

# **SIMONBURN PARISH COUNCIL**

Minutes of the Annual Parish Council Meeting  
held on 14<sup>th</sup> May 2019 in Simonburn Village Hall

Mrs V S Allgood opened the meeting at 6.45 pm.

## **01-05-01 Present**

Cllrs Mrs V Allgood (Chairman), NA Ridley and D Bulman, P Rowcroft, and Mrs S Tilson

Also Clerk R Macfarlane and County Councillor RM Gibson

## **01-05-02 Election of Chairman**

Cllr Ridley proposed **Cllr VS Allgood** and this was seconded by Cllr D Bulman - all agreed.  
NB At this point Cllr Allgood took the Chair and signed the declaration of acceptance of office (LGA 1972 s83).

## **01-05-03 Apologies for absence**

Cllr AW Langford

## **01-05-04 Declaration of Interest**

Councillors were reminded that the "Members' and Co-opted Members' Disclosable Pecuniary and Other Interests" forms need to be reviewed annually.

## **01-05-05 Appointment of Officers**

### **Chairman**

- **Cllr VS Allgood** - proposed by NA Ridley and seconded by D Bulman,

### **Vice Chairman**

- **Cllr NA Ridley** - proposed by VS Allgood and seconded by D Bulman,

### **Evans Trust**

- **Cllr VS Allgood** - proposed by NA Ridley and seconded by D Bulman,

### **Village Hall**

- **Cllr D Bulman** - proposed by VS Allgood and seconded by NA Ridley

## **01-05-06 Public First Focus**

No members of the public present

## **01-05-07 Minutes**

The minutes taken at the council meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> March 2019, having been circulated and approved by the Council were signed by the Chairman.

## **01-05-08 Matters arising from last meeting**

### **Parish Grass Mower**

The mower, Husqvarna RCTH 194, has been costly to service.

### **Bank Authority**

Clerk to check if Chairman, NA Ridley, D Bulman and P Rowcroft are signatories.

### 01-05-09 **Communications**

All councillors were circulated with a full list of correspondence.

CAN Newsletter, CAN Spring Conference, War Memorials Trust Bulletin, CPRE, Tynedale Hospice at Home.

- **Insurance Quotes** Quotes for the parish insurance were received from Aon (Allianz) and Zurich Municipal. The latter being cheaper and also giving better cover.
- **Grass Mowers** Towergate now insures the mower.

### 01-05-10 **Reports**

#### **Northumberland County Council**

Cllr Gibson gave a verbal report

#### **Village Hall**

Cllr Bulman gave a verbal report in which he informed the Council that they were enquiring about grant aid for improvements.

### 01-05-11 **Roads**

#### **Drainage**

Work has begun on the drainage system around the village Green and Castle Lane.

### 01-05-12 **Planning**

No applications

### 01-05-13 **Footpaths**

The Council is aware of various issues relating to “off-road” vehicles and the damage and distress caused by them to some of the BOATs and byways within the parish. The Council has received notification of route proposed for a Permanent Traffic Regulation Order prohibiting use by four-wheel vehicles in the parishes of Simonburn and Wark Byways Open to All Traffic No’s 24 and 72. From Ward Lane past Great Lonbrough to Greenhaugh.

### 01-05-14 **Audit**

#### **Internal Audit**

GD Scorer the Internal Auditor has completed a full audit and there were no matters arising. The Council asked the Clerk to pay him a fee of £50, thank him and invite him to continue next year. (GD Scorer will give his fee to Teenage Cancer Trust).

**External Audit to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019** The External Auditors PKF Littlejohn LLP requirements are in line with the Audit Commission and comply with the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2016 (Regulations 12-16)

**Annual Statement of Accounts** Cllr Ridley proposed and Cllr Bulman seconded that the annual Financial Return be accepted and this was signed by the Chairman. It was RESOLVED that the Council approve (in sequence) the Annual Governance Statement, the Accounting Statement, and the Annual Internal Audit Report.

#### **Exercise of Electors’ Rights**

The notice of appointment of date for the exercise of electors’ rights must be displayed for 14 days. The Audit Notice will be displayed in Parish Notice Board and the 30 Working Day Period for the Exercise of Public Rights commences on 4<sup>th</sup> June and will end on 13<sup>th</sup> July. The Council will submit the annual return and supporting documentation presented at this meeting to PKF Littlejohn LLP by the agreed audit date of 11<sup>th</sup> June. Approval of Accounts should be no later than 11<sup>th</sup> June and Publication of Audited Accounts no later than 30<sup>th</sup> September 2019.

