

COTHERSTONE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held in Cotherstone Village Hall on Wednesday 9 January 2019 at 7.00pm

In attendance:	Cllr Richard Hunter (Chair for this meeting), Cllr Jenny Watson, Cllr Richard Green, Cllr Robin Quick, Cllr Tim Sabey, Cllr John Birkett
Absent:	Cllr Alan Thorn
Public:	None
Clerk:	Judith Mashiter
1. Approval of apologies for absence	<i>As Cllr Thorn had submitted apologies due to being delayed by work, it was resolved that his absence be approved.</i>
2. Declarations of interest	None
3. Requests for dispensations	No requests had been received.
4. Minutes	Draft minutes had been circulated. <i>It was resolved that the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held 14 November 2018 are an accurate record.</i>
5. Public participation	No public were present.
6. Update on progress of actions and resolutions	<p>An action log updated 2 January 2019 had been circulated. Following discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Land Registry forms to consent to change of address for Parish Council-registered land were signed• Pothole opposite Glenair has been repaired• Tree inspectios — Cllr Hunter referred to a report on work done for the Parish Council by All About Trees in 2015. Cllr Green declared an interest at this point as Andy Watson, a director of All About Trees is the partner of a close relative. Clerk had circulated guidance notes from the insurer about liability for hazardous trees. Councillors recognised that an inspection schedule, comprising annual inspections by a professional (though at different seasons of the year) and three-monthly visual inspections, needs to be prepared. Agreed that Clerk seeks quotation from All About Trees to inspect the two trees near Hagg House, and a separate quotation for mapping all the trees on Parish Council land and drawing up an inspection schedule for all the trees.
7. Planning matters	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tree work — Agreed Clerk to seek clarification on the application and notification process involved in work on any trees (TPO or otherwise) within the Conservation Area.• Councillors had received many comments about the very much deteriorating state and the expansion of the curtilage of the Cart Barn site, post development. Agreed Clerk to write to Durham County Council planning department expressing concerns and seeking enforcement of the original planning consent.
8. Correspondence	<p>A list of correspondence received had been circulated and was noted. (late item after list was published) — Notice of amendment to stint rights on Cotherstone Common received. No comment offered.</p>
9. Cemetery matters	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Clerk had received advice from Institute of Cemeteries and Crematoria Management (ICCM) officer that responsibility for checking grave mounds/levels should be with the Parish Council and not undertakers. However, on the basis that this assumes the Parish Council digs the graves, Clerk to seek further advice for the situation in which the undertaker contracts the gravedigging.• Other than to clarify the matter of grave mounds, it was agreed that a further review of Cemetery Rules, perhaps to align them more to the template supplied by ICCM, was not necessary at this time.

- In relation to an enquiry about interment of ashes, it was agreed that the charges should be those for an ex-resident, despite the fact that the deceased was a very popular and well-respected gentleman in the village.

10. Grass cutting contracts for 2019 (Greens/Klondike and Cemetery)

A paper had been circulated.

- It was resolved that if the 2018-appointed contractor for cutting grass at the Cemetery is in agreement, then the contract be extended for 12 months.*
- It was resolved that if the 2018-appointed contractor for cutting grass at the Greens/Klondike allotments is in agreement, then the contract be extended for 12 months.*

Should the contractor not wish to extend the 2018 contract for 12 months for either one or both of the grass cutting contracts, then it was resolved that new tenders will be invited as per the process proposed. In the case of a contract being extended for 12 months, it was noted that this would be the only extension, and a new tender process would be initiated for the 2020 season. Clerk to advise potential contractor of the decision.

11. Allotment matters

- It was resolved to note that a tenancy agreement has been signed for Klondike plot 8a by Sally Baker.* It was noted that there are three prospective tenants on the waiting list, with priority assigned to those living in the parish and to those who have not previously been offered a plot.
- It was noted that correspondence to all tenants on 26 November had resulted in all but one of the rents for 2019 being paid. Agreed that Clerk issues a reminder for the outstanding rent, with an offer to change the name of the tenant from son to father.

12. New noticeboard for east end of Cotherstone

It was resolved to defer a decision on the proposed noticeboard until April.

13. Neighbourhood Plan

Councillors welcomed the news from Cllr Hunter that a draft plan for further consultation will be finished by the end of January.

14. Finance

A paper had been circulated.

- It was resolved to receive a report of receipts and payments from 1 November to 31 December and a bank reconciliation at 31 December.* It was noted that one allotment rent has been paid for 2020 in addition to 2019.
- It was resolved to receive a budget monitoring report for the first three quarters of 2018/19.*
- It was resolved to authorise payments due as listed.*

15. Budget 2019/20

A paper, including a draft budget, had been circulated.

Following discussion of the budgeting principles and the need to build reserves for possible capital spend at the cemetery and allotments and to cover the cost of any by-election, it was resolved to approve the budget as drafted and set the precept resource for 2019/20 at £6,811, the same resource as for 2018/19 (with a slight decrease in taxbase, the Band D charge will increase by 0.64% to £25.14; with the addition of £42 Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme grant, the total precept cash received for 2019/20 will be £6,853.00).

16. Reports from councillors

- Cllr Watson proposed a new scheme for next year to replace Rotters being paid by the Parish Council to collect used Christmas trees, whereby people would leave the tree as normal on the east green, make a donation to Play@Cotherstone and then volunteers on behalf of Play@Cotherstone would remove the accumulation of trees.
- Cllrs Sabey, Hunter and Watson to speak to local residents about overhanging vegetation causing obstructions at a property near each of them.
- A sign 'parking this side only' at The Hagg needs replacing. Clerk to obtain quotation.
- The increasing incidence of dog mess left particularly on the lanes surrounding the village has been noted. Agreed that the observation be noted, and an appeal to dog owners' consciences, be prepared for 'Our Cotherstone'.
- Noted that training for new councillors (or refresher for others) will take place at 6pm on Monday 14 January.

Meeting closed: 8.31pm