

**DRAFT Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting
held on Thursday 21st March 2024 at 7:30pm.
At Wall Village Hall.**

PRESENT	Cllrs: Mark Wood, Chair (MW), Elisa Wyrley-Birch (EWB) Vice Chair, Stephen Blake (SB), John Lamb (JL), Jane Michie (JM). Nick Morphet (County Councillor) (NM) Clerk: Alix Pearson (AP). Parishioner Alex Carrithers
----------------	---

NUMBER	DESCRIPTION
2607	1. Apologies for absence: Apologies were received from Gina Scott-Middleton (GSM)
2608	2 Declaration of interests There were no declarations of interest
2609	3. Approval of Minutes The chair welcomed Alex Carrithers. The minutes were approved as true record of the previous meeting and signed.
2610	4. Clerk's Financial Report AP presented an update on income and expenditure and a summary of recent transactions in the parish council bank account. The main item of expenditure was the new playground equipment The equipment cost £16,874 and was paid for by an S106 Sport and Play Grant from NCC. The grant paid was £14,062 which is exclusive of VAT of £2,812 which will be reclaimed from HMRC in April 2024. The current balance in the bank account is £3,360 . The 24/25 precept first instalment is expected in April. It was noted that the precept payment on recently received council tax bills had increased by 0.8% which caused concern as the Parish Council had not requested an increase to precept for the past 3 years. Cllrs wondered if this was a reflection of real time council tax liability of properties in the parish and Cllr Morphet was later able to confirm that this is so. AP reported that the Parish Council had not received invoices, nor sent payments to the Village Hall Trust for hall bookings during 22/23 and 23/24. After the Village Hall AGM, AP will contact Treasurer and request invoices for the missing payments.

2611	<p>5. Ultrafast Broadband Consultation - Led by Alex Carrithers</p> <p>Alex opened the discussion by outlining the difference between Superfast Broadband, which is currently available in the village and Ultrafast Full Fibre Broadband, the subject of this consultation project.</p> <p>Superfast broadband is delivered by fibre to the Openreach cabinets at the south and north ends of the village and the signal then transfers to copper wire to reach subscribers homes. Ultrafast Broadband would extend the fibre delivery directly into subscribers homes. Such an upgrade would be particularly beneficial to larger households and those working from home.</p> <p>Alex had been notified that Wall was not in the forward build plan for Ultrafast and wished to explore whether there was sufficient interest in the upgrade to warrant a community based project. A Fibre Community Partnership with Openreach , funded by a voucher scheme from central government was considered to be the most appropriate option. To get the ball rolling, we need to find out how many households would be interested in pledging to join the project.</p> <p>The cost and feasibility of the upgrade, the value of the vouchers and the number of subscribers required are all interdependent and unknown, so we must proceed with patience and optimism. Alex will set up a website where we can provide some answers to Frequently Asked Questions and help people to decide and indicate whether they want to pledge.</p> <p>AP to contact the Business & Community Liaison Officers at NCC to seek their support and advice.</p> <p>All to provide Alex with ideas for FAQs for the website.</p>
2612	<p>6. Feedback from Footway Survey</p> <p>On 9th December Cllr Morphet conducted a detailed survey of the footways in the village, supported by MW, AP and Alex Carrithers. Activities involved measuring the width of footways, observing and recording obstacles, both fixed and moveable and measuring the height of kerbs and steps. Cllr Morphet has produced a set of detailed drawings of the access issues within the village. Overall, there is a huge variation in the width and accessibility of footways in the village, with no safe south - north route possible without crossing the A6079 twice. Cllrs discussed and agreed that the creation of such a route is very desirable, and acknowledged that it would also be very costly and disruptive. Cllr Morphet intends to invite Michael McMonagle from NCC to visit the village to comment on the accessibility survey and offer his opinions on the feasibility of creating an unbroken South - North footway on the west side of the A6079.</p> <p>Cllrs also mentioned the accessibility issues caused by cars parking on pavements off the A6079.</p>

2613	<p>7. County Councillor Update Cllr Morphet's comprehensive report appears at Appendix 1.</p> <p>Of particular interest was: Item 2 - Speed Survey in Village. Although the recent survey shows that the removal of the centre lines on the road has made no difference to the speed of the traffic, NCC will not automatically proceed to the next stage of the feasibility report which was a 40mph buffer zone. Parish Councillors urged Cllr Morphet to push for the installation of the buffer zone.</p>
2614	<p>8. Review of Action Log</p> <p>a) Renewal of Mowing Contract AP discussed the terms of the contract with Chris Mowatt the mowing contractor. Chris will once again not increase his prices, which was very welcome. Recent weather events of prolonged periods of rain and extreme heat have made the upkeep of the greens with regular mowing very difficult. A more flexible contract, with monthly payments was proposed by AP and agreed by Chris and approved by Cllrs. The practicalities of such a contract and associated invoicing need to be rehearsed and agreed. AP to draft new contract and discuss with Chris Mowatt.</p> <p>b) 24/25 Precept Precept form signed and submitted to NCC.</p> <p>c) New Playground Equipment The new pieces of playground equipment have been installed and all invoices paid and grants claimed. The children of Wall are delighted with the new items.</p> <p>d) Community Resilience Plan Further to the power outage which occurred on 23rd January, a resilience grant of £1,000 to purchase a gas cooker for the Village Hall has been approved but not yet paid.</p> <p>e) Wildflower Project The mowing contractor is aware of the newly planted trees on the green and the care required when mowing.</p>

