

NEWBROUGH PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Council held on 1st May 2019

01-05-1 **Present** Cllrs MW Gibson (Chair), J Annan, KE Bell, IS Hunter and HA Walton
Also Present: Clerk, R Macfarlane and County Councillor RM Gibson

01-05-2 **Apologies** Cllrs A Smith, and MD Newson.

01-05-3 **Election of Chairman** Cllr J Annan proposed **Cllr MW Gibson** seconded by HA Walton and all agreed. At this point in the Meeting MW Gibson took the Chair. The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked members of the Council for their support throughout the year. He also thanked Clerk, R Macfarlane and County Councillor RM Gibson for their help and advice.

01-05-4 **Declaration of Office** Cllr MW Gibson signed the declaration of acceptance of office (LGA 1972 s83).

01-05-5 **Election of Vice-Chairman** Cllr J Annan proposed **Cllr IS Hunter** seconded by HA Walton and all agreed.

01-05-6 **Declaration of Interest** All councillors were reminded to keep up-to-date the "Members' and Co-opted Members' Disclosable Pecuniary and Other Interests" forms. These will be maintained by the Monitoring Officer at County Hall in accordance with Section 29 of the Localism Act 2011.

01-05-7 **Minutes** The Minutes of the Meeting of Newbrough PC which was held on 6th March 2019 approved by the Council then signed by the Chairman.

01-05-8 **Matters Arising**

None

01-05-9 **Public First Focus**

This item was covered in the Annual Meeting of the Parish

01-05-10 **Communications**

The following correspondence has been forwarded to all councillors: CAN Newsletter, Nalc e-news, Tynedale Hospice, Clerks and Councils Direct and CPRE newsletter

01-05-11 **Roads**

Interactive Speed Sign

This is to be removed from its present position in the Conservation area. It is hoped that the steel pole can be moved in conjunction with proposed plans for speed restrictions associated with the school.

01-05-12 **Reports**

Northumberland County Council

Cllr RM Gibson presented a verbal report on NCC activities.

Sportsfield Association

Cllr Walton gave a verbal report.

01-05-13 **Planning**

NNPA Application

- 18NP0040 Carrawbrough Farm, NE46 4DB – granted permission.

NCC Planning Applications

- Thistledene Cottage Stanegate Newbrough Hexham Northumberland NE47 5BG Ref. No: 19/00984/FUL Pending Consideration
- Newbrough Hall Newbrough Northumberland NE47 5AJ Ref. No: 19/00707/LBC Application Permitted
- Thornton Tower Newbrough Northumberland Ref. No: 18/02171/LBC Application Permitted
- Bridge House Newbrough Hexham Northumberland NE47 5AR Ref. No:18/03615/LBC Application Permitted
- Extraction of sandstone Prudham Quarry Newbrough Northumberland which will be decided at Northumberland Council Strategic Planning Committee on 7th May.

01-05-14 **Audit**

External Audit to 31st 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 Governance and Accountability Return for 2018/2019

Internal Audit

The Internal Audit has taken place and there were no matters arising. The Clerk was asked to thank the Internal Auditor and invite her for next year. The Internal Auditor has requested that her fee should be paid to “The Sick Children’s Trust.” This was agreed.

Annual Statement of Accounts

After Cllr Annan proposed and Cllr Walton seconded, it was RESOLVED that the Council approve (in sequence) the Annual Governance Statement, the draft annual accounts 2018/19, the Accounting Statement, and the Explanation of Variance.

Exercise of Electors’ Rights

The notice of appointment of date for the exercise of electors’ rights will be displayed for 14 days in Parish Notice Board and the 30 Working Day Period for the Exercise of Public Rights commences on 4th June and will end on 13th 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 11th June. Approval of Accounts should be no later than 11th June and Publication of Audited Accounts no later than 30th September 2019.

Limited Assurance Exemption

As the Council's gross income or gross expenditure did not exceed £25,000 in the year of account ended 31st 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.

