

Rochester with Byrness Parish Council

Minutes for the Meeting of Rochester with Byrness Parish Council held on
Tuesday 27 September, 2022
At Rochester Village Hall

1 Attendance: S Chapman (Chair), P. Scott, M. Kelly, N. Hall & M. Chilvers (Clerk).

2 Apologies: There were apologies from P. Softley.

3 Declaration of Interest: S. Chapman & M. Kelly 8a and S. Chapman regarding Tynedale Hospice.

4 Minutes of previous Parish Council meeting on 26 July, 2022 – Were agreed as a true record.

5 Guest speaker – not applicable

6 Opportunity for members of the public to raise matters – None was raised.

7 Matters arising

a) Revitalising Redesdale update on progress – The Chair reported that she had missed the last Steering Group meeting however the end of project event on 22 September in Elsdon was well attended and had been a very enjoyable evening. The Chair advised that Northumberland Wildlife Trust would be holding the budget for the RR website and Facebook costs for the next 10 years as well as for some small maintenance work. A legacy report was still to be completed as well as an evaluation of the overall project. There would still be some ongoing projects to complete before the overall project finishes on 31 December, 2022.

b) Road signs at Carter Bar – The Chair advised she had no further update on this topic this month.

c) Northern Powergrid substation in Byrness – The Clerk shared the details of the latest email from Chris Mitchell of Northern Powergrid advising that the work was progressing as planned. It was agreed by all that it was looking good.

d) Northumbrian Water treatment works legacy for Byrness – The Chair shared a report from Cllr Softley advising that a consultation had taken place with Byrness parents and given the budget available the recommendation was for a slide for the younger children with matting at the bottom of the slide. There was agreement from all Councillors to proceed with this suggestion.

e) Maintenance work on trees near 31 and 32 South Greens – It was confirmed that Frank Charlton had dealt with the overhanging trees. It was agreed the Clerk would contact Frank again regarding attention needed on the ash in South Greens and a dead tree at the car park near to the bottle bank.

f) NCC / Forestry Commission tree planting/Great Northumberland Forest – The Clerk advised he had received an email from NCC advising that the application had been successful although there was no date for the delivery of the trees.

g) Mole trapping in Byrness Parish Council owned land – The Chair reported on a quote she had received from a mole catcher in Kirkwhelpington who had his own appropriate insurance. It was agreed to monitor the situation for the time being before deciding on any action.

h) Request for communal water-butts at Byrness allotments – The Chair advised she had been approached by a resident who believed there should be communal water-butts to capture rainwater at the allotments. Cllr Scott advised that there was a spring that surfaced in his plot and that any of the tenants were welcome to take water for their own plots. It was agreed to write to the tenants for feedback before any action was taken.

i) Maintenance of Byrness garages – The Councillors agreed on the quote received from Chris Mowatt for £500.00 plus materials and it was agreed to ask him to quote for any gutter repair work identified.

j) Rochester Roundhouse including Woodland Trust hedging, star cairn, wild-flowers & charging policy – The Chair reported that the work on the star cairns had been delayed until November. Cllr Scott agreed to assess the saplings and would update on when best to plant these. In the mean time it was agreed to apply for additional saplings to plant towards further hedging of the boundary. There was discussion on a possible charging policy for hire of the building. It was agreed £3.00 an hour and £20.00 daily charge. There was discussion on whether the Roundhouse should have its own Facebook page. Whilst during the summer the building had been unlocked each day it was agreed a commitment could only be made to unlock it at weekends during the winter. There was agreement to ask Chris Mowatt to cut the grass inside the Roundhouse boundary instead of a final Rochester roadside grass verge cut.

k) Glen Harrison's (NCC) visit to Rochester & Byrness (including footpath outside 27 South greens, Byrness, condition of Bremenium Way, Rochester and path at Catcleugh Reservoir layby – The Chair reported on the areas visited and Mr Harrison's response on what he would do. He would arrange for the drainage in Bremenium Way to be assessed before any road surface work was undertaken. There was discussion on what could be done at the lay-by near Catcleugh where the path was overgrown and markers had mostly disappeared. Cllr Scott referred to a conversation he had with Neil Reid from Northumbrian Water about the wall which had started to collapse on to the path and was in danger of collapsing further. It was also reported that the litter bin at the lay-by was broken and rubbish was being thrown over the wall. It was agreed to contact NCC for a replacement. Cllr Hall highlighted that the drains along the main road in Rochester were blocked and required attention from NCC.

l) Northern Powergrid applications for energy resilience grant funds – The Chair advised that Byrness Village Hall committee were still attempting to secure a contractor for the agreed refurbishment work. Rochester Village Hall committee had submitted an application and EDF had recently been out to undertake the work required to allow switch over from mains electric to a generator. The Chair also advised she would be attending the joint meeting with Guy Opperman MP & NPG in Bellingham on 30th m)

m) Request to plant trees in commemoration of the Queen – The Chair reported that she had been asked whether it would be possible for the Parish Council to plant a tree in Rochester. As the Parish Council did not own land in the centre of the village she had asked Lord Redesdale for his agreement to possibly planting a couple of trees with a plaque in front of the garage to which he & Mr Walker had kindly agreed. It was agreed that she would obtain a quote for a Great White Cherry tree.

n) Local defibrillator maintenance – It was noted that the units in both villages had had the required software upgrade and had been returned.

o) Parish Council vacancies – It was noted that there were two vacancies in the Byrness ward and one in the Rochester ward. There was discussion as to what could be done to attract interest.

p) Date of the Parish Council meetings in Byrness & Annual meetings – The Chair shared the comments from Cllr Softley who had highlighted the uncertainty about Byrness Village Hall so suggested no change in the current schedule. There was agreement to alternating the Annual Meeting location in May each year although this would need to continue to be the last Tuesday of the month. It was agreed to schedule the November meeting on Monday 28th.

8 Planning

a) 22NP0001: Construction of 2NO detached holiday cottages: Land to north of 14 Bremenium Way, Rochester – The Clerk shared the comments agreed by the Councillors who had considered the matter and decided to submit a decline recommendation based on information provided.

b) 22NP0073: Advertisement Consent: Installation of lectern interpretive panel: Land to west of Holy Trinity Church, Horsley, Rochester, NE191TA – There was agreement to support this application.

c) 22/03206/ADE: Advertising consent for 1 x fascia sign: Public Convenience block: Rochester, NE191SW – There was agreement to support this application.

9 Finance/accounts for payment

a) Parish finance update and adoption of the 2021-22 accounts – The Clerk advised the current bank balance was £29,721.14 that included reserve balances for the Byrness garages and allotments. There was agreement to adopt the accounts.

b) The following payments presented were all agreed

- M. Chilvers salary for August and September 2022 of £304.82 was agreed.
- Payments to Chris Mowatt Landscaping Ltd for grass cutting in Byrness was agreed.
- Payment of room hire at Rochester Village Hall on 27 September, 2022 of £12.00 was agreed.
- Payment of invoice from F. Charlton £70.00 + VAT was agreed.
- A donation of £100.00 to Tynedale Hospice at Home was agreed.

10 Any Other Business:

a) Cllr Scott highlighted the state of some of the Byrness road signs along the A68. It was agreed he would send over photographs showing the signs as they used to look and their location before the Clerk would contact NCC for replacements.

Date of Next Meeting. MONDAY 28 November, 2022 at Byrness Village Hall, starting 7:00pm.

Meeting closed 8.55pm