

COTHERSTONE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council held in Cotherstone Village Hall on Wednesday 12 February 2020 at 7.00pm

In attendance:	Cllr John Birkett (Chair), Cllr Jenny Watson, Cllr Vince Bendin and Cllr Richard Green
Absent:	Cllr Tim Sabey and Cllr Richard Hunter
Clerk:	Judith Mashiter
1. Approval of apologies for absence	Apologies were received from Cllrs Hunter and Sabey. <i>As apologies had been submitted by Cllr Hunter who was on holiday, it was resolved to approve his absence.</i>
2. Declarations of interest	None.
3. Requests for dispensations	No requests had been received.
4. Minutes	Draft minutes (paper 120220-1) had been circulated. <i>It was resolved that the minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting held 31 January 2020 are an accurate record.</i>
5. Public participation	No members of public were present.
6. Update on progress of actions and resolutions	Paper 120220-2, an action log updated 5 February 2020, had been circulated. Following discussion: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Danger outside Cotherstone School – agreed that lines have been refused. Remove from action log.• Dog waste bins — Clerk reported support received from Ross Carrick (DCC Tees Railway Path officer) for new bin at West Park crossing. Mr Carrick will make the request to Clean and Green team.• Potholes in Leadpipe Lane — agreed work complete. Remove from action log.• Bench seats — see agenda item 16.
7. Governance	Paper 120220-3 had been circulated. <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. <i>It was resolved to approve the revised Disciplinary Policy and Grievance Policy as presented.</i>b. <i>It was resolved to approve the Scheme of Delegation as presented.</i>c. <i>It was resolved to approve the Equality Policy as presented.</i>
8. Finance	Paper 120220-4 had been circulated. <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. <i>It was resolved to receive a report of receipts and payments from 1 to 31 January and a bank reconciliation at 31 January.</i>b. <i>It was resolved to authorise payments due as listed.</i>
9. Cotherstone Community Celebration	<i>It was resolved to note the award of £935 from the National Lottery for a community celebration event to be held in May.</i> Clerk had been contacted by Friends of Cotherstone School to explore the possibility of combining the event with one planned by the school to mark the 75 th VE Day. Agreed that Clerk arrange to meet with a Neighbourhood Plan Group representative (Cllr Hunter) and Friends of Cotherstone School's Kelly Green to plan the event.
10. Grass cutting tenders (x2) for 2020	Cllrs Birkett, Watson and Bendin had opened four tenders for each available contract immediately prior to the meeting. <i>Evaluated on the basis of cost, quality of work and locality of the contractor, it was resolved that A R Toward be appointed contractor for the Cotherstone Village Greens and Klondike Allotments contract for 2020 at £125 per cut and that C A Stamp be appointed contractor for the Cotherstone Cemetery contract for 2020, at £100 per cut.</i>
11. Correspondence	Paper 120220-5, a list of correspondence received, had been circulated and was noted. No further information was requested or action necessary.

(item 44) — Agreed to advise that Parish Council is lobbying for more dog waste bins and will increase the number of its own 'Please pick up' posters, and has advised the owner of the field highlighted as a particular problem.

12. Request for permission to erect directional sign on village green

A decision on a request from Cotherstone Quaker Meeting was deferred until councillors have studied the request in more detail, with the applicant being asked to mark the required position on a map.

13. Planning matters

Paper 120220-6 had been circulated.

- a. *It was resolved to submit a neutral 'no comment' on application DM/20/00122/FPA (change of use, Post Office).*
- b. *It was resolved to note Durham County Council's decision on four planning applications (all approved).*

14. Cemetery matters

No matters were raised.

15. Allotment matters

- a. Rents for two half-plots remain unpaid. Agreed that Clerk establish if the tenants wish to continue.
- b. Clerk reported a new entry on the waiting list (for either allotments site).

16. Bench seats

It was resolved to accept a quotation of £256.23+VAT received from Wicksteeds for new bracing strips, with fixtures and fittings, for six benches and order the spare parts, with delivery address to be advised, and subsequent fitting carried out by councillors.

It was resolved to accept Cllr Sabey's offer to explore the possibility of students from Bishop Auckland College undertaking some of the bench maintenance work on a voluntary basis.

17. Community-run shop/post office

Draft 7 of a consultation leaflet and response form had been circulated to councillors and was tabled as hard copy. Item 17b was taken before item 17a.

- b. Cllr Bendin provided a brief verbal update on recent activity. Key points discussed were as follows:
 - External advice had been sought from Durham Bright Sparks and Plunkett Foundation advisers, both of whom considered the documentation clear, concise and fair. Further support, advice and (in Plunkett's case, funding) might be forthcoming once the result of the community consultation is known.
 - Draft spreadsheet data provided by the Steering Group had given very helpful outline/estimated financial figures, enabling sufficient key points to be extracted for the consultation leaflet.
 - After considerable work, revisions and due consideration to the differing views of all parties involved in the consultation preparation, the Parish Council has done its very best at presenting the two options to the community. Whilst the primary objective is to show how the shop/post office/café facilities could be accommodated in both premises, it was agreed they present very different visions. It was important that this was also reflected in the leaflet; the emphasis on the project as a 'venture' and presenting 'the big picture' comments are acknowledgement of this.
 - A suggestion had been received from volunteers Joy and Peter Collyer that a 'consultation event' over a weekend, at the village hall, should be held, with displays and Steering Group members and Parish Councillors present to answer questions. Parish Council agreed to thank them but respond that the planned consultation leaflet is considered sufficiently comprehensive in order to gain the understanding of the community's wishes, which is what the Parish Council is seeking.
 - Newcastle Building Society's local Branch Manager has made known the Society's interest in supporting community outreach services, and indeed in making small grants available as well as larger Community Building Improvement Grants, which community-run ventures can apply for.
- a. *It was resolved:*
 - *To approve the content of draft 7 of the consultation leaflet and response form, with an adjustment to the existing shop accommodation potential rental income figure.*
 - *That the consultation leaflet and response form be posted w/c 17 February to each household in the parish, with a stamped addressed envelope, for response by 29 February and results to be considered at the Parish Council meeting on 11 March and subsequently published in raw form through appropriate channels.*

18. Reports from councillors

- Cllr Watson reported severe potholes at The Hag and Hallgarth Hill. Clerk will report to Durham County Council.
- Cllr Watson reported standing water problem on Moor Road (Lancelands side, close to junction with old railway). Clerk to clarify position and report possible blocked gully(s).

Meeting closed: 8.45pm