### 01-05-14 **Audit (continued)**

#### **Limited Assurance Exemption**

As the Council's gross income or gross expenditure did not exceed £25,000 in the year of account ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019 the Council has applied for certification of exemption from a limited assurance review under Section 9 of the Local Audit (Smaller Authorities) Regulations 2015.

### 01-05-15 **Policy and Document Review**

#### **Assets Register**

The Assets Register value remains at £3,713

#### **Financial Regulations Documentation**

The Clerk pointed out that the Fidelity Guarantee is now £25,000 and has amended the Risk Management Document appropriately.

#### **Risk Management**

It was RESOLVED to continue insurance cover with Zurich Municipal.

#### **Standing Orders**

The Council will review the new Nalc Model.

### 01-05-16 **Finances**

**LGA 1972 s137** The government has confirmed that for the purpose of Section 137(4)(a) of the Local Government Act 1972 for local councils in England for 2018/19 is £7.86. Electors number 145 so allowance is £1,139.70

**Bank Statements** The latest statements were approved and signed. Balances at 1<sup>st</sup> April Deposit Account £1,420.47 and Current Account £322

**Income** Half precept £1500 and vat repayment £210.20

**Approved Payments** Clerk's salary £276, HMRC £69 tax, Expenses £25.43, Council Insurance Zurich Municipal £257.60, G Scorer Internal Audit £50, Car Park Rent Land £5.00, Village Hall Committee (Annual Rent) £40, R Hadley (Petrol) £100, SLCC £45, Nalc £60.61, ICO £40, Rickerby Ltd £282.53 (£47.10 vat) and Mower Insurance £174.36 (due 1<sup>st</sup> June)

01-05-17 **Date of next meeting** 18<sup>th</sup> September 2019

## Annual Parish Assembly Meeting

### **Chairman's Report**

The Chairman (Mrs VS Allgood) welcomed everyone to the meeting. She reported that the parish council had held four meetings throughout the year; in May, September, December and March all in Simonburn Village Hall (grateful thanks to the Hall Committee)

She thanked the Council for their support throughout the year and County Councillor Gibson for his advice and information. Thanks to the Clerk for his hard work and guidance. The Council is grateful to those who keep the Green clean and tidy and cut the grass, especially Roger Hadley who also looks after the mower and strimmer. Thanks also to the Internal Auditor, Gordon Scorer.

TWDA have arranged the Domain (Simonburn.info) and Hosting and have updated the new site for which we are grateful. The website enables the Council to publish all

the relevant documents to conform with Localities Act 2011. Contributions that may enhance the site, are requested.

At present much needed work is being carried out on the drains around the village green. The repair/renovation on Simonburn Bridge is now completed although there is still some concern over the low parapet.

The Council is aware of various issues relating to “off-road” vehicles and the damage and distress caused by them to some of the BOATs and byways within the parish. The Council has received notification of route proposed for a Permanent Traffic Regulation Order prohibiting use by four-wheel vehicles in the parishes of Simonburn and Wark Byways Open to All Traffic No’s 24 and 72. From Ward Lane past Great Lonbrough to Greenhaugh.

No planning applications have been received from Northumberland County Council.

Northumberland National Park Authority Planning Application Consultation 18NP0040 Carrawbrough Farm, B6318 Military Road Carrow To New Houses, Humshaugh, Hexham, Northumberland, NE46 4DB Simonburn Parish Council has no objections to this application

In order to support village projects, new auditors, FOI implications, website costs, running and maintenance of the grass mower and strimmer; it was resolved that the precept should be increased to £3,000 for the financial year 2019-2020

The Council was able to support worthy organisations with grant awards; St Mungo’s PCC, Tynedale Hospice at Home, Community Action Northumberland, Great North Air Ambulance and the Church Bells Appeal.

In March 2018, Kelly Ritchie, Chairperson of Governors of Wark CofE First School addressed the Council. There was much concern over the proposal to merge or close Wark C of E Aided First School as outlined in the Northumberland County Council's consultation on education in West Northumberland.

The catchment area for the school includes the villages of Birtley, Simonburn and Stonehaugh and the surrounding farms and hamlets are an integral part of the local community. So the news that it would not be closed was well received.

The school caters for the educational needs of pupils aged 3 to 9 years placing great importance on the children’s personal development and well-being. There are currently 36 pupils on role divided into three classes. The school offers nursery childcare from 3 years old and a Breakfast Club is available for five morning a week from 8am and after school provision is available from 3.15pm - 5.30pm.

The school has achieved successful conversion to Primary status from September 2019.