

## **MINUTES FOR THE MEETING OF EMBLETON PARISH COUNCIL**

Monday 30<sup>th</sup> March 2015 in the Meeting Room at Christon Bank Church

**PRESENT:** George Skipper (Chair), Terry Howells, Adam Moody, David Morgan, Raymond Carss, Gordon Coxon, Richard Manners and Neville Fawcett

**IN ATTENDANCE:** John Young, Andy Davis.

1. **APOLOGIES:** Raymond Imeson, Georgina Armstrong and Cllr Kate Cairns

2. **Resignation and Appointment of new Parish Clerk**

Cllr Howells reported that due to an incident at Thursday's Craster Parish Council Meeting, the potential new clerk resigned before he got into office. A member of the public pointed out that no agenda had been posted for three days prior to the meeting and, therefore, was illegal. That meeting had to be abandoned but, as a result, the clerk resigned from all three committees (Craster PC, Burial Board Committee and Embleton PC). Cllr Howells informed the PC that there had been two other strong applications from the interviews previously held by Craster PC and after discussion Embleton PC agreed that Cllrs Howells and Coxon sit in on the next interviews held by Craster for a Clerk. Clerk for Newton does not want the position. It is hoped to have someone in post before next meeting.

3. **Confirmation of Minutes of Last Meeting** (2<sup>nd</sup> March 2015)

The Minutes were agreed and signed as a true record.

4.

### **Matters Arising**

**Memorial** - The Norwegian Embassy has been approached and they have agreed to the refurbishment of the Norwegian Memorial.

9. **Application for grant from PCC Rooms** – nothing to report as yet.

10. **School re-organisation proposals** – a letter from the PC was given to the Chair of the Governors before the Governors meeting. Letter also sent to Morpeth.

11. **Footpaths** – we have had an acknowledgement regarding our letter of concern re the state of footpaths in Embleton and Christon Bank.

12. **Obstruction by vehicles along Quakers Row and Untidy State of Garden** – one of the vehicles has been removed but there was still concern re rubbish at the side of this building.

13. **Greyfield Estate / Turnstone Gardens** – a campervan has been seen on numerous occasions parking across the footpath and road. Parking is available on the Turnstone site.

5.

6. **County Councillor's Report – See last page of the minutes**

### **Spittalford Cemetery Update**

- Meeting was to have been tonight but has been postponed.
- Bryn has been appointed as temporary Clerk.
- Bathroom is now complete. Jill and Gary are happy with this. The tenancy agreement has been signed.
- There are proposed improvements to access and turning for hearses.

7.

### **JBC – Terms of Reference**

8. JBC still waiting for response re Terms of Reference from the three PCs. Embleton PC to send their amendments to Craster and Newton PCs.

**NCC – New Planning Review** – there is a meeting on Wednesday to discuss this matter. Stannington Cllrs suggested Parish Councils instruct their County Councillor to vote against it. Clerk to e-mail Cllr Cairns instructing her to vote against this matter on our behalf. Clerk to inform Stannington Chair of our action.

9.

Cllr Skipper read out a letter received from the Rt Hon Alan Beith regarding this matter. Clerk was asked to write to Sir Alan Beith wishing him a long and happy retirement and

thanking him for his help over the years.

#### **Finance**

- Clerk's salary – March 2015 - £66.80
- PAYE – March - £16.60
- Playing Field rates - £66
- Simon Rippon - £145 – repair of toilet site fence

10. Pension contribution by PC – Michael Craster has agreed to look into this and report back. Cllr Howells to contact David Francis for advice.
11. Renewal quote from Zurich Insurance - £132.50 – Renewal date 1<sup>st</sup> May 2015

#### **Correspondence**

(a) **Letter from Sir Alan Beith** – (see NCC new Planning Review)

#### **12. Planning**

- (a) Quarry housing development – removal of spoil – granted.
- (b) Blue Bell signs – these are already in place.
- (c) Sea View, Embleton – no objections.

