

SIMONBURN PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting
held on 14th March 2018 in Simonburn Village Hall

03-03-01 Present

Cllrs VS Allgood (Chairman), S Tilson, NA Ridley, D Bulman and AW Langford
Also Clerk R Macfarlane and a member of the public.

03-03-02 Apologies for absence

Cllr P Rowcroft and County Councillor RM Gibson

03-03-03 Declaration of Interest

Cllr NA Ridley – Wark CofE First School

03-03-04 Public First Focus

Proposal to merge or close Wark CofE First School

Kelly Ritchie, Chairperson of Governors of Wark CofE First School addressed the Council
Northumberland County Council's consultation on education in West Northumberland
It was RESOLVED that Simonburn Parish Council strongly objects to any proposal to close or merge Wark Church of England First School. The Council fully supports the School's Governing Body as well as the parents, pupils and the wider community who are all keen to keep a Primary or First School functioning in Wark.

03-03-05 Minutes

The minutes taken at the council meeting held on 6th December 2017, have been circulated all Councillors. These were approved and signed by the Chairman.

03-03-06 Matters arising from last meeting

- **Website** – At present TWDA are dealing with the financial arrangements. The Council will approach the bank to organise direct control and payment by direct debit for domain name (www.simonburn.info) and domain hosting.
- **Proctor's Bridge (Humpy Back Bridge)**
NCC are aware of the loose stones on its parapet.

03-03-07 Communications

The following correspondence has been received: GNAA newsletter, CAN Newsletter, Nalc Enews, Consultation - Car Parking Studies for Alnwick, Morpeth, Hexham and Berwick, Civic Voice - War Memorials News, Northumberland Local Plan Update and 'Call for Sites', Post 16 Transport Consultation, Ray Wind Farm Community Fund and FOI Data Protection from Nalc

03-03-08 **Roads**

There are concerns about the gully/drainage systems on Castle Lane. The ditch under the road is too small and other ditches get blocked regularly causing flooding in No 2 The Green. Clerk has contacted the appropriate highways inspector.

03-03-09 **Footpaths**

The Chairman and Clerk met with NCC ROW Officer Tim Fish on 19th December and had further discussions regarding the Simonburn Byways.

The NCC have a proposed course of action that they hope to implement over the next few months. Unfortunately, due to a reduction in their capital works programme budget for 2018/19, it is unlikely that some of the repair work that they had hoped to carry out will be now be possible.

Councillor Gibson has agreed to allocate £5,000 of his Members Scheme allocation for 2018/19 to improvement works to byway open to all traffic no. 24 in the vicinity of Stooprigg, however work on Byway 38 is no longer in NCC current work schemes. The work at Stooprigg will be scheduled for the summer and prior to that officers will finalise the details of the extent of the work with the tenant farmer and Allgood Estate.

NCC will also be progressing measures to try and control and restrict the future use of the Byways, particularly Byway 24, by consulting on a proposal for voluntary restraint on the use of the route and further consultation on a TRO for seasonal use.

Tim assured that the Parish Council and the landowners will be kept informed of the progress of this process once it is underway.

03-03-10 **Planning**

No issues.

03-03-11 **Review of Documents**

Financial Regulations, Risk Management, ROI and Transparency

– no suggestions or amendments.

GDPR 2016 and the Data Protection Bill.

Initially there were some indications that a pragmatic approach might be taken so that the clerk for smaller local councils could be the data protection officer. Advice since then indicates the potential for a clerk to be the data protection officer if it is compatible with the duties of the DPO and do not lead to a conflict of interest. At present there is no firm advice or guidance.

Model Code of Conduct

Nalc's County Committee are to revise the current model and will circulate draft copies to all councils.

03-03-12 **External Auditors**

PKF Littlejohn (PKF) are the new external auditors.

NB Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) is a Limited Assurance Review only. The Common Period for Inspection of Accounts (6-week period) must include the first 10 working days in July and will remain in force this year. It may be amended in 2019. The fees have been set by SAAA. The original hard copies of Sections 1 and 2 of AGAR are not required so all information can now be submitted via email.

03-03-13 **Finances**

Bank Statements The latest statements were approved and signed.

Approved Payments Clerk's salary £240, HMRC £60 tax, Council's expenses £13.85
St Mungo's PCC £100, R Hadley Petrol £100, TWDA £120 Transparency Fund Training £360.

03-03-14 **Date of next meeting**

Regular Council Meeting Wednesday 17th May 2018, 6.30 in Simonburn Village Hall.