

**MINUTES OF THE ONLINE MEETING OF MATFEN PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON  
TUESDAY 24 NOVEMBER 2020 AT 7.00PM**

**PRESENT:** Cllr Stuart Mills, Chairman of the Council together with Mrs Ann Gregory Smith, Keith Mavin  
**In attendance:** Mrs M Senior, Clerk to the Council and County Councillor Mrs V Jones

**1120.01 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC.** None.

**1120.02 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** – Cllrs F Robson

**1120.03 TO CONSIDER CO-OPTION TO FILL TWO VACANCIES.** It was noted that Cllr K Irving had resigned shortly after the September meeting. Thanks were expressed to both Chris Austin and Keith Irving for their valuable contribution to the Parish Council over the years. The statutory notice had been displayed and the regulation 10 requests from electors have not been fulfilled therefore the Parish Council is able to co-opt at their earliest convenience. Expressions of interest had been received from Justin Dempsey and Kevin George and it was proposed by Cllr S Mills, seconded by Cllr K Mavin and AGREED to co-opt both candidates. Declarations of acceptance of office had been signed.

**1120.04 DECLARATION OF INTEREST.** Cllr J Dempsey declared a personal interest of item 1120.08c as a potential governor of Stamfordham Primary School.

**1120.05 COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT** – Cllr Mrs Jones gave her verbal report in matters relating to Northumberland County Council and Matfen Parish.

- a) **Resurfacing of roads.** Preliminary works had been carried out on the roads around Matfen in preparation for the resurfacing works next week. The work will be carried out from the Great Whittington junction through the village. The hard standing by the bus stop had already been improved. After a query from a resident, the area around Southside is to be included in the works.
- b) **Road Safety Officer.** Cllr Jones had met with the NCC Road Safety Officer and discussed the Standing Stone junction. NCC is to replace the signage around the junction. The entry signs had been discussed and suggested that they could provide new signs. After discussion, it was AGREED to keep the existing signs. This could always be revisited at a later date.
- c) **Covid-19 response.** Northumberland Communities Together is supporting existing support groups in the County. Cllr Jones had assisted the Stamfordham group by providing funding for the food storage areas in both churches and a contribution towards food poverty in the Parish.
- d) **LTP 2021-22.** It was noted that the resurfacing of the Fenwick to Matfen road was on the initial programme list for 2021-22.

**1120.06 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 30 SEPTEMBER 2020.** It was proposed by Cllr S Mills, seconded by Cllr Mrs A Gregory Smith and AGREED that the minutes of the meeting held on **30<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER 2020** be signed as an accurate record.

**1120.07 ACTIONS ARISING FROM THE MEETING HELD ON 30<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2020**

- a) **Ingoe Village Green.** Minute 920.11a refers. A further letter had been received from the resident in Ingoe regarding the parking on the village green and the installation of the notice board and picnic bench. It had been agreed at the September meeting that during these difficult times due to the Covid restriction the Parish Council would take a lenient/tolerant view on the cars parked on the village green. After a site visit by two members of the Parish Council it was AGREED that the parking situation on the village green is unacceptable. A letter will be sent to all properties in Ingoe advising that it is illegal to park on the village green and alternatives arrangements should be made. With regards to the installation of the notice board and picnic bench, this had been unacceptably delayed, and Cllr J Dempsey will contact a contractor who may be able to install all seats and the notice board.  
**Action: Cllr J Dempsey to contact J Oliver to see if he is able to carry out the work.**
- b) **Street Lighting.** Minute 920.06b refers. NCC is still to provide a date for the installation of the new columns. Cllr Mrs V Jones is to follow this up on behalf of the Parish Council.
- c) **Play Area.** Minute 920.11b refers. The play area had been completed and was now open. Thanks were expressed to Cllr K Mavin and Mrs Senior for their work on the project. Thanks were also expressed to Rachael Dempsey who had initiated the whole project and had worked very hard communicating with residents and Kompan. Pocket Parks had been in touch and the Parish Council is to complete the evaluation by March 2021. Tree planting was briefly discussed, and it was AGREED to see how the play area settles in within the next few months and if further trees need to be planted. This will be discussed further in Spring 2021.

**1120.08 FINANCE**

- a) **ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT.** It was proposed by Cllr S Mills, seconded by Cllr Mrs A Gregory Smith and AGREED to approve the expenditure on the list circulated.
- b) **TO CONSIDER DRAFT BUDGET AND SET PRECEPT FOR 2021-22.** A draft budget had been prepared for the coming financial year estimating the expected expenditure at £11,564 for the year.