#### **E-Mails (List circulated at meeting.)**

- (a) Peter Mitchell (Homes for Northumberland) re Quarry site – street name is required and PC has been asked for suggestions. Also Peter would like to attend next PC meeting to give overview of scheme. Clerk to send invitation to next meeting.
13. (b) Burial Board reimbursement – clerk has received confusing e-mails regarding this reimbursement and is not sure which is the correct sum. Clerk to contact person concerned for clarification. Also is amount to be shared with Craster and Newton or have they also had reimbursement.
- (c) Dates and venues for Town/Parish meetings – 20<sup>th</sup> May at Wooler and 21<sup>st</sup> May at Rennington Village seem to be the meetings nearest Embleton. Cllr attending to be agreed nearer the dates.
- (d) Village agents – Terry to put a précis in Whinstone Times.

#### **Any Other Business**

- Streetlight west side entrance to Springfield at Christon Bank has been flashing for weeks. Clerk to report when John e-mails the relevant details.
  - Horsley Place sign at Christon Bank – one of these signs has been removed from the site of the newly built house. Also residents of that house appear to be addressing it as Darling House, Lambert's Lorren. Lambert's Lorren is nowhere near this location. Cllr Skipper is to contact NCC and make enquiries.
  - Mr Young asked if Christon Bank could have similar stone built signs for "Embleton". John could supply the sandstone. He was informed that these signs were done by a Youth Employment Scheme. Enquiries to be made through Highways Department whose permission would have to be sought if project was possible.
  - Embleton Bus Shelter (plastic shelter) – this is in a bad state of repair and does not give a good impression of Embleton. The Chairman has volunteered to replace wood on seats. Cllrs Manners believes he may have some wood suitable. PC to consider precepting for new bus shelter next year. PC to ask NCC at next meeting to consider replacing the bus shelter as part of the Quarry Scheme.
  - Broadband – now in Embleton. Land by Broadband boxes is owned by Bruce Douglas and he is happy for residents to tidy the area.
  - History books – Cllr Howells handed £150 to Clerk from sale of books. However, there are not many books left. The question was asked "Do we print more books?" The cost involved last time was approx £1500 to print. Matter to be discussed further.
  - Standing Orders - Health & Safety Issues - ? responsibility for Health & Safety for places leased out by PC. Should PC have disclaimer from those people saying PC not responsible for H & S.  
Contact David Francis for advice.
- 14.

- Asset Register – this will be inserted on web site in the future.

**Date and time of next meeting**

Monday 20<sup>th</sup> April 2015 7.30 p.m. in the meeting room at Creighton Hall.

**NCC's Review of Planning Procedures**

Many PC's responded to the County Council's consultation on its changes to the Development Management system: the procedures by which the Council determines planning applications. The proposed changes are designed primarily to speed-up the decision-making process, and to achieve a greater consistency across the county.

The County Council has not suggested that the statutory rights of local councils to be consulted on all planning proposals in their area would cease altogether.

In February, NCC's Communities and Place Scrutiny Committee proposed the creation of a Task-and-Finish Group to consider changes to the structure and procedures of NCC's planning committees but this proposal was not supported by NCC's Policy. A final decision on whether to implement the proposed changes is due to be made by the full council meeting on 1 April.

**Schools Partnership**

Policy Board meeting 21<sup>st</sup> April to make decision on response of consultation

**Transparency and audit**

The Government is proceeding rapidly with its programme to change the audit arrangements of local councils, and to require every council to be more 'transparent'. The Audit Commission will be abolished on 31 March 2015, and the role of BDO as the external auditor of all local councils in our area will cease with effect from April 2017.

However, the most imminent changes will impact on the smaller councils (ie those with annual income or expenditure below £25k pa). From 1 April 2015 every smaller council must post a range of key financial and governance information on a publicly-accessible website. Thus, from 1 April, every smaller PC will need to have access to a website (see below) on which they must post agendas and draft minutes of PC meetings. Then, from 1 July 2015 these councils should post information about their governance and finance. Fuller details are available in two DCLG guides: see [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/388541/Transparency Code for Smaller Authorities.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/388541/Transparency_Code_for_Smaller_Authorities.pdf) and [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/411617/Changes to the smaller authorities local audit and accountability framework a guide 2 .pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/411617/Changes_to_the_smaller_authorities_local_audit_and_accountability_framework_a_guide_2_.pdf)

Signed as a true record