2615	<p>9. Review of Planning Application Log</p> <p>21/03394/FUL Land on Hadrian's Wall holiday accommodation Cllrs Morphet reported that the land was once more advertised for sale and that the case officer for the enforcement has notified the agent that any purchaser would be responsible for carrying out the enforcement actions. See Cllr Morphet's report at Appendix 1 for more detail on this case.</p> <p>23/03918/FUL Braeside, The Green. Building Alterations Application permitted.</p> <p>23/02276/FUL 23/04683/LBC Peartree Cottage. Building Alterations Application permitted</p> <p>23/04246/FUL Halton Grange. Extensive Alterations Ongoing</p>
2616	<p>10. Annual Litter Pick The Parish Annual Litter Pick will take place on 6th April at 10.30. All welcome. AP has ordered equipment and will place a poster on the Parish Noticeboard 1 week beforehand.</p>
2617	<p>11. Village Hall Report</p> <p>The hall hosted a very successful pub night on Friday 8th March, attended by around 60 people. Further social evenings are encouraged and looked forward to. The next event will be a Quiz on Tuesday 23rd April. All welcome.</p> <p>Following the installation of the new roof, a Completion Certificate is still required by the insurers. This is being pursued and will hopefully arrive by the end of March.</p> <p>The next trustees meeting is on March 27th. The AGM is 10th April.</p>
2618	<p>12. Additional Business The Information sign at St Oswald's is in very poor condition. MW, as a Friend of St Oswald's asked Cllr Morphet whether there was any grant funding available to replace it. NM will investigate and report back.</p>
2619	<p>13. Date of next meeting Thursday 16th May 2024 at 7.30pm. AGM at 7.15pm</p> <p>The meeting ended at 9.35pm</p>

COUNTY COUNCILLOR UPDATE FOR WALL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING 21/3/2024

1) The final **Local Transport Plan programme for 2024/25** was released in February. The A68 to the south of Bingfield will be surface dressed, but I'm afraid that's all that I can find in it for Wall parish. Phase 2 of the resurfacing work on the A6079 between Brunton crossroads and Dunkirk isn't in the programme, but I have been told that it will be done when the capacity exists and that it doesn't need to be requested by either the parish council or myself. Chapel Lane hasn't made the programme, but we were warned that it was unlikely to. Improvements to the footway which carries HWNT alongside the A6079 haven't made the programme either, which is disappointing because I made it really clear that they wouldn't require the road to be narrowed and I sent them the estimate that Michael McMonagle prepared for us. I'm still trying to get the Rural Growth Manager (Tony Brown) to confirm that the Expression of Interest we submitted to the Hadrian's Wall Ten Year Investment Programme is on track. I realised today that I've been well over a year since I first emailed him, so I emailed his line manager to check he's still with the County Council and that I've got the right contact details. Hopefully she'll also give him a sharp nudge for us.

2) They repeated **the traffic speed survey on the main road through the village** in February, and the results show that the removal of the centre line has made no difference whatsoever. The average speed has gone up by 0.3mph in both directions and the 85th percentile speed (which is the speed above which the fastest 15% of vehicles are travelling) has gone up by 0.4mph for southbound vehicles and 0.7mph for northbound vehicles. I asked Richard McKenzie whether we could now request the 40mph buffer zones and build outs, and he said that because the differences are negligible he wouldn't recommend any further intervention. The feasibility report from February 2023, however, says that "should a reasonable reduction in traffic speeds not be achieved, enhanced/physical measures may be justified". It also says that these would "comprise 40mph buffer speed limits to the north and south of the village in association with physical traffic calming measures such as chicanes within the 30mph speed limit entering the village in both directions". Richard did say that the results of the last traffic speed survey before the centre line was removed didn't justify the extra measures, and that the need for them would be assessed *if speeds become a problem*. Would you like me to argue that speeds have become a problem and to push for extra measures?