Assets

Council's asset register is brought up to date at 31 March. It includes all capital acquisition and disposal transactions recorded in the cash-book during the year. The Council, follows an appropriate and commonly used method of fixed asset valuation for first registration on the asset register at acquisition cost. This means that in most circumstances once recorded in the asset register, the recorded value of the asset will not change from year to year until disposal.

For reporting purposes therefore, the original value of fixed assets will stay constant throughout their life until disposal. The Assets Register has a value of £15,323

01-05-15 **Finances**

Bank Accounts 1st May 2019 BMM £15,363.66 Community £1266.46

Income Half precept £4,750 and vat £263.01

Section 137 Expenditure: Limit for 2018/19 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 455 so allowance is £3,576.30

Insurance Quotes Quotes for the parish insurance were received from Aon (Allianz) and Zurich Municipal. The latter being cheaper and also giving better cover. The policy premium has remained the same at £257.60 including taxes.

Payments by S/O Clerk's Salary, HMRC and Meeting Room Rent are now paid by standing order.

Payments Approved

Expenses £28.09 (vat £1), Nalc £118.91, Grass Cutting S Davies Inv 97 1st Cut £98, ICO £40, Council Insurance £257.60

Payments to be Approved Internal Audit fee payment to Sick Children's Trust £60 (LGA 1972 s137) CAN to be confirmed and administered at future meetings and at the grant aid meeting in November

Clerk's Salary It was agreed to increase this by £120 p.a. in line with the National Joint Council for Local Government Services National Salary Award from 1st April at Scale LC1 (SCP27)

01-05-16 **Footpaths**

The Council agreed to pursue the possibility of sourcing grant aid to construct a pathway to St Peter's from Newbrough Bridge.

01-05-17 **Review of Documents.**

Financial Regulations Documentation & Risk Management

There were no additions or amendments proposed.

01-05-18 **Date and Time of Next Meeting** - 7.00 pm, Wednesday 3rd July 2019

The Meeting was closed at 9.15 pm.

NEWBROUGH PARISH COUNCIL

Annual Meeting 1st May 2019

Annual Report

As usual the Council met on six occasions, 2nd May, 10th July, 5th September, 7th November 2018, 9th January and 6th March 2019. We are pleased by the good attendance of the public (who are always welcome) and their contribution is invaluable.

I would like to thank the members of the Council, especially Cllrs Iain Hunter and Malcolm Newson who deputised as chairmen when the occasion required. Thanks to County Councillor Rupert Gibson for attending and offering advice and to our ever-reliable clerk, Robert Macfarlane.

The Council counts itself very lucky to be able to hold meetings in the Town Hall and we are very grateful to Dave Spearman (Town Hall Chairman) who regularly attends Council meetings (supported by his committee members).

Following a number of complaints, Neighbourhood Services arranged for the Stanegate road uphill from Greyside to be resurfaced. This was carried out very satisfactorily and Northumberland County Council (NCC) also took the opportunity to clean out the gullies alongside the road.

Some members of the public who attended the Council meeting in September were concerned about road safety issues and in particular irresponsible and dangerous drivers; especially past the school and the Town Hall. Several ideas and strategies were discussed. The NCC Highways were asked to monitor traffic through Fourstones and Newbrough on the Stanegate in school term time. Road Traffic Surveys have been carried out recently (Butt Bank and Hardhaugh).

For a long while now there have been issues with the surface water and the condition of the road down the Mossy and on either side of Warden Crossing. It is pleasing that the recent meeting with the land owners, farmers and NCC officers was quite productive and a number of problem areas were identified. NCC have investigated where there are blockages or collapsed gullies causing problems. They have to be given permission by Network Rail in order to carry out investigations on the LNE&EM railway infrastructure and this takes time to arrange. Network rail have plans to renew the crossing sometime next year and it is likely that the crossing will be closed overnight for maintenance on 11th May and 20th August.

From the Chair I wish to thank Cllr Walton for his work with the Sports Association and his regular updates to the Council. There has been much activity with fencing and grass cutting but sadly during the year there has been some vandalism to the pavilion. We learn that the metal goal posts on the football pitch will be removed and the bases temporarily filled. I understand this field will still be available on request for community events.

