased therefore this should not cause any issue.

f) Clerks Appraisal & Salary Review: - Cllr C. Hamilton informed all that he had carried out an appraisal with KT the previous week. Cllr C. Hamilton read out a statement from KT's appraisal regarding the works KT had carried out over the previous year. Cllr C. Hamilton explained that he & KT had gone through various questions relating to her role as clerk which were available to view should Cllrs wish to. Cllr C. Hamilton explained that he had sought advice from the National Joint Committee and the Society of Local Council Clerks regarding pay scales. Cllr C. Hamilton stated that KT was fulfilling all duties in profile 1 & some in profile 2 from the national agreement which therefore indicates that the clerk's salary should be LC1 which is covered by scale points 13 to 17 under the amended pay scale. Cllr C. Hamilton stated that the clerk was currently on scale point 14 and that following a satisfactory outcome of the annual appraisal, he is recommending that the clerk moves to scale point 15 which would increase the clerk's hourly rate by 24p, if all agreed this would be applied from the 1<sup>st</sup> of July. Cllr C. Hamilton stated that the unions were still negotiating the annual cost of living raise and as yet a percentage had not been agreed upon. Cllr C. Hamilton recommended that once a resolution had been reached, CPC adopt the revised pay scales and award any outstanding pay award arrears at the next pay interval. All Cllrs were happy with Cllr C. Hamilton's proposals and agreed to the clerks pay award.

18) Matters for discussion at the Chairman's discretion: - Cllr A. Harding discussed the issue of speeding traffic on the A68 in West Woodburn and how this problem is constant and never goes away. Cllr A. Harding explained a near miss he had experienced whilst trying to pull away from his driveway. Cllr A. Harding stated that within various industries near misses are recorded as it has been proven that there is a correlation between near misses and fatalities. Cllr A. Harding suggested that there should be a way CPC could record any near misses so that this data could be collated and passed on to the relevant organisations. All Cllrs agreed that this was a good idea. Cllrs asked KT to put a note out on The Corsenside Clarion Facebook page asking that people inform the clerk of any near misses on the A68 within the speed limit zones via the online contact form on Corsenside Parish Council website. KT to ask people to only report the very basics such as date, time, and brief description of what happened and not give any personal details such as names or registration numbers etc of vehicles involved.

KT informed all that Cllr C. Hamilton had asked her to contact NCC to request the type of dog fouling signs that were displayed in Hexham. KT explained that she had spoken with the dog warden who had delivered the latest addition of signs which CPC may display where appropriate however not on any BT poles. KT also informed all that she was awaiting a price for some wooden stakes in order to attach dog fouling signs which can then be located at problem areas.

KT informed all that she had yet again contacted NCC to ask for an update on what would be happening to the West Woodburn First School building and school field. KT had asked NCC if there were any documentation regarding ownership of the school field. KT explained that NCC had replied stating that the property had not

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yet been put on the market and that as previously agreed NCC would inform CPC when this happened. NCC stated that the site was still being discussed with their Children Services team before making any decision. NCC stated that the playing field was included within NCC’s registered title and that they would let CPC when a decision had been made on the site and our request for it to be transferred back to the community. KT stated that she had spoken with the Northumberland Theatre Company and had provisionally booked in the performance ‘Alice in Wonderland’ for the 13<sup>th</sup> of January 2022. KT asked if this was something CPC wanted to book as obviously last years was unable to go ahead. All Cllrs agreed that they would like to see this year’s panto go ahead should such events be permitted. KT to make the necessary arrangements.

Cllr C. Hamilton once again discussed the June 2022 Platinum Jubilee and how such an event would involve the creation of a committee. Cllrs discussed this and agreed to put the call out for volunteers and to hopefully launch the committee at the Annual Parish Meeting in September. Cllr C. Hawman suggested that the request for committee members could also be put out at Septembers Corsenside Parish Show. Cllr C. Hawman stated that she had spoken with North Tyne Youth who would be happy to organise events for children and young people at the Jubilee.

19) Next Meeting: - Annual Parish Meeting 7pm (CPC to monitor the situation and confirm nearer the time), Monday 6<sup>th</sup> of September 2021 and CPC general meeting 7.30pm. 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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