

Minutes of the meeting of Elsdon Parish Council on Thursday 9 July, 2020

Due to the Coronavirus emergency and social distancing imposed the meeting was conducted via video link between the recorded attendees.

Present: Councillors, Simmance (Chair), Graham and Morgan. Clerk - Martin Chilvers. Cllr France, Duncan Hutt (Northumberland Wildlife Trust – until 7.30)

1. Apologies: There were apologies from Cllrs Renton & Maddison

2. Declarations of Interest: None were declared.

3. Minutes of the previous Ordinary meeting: The minutes of the meeting was accepted as a true record.

4. Duncan Hutt (Northumberland Wildlife Trust – Benshaw Moor) – Mr Hutt was welcomed to the meeting. He provided details of work that has been taking place on site. This, he explained, has been somewhat limited due to the Covid19 lock down but he detailed the survey work completed and in progress. A lichens and mosses survey had been completed and Mr Hutt advised that there were tentative signs of water vole at the location.

Mr Hutt advised that a trainee Wildlife Officer had been appointed and would start work on site from August. He additionally reported that it was hoped a Country Stewardship grant would be received to assist towards the development of a fence around the whole perimeter

He advised that the site was open to the public but they needed to follow social distancing guidelines. He highlighted that the public could get involved in the bio-blitz survey across the site.

Mr Hutt finished by advising whilst there was a plan for a car park for approximately 4 – 5 cars plans needed to be agreed with NCC.

Mr Hutt left the meeting at 7.30.

5. Matters arising

- a) Ray Wind update – The Clerk provided an update on developments within the CIC highlighting the various grant funds available. Following the decline from the Ray Windfarm CIC in respect of the application for the village green protection the Clerk reported on his investigations via Community Foundation and CAN for possible funding avenues. Cllr Graham agreed to approach the Open Spaces Society for any guidance that they could provide.
- b) Brown Tourist signs and replacing other road signage – The Clerk advised that the grant funds from Ray Windfund for this project had been credited to the Parish Council bank account. He was seeking an update from Richard McKenzie (NCC) for the timescales of the project.
- c) Revitalising Redesdale – The Clerk provided an update following the Steering Group meeting on 17 June including plans regarding the projects as lock down easement continues, the budget update and an update on the proposed signage at Carter Bar. Whilst National Lottery are agreeable to the Revitalising Redesdale project to continue due to delays following the Covid19 lock down there would be no further budget. An update was also provided on the recent Community Heritage Fund applications and decisions.
- d) Repair of roadside fence alongside burn – The Clerk advised he was chasing Cllr Bridgett and Mitch Young (NCC) for an update and timescale of this work.
- e) Climate controlled cabinet in the church – The Chair advised he had not heard back from Rev Ryder as yet on this matter.
- f) Soppit arena lighting – It was agreed that given the evidence provided and latest email from NCC that this matter could now be closed.
- g) Soppit Lane road flooding – The Clerk highlighted the notice he had received that work was due on this location the week commencing 29 August.
- h) Replacement of notice board near Pinfold – The Clerk reported that he hoped the quote for the four noticeboards across the three Parishes should be completed very soon and then he would seek confirmation from Revitalising Redesdale for the amount of funding that would be provided.

- i) Annual bonfire and firework display – There was discussion on whether the event should take place this year. It was agreed to approach the Parish Council insurers for their comment and monitor the situation over the next couple of months before making a final decision. Additionally it was agreed to consult with those who help to organise the event.
- j) Bird in Bush reopening – The Chair advised he had received an email of complaint that the Parish Council had allowed the Bird in Bush to have a marquee erected on the village green and that the pub were able to conduct business there. It was noted that the Parish Council insurers confirmed that the Parish Council were covered providing the Bird in Bush had their own insurance that met their business requirements. It was highlighted that whilst the Parish Council had agreed for a marquee to be erected on the village green to assist the pub to become operational again it had not provided agreement on where the marquee should be hired from.

6. Finance:

- a) There were no finance matter to consider this month.

7. Planning:

- a) 20/02028/BT: Proposal to remove phone box 01830520676: Elsdon, EN191AA: Following discussion it was agreed to object to the proposal as the mobile service was patchy in the local area. Additionally with a defibrillator located nearby it was believed it was vital to have the telephone box. Also as there were many cyclists that travel through the village the phone box was required in case of an emergency.

8. New business:

- a) Smoutel Ford - The Clerk provided an update from details learnt at the Revitalising Redesdale Steering group meeting. The original plan had apparently always been for crossing only the possible over the stepping stones when the river level was low. Further details would follow and the Clerk reported that he was advised warning signs would be put in place to highlight to walkers before they got to Smoutel Ford.
- b) Cycle race 6 September – The Clerk provided details of an email he had received from the race organiser. The Councillors agreed that from their perspective providing all concerned followed the latest government guidelines on social distancing they were agreeable to the event taking place. However the Clerk was asked to direct the organiser to contact the Chair of the Village Hall committee for comment / agreement.
- c) Consultation of Northumberland Local Plan 13 July to 7 September – The Clerk provided details

9. Any other business:

- a) There was discussion regarding the format of the future meetings. It was agreed that the August meeting would be conducted via video link and the matter discussed again at that meeting.

10. Date, time and place of next meeting: The next meeting will be on 13 August, 2020 starting at 7.00pm via video link.

Meeting closed at 8.40