The Council is still receiving reports of irresponsible dog owners (dog faeces and adverse impact to natural wildlife). The Council has made available a supply of dog poo bags and I can report they have been well utilised. The Council will purchase more of these bags to replenish the supplies at Fourstones Filling Station.

The Council was consulted on six planning applications; Thistledene Cottage, Newbrough Hall, Bridge House, Thornton Tower, Prudham Quarry from Northumberland County Council and one, from Northumberland National Park -Carrawbrough Farm. All of these applications were granted permission except Thistledene Cottage which is pending consideration and the extraction of sandstone at Prudham Quarry Newbrough which will be decided at Northumberland Council Strategic Planning Committee on 7th May.

The Council was consulted on the Publication Draft of the Northumberland Local Plan and it was RESOLVED that the Council would respond to a) Sand and gravel extraction at Wharmley b) The Identification of Suitable Areas for Wind Turbine Development
With the West Wharmley aggregate minerals site allocations Newbrough Parish Council has made representation and disputes the need for aggregate minerals and the Local Plan Assessment takes insufficient account of alternative aggregate sources. The Council is concerned about the adverse effect on tourism in the local area, close to the Roman Wall. The site and surroundings are rich in wildlife and the probable detrimental effect on salmon behaviour and loss of spawning areas is a major concern.

Wind Turbine Development: The Council believes that the NCC approach is inconsistent with national planning policy and guidance which states that no onshore wind development can be considered unless it is in an area identified as suitable for wind turbine development by a local or neighbourhood plan. The Council appreciates and supports the work carried out by Northumberland & Newcastle Society and CPRE NE and Wharmley and Newbrough Action Group.

Coordinated efforts by land owners, Tyne River Trust, County Council and volunteers have been concentrated on the damage caused by “Storm Desmond” in early December 2015. It’s good that this valuable investment has now provided a continuous footpath from Warden Crossing to Crow Wood (and further).

Isn’t it wonderful that the River Tyne is now the best salmon river in England and Wales and this is a spectacular recovery from the polluted river it once was. Tyne Rivers Trust is the only environmental charity looking after the River Tyne and its tributaries, and the Council recognises the Trust’s work in assisting the waterways to recover from the long dry spell, especially Newbrough Burn. The initiative “Go with the flow, get in the know” has been successful and local projects, especially practical conservation work, have gained national recognition. Lots of salmon and sea trout (as well as other fish) are moving more freely and the Newbrough Water Trail leaflets have proved very popular.

To mark the Commemoration of the Centenary of the end of The Great War the Council published a book, (O Dry Those Tears). This was well received with much interest and

curiosity and provides an educational and historic source. The book contains the names and some information on 203 men who served in the armed forces and biographies of 51 men (of Warden and Newbrough parishes) who were killed in the First World War.

The Red Lion Fireworks Display was yet another very successful and supported Guy Fawkes event enjoyed by all. The Council expressed their thanks and congratulation to all those who contributed to the occasion.

It was very pleasing that over twenty volunteers took part in a well-organised clean and tidy-up of St Peter's churchyard one Sunday morning. The Council wanted it recorded that the work of these volunteers is recognised and appreciated. Thanks also to the sustained efforts of John Taylor and others for the work they carry out in the parish.

The Pantomime was another success, well supported and thoroughly entertaining.

The Council has felt it important to support local activities and projects which have influenced the parish. We have grant aided the Town Hall, Parochial Church Council, Sportsfield Association, Sport Tynedale, CORE Music, Great North Air Ambulance, Tynedale Hospice at Home, Sick Children's Trust and The Royal British Legion.

This time last year there was great concern over the future of our school at Newbrough but thankfully things have changed for the better. The latest Ofsted reports a school that has strong, lively teaching, knowledgeable teachers who were clear in their objectives, with early years provision a strength of the school that has excellent outdoor environment. Ofsted states that Newbrough school pupils feel safe, everyone behaves well and teachers lead their subjects with energy and purpose. The school was given a 'Good' rating.

M W Gibson
Chairman Newbrough Parish Council