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After discussion, it was proposed by Cllr S Mills, seconded by Cllr Mrs A Gregory-Smith and AGREED to accept the budget and levy a precept of £10,500 on Northumberland County Council for 2021-22.

PAYEE	DESCRIPTION	NET OF VAT	VAT	CHEQUE AMOUNT	CHEQUE NO
Kompan Scotland Ltd	Play area equipment – Village Green (replacement cheque 101138)	23345.96	3890.99	19454.97	101141
RBL Poppy Appeal	Remembrance Day Wreath	30.00		30.00	101142
Great North Air Ambulance	Grant aid 2020-21	300.00		300.00	101143
Mrs A Senior	Clerical services	510.12		510.12	101144
H M Revenue and Customs	PAYE	127.40		127.40	101145
Mrs A Senior	Postages/Travel expenses	152.11		152.11	101146
Stamfordham Primary School	Grant aid 2020-21	300.00		300.00	101147
<b>Income</b>					
HMRC VTR	VAT refund	4998.25		4998.25	12.10.20

**1120.09 CORRESPONDENCE** received since the September meeting had been circulated to all councillors by email and noted.

SENDER	DETAILS
National Assoc of Local Councils	Rebuilding Communities – Online Event Series
Northumberland County Council	Northumberland Local Plan Examination: Consultation on additional evidence
Northumberland County Council	New Pavement Licensing Regime
Northumberland County Council	Local Transport Plan 2020/2021 Feedback on submissions
Age UK Northumberland	Update on services and activity packs for older people
Northumberland Local Plan	Phase 2 Examination hearings
Great North Air Ambulance	Request for donation
<b>Information items</b>	
NALC	eNews - weekly
Community Action Northumberland	CAN eNews October 2020
National Assoc of Local Councils	LCR Magazine Summer 2020
Northumberland County Council	Patching work C222 – C340 Ingoe to Ryal – 29/10/20
Clerks and Councils Direct	Publication November 2020 Issue 132

**1120.10 PLANNING MATTERS.** All applications received since the last meeting are listed below together with the decisions on outstanding applications.

- a) Ref No: 20/02511/LBC South Fens Farm, Stamfordham – Listed building consent for the replacement of garden room windows and doors.

**1120.11 VILLAGE ISSUES**

- a) **TO CONSIDER QUOTES FOR PARISH COUNCIL/VILLAGE WEBSITE.** Quotes had been provided by two Companies and a example website had been provided. The current Parish Council website is not compliant with the WCAG 2.1aa requirements. It was AGREED that Cllrs S Mills, K George with input from Cllr J Dempsey would look at options and bring a proposal to the January meeting. Thanks were expressed to Ollie Stephens who had set up the current website many years ago and had been hosting on behalf of the Parish Council.
- b) **TO CONSIDER OBTAINING AN ARBORICULTURAL ASSESSMENT OF THE TREES ON THE VILLAGE GREEN AND CONSIDER TREE WORKS REQUIRED.** It is several years since a survey was carried out on the trees on the village green and work is needed on the tree opposite the Village Shop to cut the branches away from the roof. Cllr S Mills is to speak to his contractor. **Action: Cllr S Mills to speak to his contractor for the survey and works needed.**
- c) **BRIDGE REPAIRS.** The repairs to the bridge are due to be carried out in the next few days by Northumbrian Water.
- d) **TO CONSIDER REQUEST FROM RESIDENT TO RECLAIM SEAT BY THE WAR MEMORIAL.** A request had been received to salvage/reclaim the old seat by the war memorial which had been identified for disposal. It was AGREED that the resident could remove the seat and carry out any work that he deemed necessary and either reinstall on the village green or sell for the Men's Shed fund.

**1120.12 ANY URGENT ISSUES (FOR INFORMATION ONLY).**

- a) **MATFEN HALL.** Cllr S Mills had written to the new owners of Matfen Hall to introduce the Parish Council. A response had been received. It was noted that several residents had been stopped walking through the wood. It was thought that this was due to health and safety reasons as heavy plant is

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working in this area. It is expected that this work will continue until March 2021. It was also noted that the path behind the village shop had been closed and this area may be developed at some point.

**1120.13 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING.** The next meeting of the Parish Council will be held online on Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> January 2021 at 7.00pm. The link will be circulated and made available to residents 7 days before the meeting. The advice from NALC/SLCC is still for Parish Councils to meet remotely however should the advice change before the date of the next meeting the venue of the meeting will be publicised in advance.

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Signed as an accurate record