November 2022:

	Average daily vehicles	Average speed	85 th percentile speed
Northbound	1696	28.6mph	32.9mph
Southbound	1581	30.8mph	35.2mph

February 2024:

	Average daily vehicles	Average speed	85 th percentile speed
Northbound	1654	28.9mph	33.6mph
Southbound	1499	31.1mph	35.6mph

Confirmed as a true record of Meeting: Original Signed M Wood

3) There's been no progress at all with **the double yellow lines** on the Military Road below Brunton crossroads, and Neil Snowdon's excuse is that they're introducing a new system for TROs which has led to delays. He also asked me if it would be worth doing some monitoring over the summer to see if the pavement parking is still an issue. I told him that further monitoring that wouldn't delay the implementation would be fine, but anything that delayed implementation would be seen as Highways Programme "kicking the can down the road" and wouldn't be popular with residents. I also asked who would do the monitoring, and how they would do it. I haven't had a reply yet. Would you like me to say no to further monitoring and ask them to get on with it, or would you like me to tell you what he says about the monitoring and let you make a decision then?

4) We've made a very small amount of progress with **the longer green light for cyclists on Chollerford Bridge**. They haven't agreed to the longer green light yet, but they have agreed to install advanced stop lines for cyclists so that they're always at the front of the queue and able to make the most of every second of green light. They're planning to install them when they install the traffic calming measures on the Military Road at New Houses, which is likely to be before the end of this financial year. I think we'll probably need to extend the green lights as well as introducing the advanced stop lines, but it might be that we'll have to take it one step at a time. The problem with advanced stop lines is that it might irritate motorists if a cyclist pulls in front of them at the lights by the George and then struggles to get going on the climb onto the bridge. Bob told me that he prefers to hang back so he can have a bit of a run up, so it seems that it might even irritate cyclists as much as motorists! Should we go with the flow and see whether the advanced stop lines help, or should we push for the longer green light instead? Humshaugh Parish Council are happy to go with the flow on this one.

5) I asked Keith Hopper if he's looked at **locations for an EV charger on the village green** yet but I didn't get a reply. I'm assuming that he hasn't, and it might well be because the funding isn't in place yet. He's always keen to install chargers, so I'm sure he'll jump into action when the funding's in place. I'll keep reminding him and I'll keep you updated too.

6) **The first Local Bus Board meeting** will be in March or April. One of the agenda items at the first meeting will be how to engage with county councillors and parish councils, and I'll let you know what they decide. Once we know how they want us to engage with them we can start pushing for better bus services for the parish.

7) The County Council's **new Climate Change Action Plan** has been completed in its draft form and the Climate Change team leader (Nick Johnston) told me he's very pleased with it. It's 160 pages long, but he said it doesn't need to be read cover to cover. Nick left the council two weeks ago and is yet to be replaced, so the Climate Change team's currently without a leader.

8) The NE & Yorkshire Net Zero Hub has appointed a **new Community Energy Development Officer**. Her name's Sue Manson and she's keen to provide advice and support for community energy saving/generation projects. Her email address is enquiries@NEYnetzerohub.com. The NE & Yorkshire Net Zero Hub is also accepting

applications for round two of the Community Energy Fund, which provides up to £40,000 for feasibility studies. All community-based organisations (including parish councils) are eligible, and the application deadline is 5th May.

9) The scrutiny committee that I sit on recently received an update on the implementation of the recommendations of **the Storm Arwen review**, and it seems that all but two of the 28 recommendations have been actioned and the remaining two are works in progress – so it seems that all the work that we put into the review was worth it. I noticed that Northern Powergrid did a much better job of estimating reconnection times after the January storms, and I think the review can take some of the credit for that.

10) A **review of parliamentary polling districts and polling stations** is going to take place after the mayoral and PCC elections in May. I've told the elections officers that the arrangements in the Humshaugh ward are satisfactory, but that we could consider closing one of the two polling stations in Chollerton parish - if Chollerton Parish Council's in agreement. It would save taxpayers about £1000, so it's worthy of consideration.

The glamping site on Brunton Bank was offered for sale in February. The Enforcement Officer (Alex Campbell) advised the agent that there's a live Enforcement Notice for the unauthorised entrance and that the breach will become the responsibility of any new owner if and when the land's sold. The current owner of the site recently contacted Alex and told her that the access is an old access and that she wasn't aware of the Enforcement Notice for it. Alex shared the notice with her and hasn't heard from her since. The toilet hut was removed in January at a cost of £660 to the council. I haven't asked if they'll be billing the landowner, but my guess is that chasing her for £660 wouldn't be a good use of resources.

The owners of **Pear Tree Cottage** have now obtained planning permission and Listed Building Consent for their extension, internal alterations and air source heat pump and are going to submit a second application for solar panels in the next few weeks. I'm going to ask for it to be determined by councillors at Local Area Committee, because I think that the tension between what's visually best for the listed building and the conservation area and what's best for the climate should be debated by councillors. A similar application for solar panels on a listed building in Allendale conservation area was refused by councillors in November 2022, but I've spoken to a planning policy officer and he's going to remind the case officers to consider the climate when they're deciding whether to recommend refusal or granting of planning permission.