

Minutes of the Monthly Meeting of Slaley Parish Council
Held on Wednesday 12th July 2023 at 7.30pm
in Slaley Commemoration Hall

Present: Councillor Ian Stevens, Councillor Stella Douglas, Councillor Debra Taylor, Councillor Jon Storey and Parish Clerk Clare Loughlin.

1. Apologies for Absence

Councillor Lynda Sale and County Councillor Colin Horncastle.

2. Public Participation

Mr. Dryden of the Parish attended the meeting to raise three specific points with Councillors:

- i. The speed vehicles took the corner at Townhead off the B6306 as they entered the village.

In response to this point, Cllr Stevens advised that the Parish Council were seeking to progress the Speed Awareness Initiative with the Community Policing Team. When up and running again this had the potential to address this issue. It was also discussed that moving the 30 m.p.h. speed sign, from its current location to the approaches of the junction in question might also help address the issue.

Action – Cllr Stevens to identify progress being made with the reintroduction of the Speed Awareness Initiative in the village.

Action – Parish Clerk to contact the County Councils Highways team to establish if the current 30 m.p.h. sign could be moved or some other mitigation offered.

- ii. Shrubbery overgrowing footpaths in the village, particularly at Town End

In response to this point it was agreed that an item would be placed in Slaley News, requesting that residents with hedges alongside pavements in the village trim them appropriately

Action – Cllr Stevens to place an item in Slaley News.

- iii. The excess amount of road surface grit that had collected in the road gutters and was in some cases blocking drains.

In response to this point, Councillors advised that this issue had recently been raised with them on a number of occasions and would now be added to the list of items that would be brought up with Northumberland County Councils Highways team.

Action – Parish Clerk to contact the County Councils Highways team and raise this issue with them.

3. Short Address by County Councillor Colin Horncastle

Due to the absence of County Councillor Colin Horncastle there was no address.

4. Declarations of Interest

None declared.

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5. Minutes of Meeting

Cllr Douglas reminded Councillors and the Parish Clerk that all meeting minutes had to be sequentially numbered. During the same discussion it was also agreed that minutes posted on the website should be the signed copies.

Action – Parish Clerk to address these issues.

i. Approval of minutes

The minutes were proposed as a true record by Cllr Storey and seconded by Cllr Taylor.

ii. Review of outstanding actions

The Actions Log was reviewed and appropriately updated.

iii. Matters arising

In relation to minuted item 5.iii – It was noted that Cllr Taylor had distributed an updated policy and feedback was required by 2nd August 2023.

Action – All Councillors to provide feedback.

iv. Review of Outstanding Actions From Previous Parish Council Meetings

The Actions Log was reviewed and appropriately updated.

6. Correspondence

- a. Mazars LLP - 23rd June 2023. Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2022/23. Acknowledgement of exemption.
- b. Post Office Ltd – 28th June 2023. Response to concerns raised by the Parish Council in relation to the irregular service recently provided to the village by the Post Office van, which were put down to circumstances beyond their control.
- c. Mrs. P Wilson – 6th July 2023. Acknowledging the Councils decision to donate £150 towards the leaving fund for the Reverend Helen Savage.

7. Approached Made to Councillors

Cllr Ian Stevens was approached regarding a concern about Japanese Knotweed growing close to the narrow road bridge over Reaston Burn at Flothers.

Action – Cllr Storey to progress with Northumberland County Council.

8. New Items

i. Review of Annual Parish Meeting Minutes (9th May 2023)


Actions reviewed and Actions Log updated as appropriate.

It was noted that 80% of items still remained open from this meeting.

Action – Parish Clerk to progress open items as a matter of urgency.

ii. Review of Annual Sleafy Parish Council Meeting Minutes (9th May 2023)

Actions reviewed and Actions Log updated as appropriate.

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iii. Local Transport Plan Capital Programme 2024/25

Councillors requested that the following schemes be submitted to Northumberland County Council for consideration in this scheme:

- a. A footpath along the B6306 between the junction at Townhead and the Travellers Rest café (or even as far as the Wooley junction)
- b. A speed restriction on the B6306 between Foresters Cottage and Well House
- c. A speed restriction on the approaches to the B6306/Townhead junction (possibly between Lawn House and Forester's Lodge)

Action – Parish Clerk to submit proposals to Northumberland County Council by 28th July 2023.

iv. Faulty Speed Sign at Townhead

This automated speed sign has been faulty for a considerable period. Following enquiries to establish if it could be repaired, Cllr Taylor advised that it could not. Following discussion, Councillors were asked to consider the removal of this redundant equipment to declutter the street scene and act as a prompt for a wider discussion regarding speeding through the village in due course.

Resolution – To remove faulty automated speed sign at Townhead – APPROVED

Action – Parish Clerk to bring forward an agenda item for the September 2023 meeting relating to managing traffic speed through Slaley village

v. Grass Cutting

This agenda item was deferred until the Parish Council meeting of August 2023 due to insufficient information being available at this meeting to allow a meaningful discussion.

vi. Feedback from the National Rural Crime Network First Annual Conference

Cllr Stevens attended this conference on behalf of the Council and speaking to a paper (at Appendix B) provided feedback. The actions proposed in the paper were agreed by Councillors.

vii. Review of Parish Council Meeting Dates

At the Annual Parish Council Meeting of May 2023, the day of Parish Council meetings was moved from the second Monday of the month to the second Wednesday. It was agreed at the time this change would be reviewed – hence this agenda item. Cllr Taylor advised that she had approached Cllr Sale in relation to this issue and was waiting a response.

Action – Cllr Sale to share her view about the day on which the Parish Council meeting is held.

viii. Use of the Parish Council Email Address

Councillors agreed that all external correspondence should reach the Parish Clerk and themselves by the Council website, slaleypc@gmail.com. It was also agreed that a copy of all official correspondence written by the Parish Clerk or a Councillor should also be sent to this address for filing.

Action – All Councillors to note the use of slaleypc@gmail.com as a correspondence address.

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xi. Fly Tipping at Dipton Cut

Cllr Stevens suggested that fly tipping at Dipton Cut was on the increase. Fellow Councillors perceived this to be the case too, but before progressing any preventative action felt a better understanding of the scale of the problem was required. It was agreed that a record of fly tipping would therefore be kept over the next six months and the issue reviewed again in February 2024.

Action – Parish Clerk to maintain a record of fly tipping at Dipton Cut.

Action – Parish Clerk to bring forward an agenda item for the February 2024 meeting relating to fly tipping across the Parish and Dipton Cut in particular.

9. Planning Applications

- a. Listed building consent for replacement of rotten single glazed sliding sash windows (reference numbers W9, W28, W31, W42, W45, W46, W48, W49 and W52) in the main house with slim-line double glazed timber sliding sash windows. Shield Hall, Hexham Northumberland, NE46 1TU.

Status: Granted.

- b. Planning Ref: 23/01259/FUL, Construction of open fronted agricultural shed. Land at North of Dukesfield Hall, Slaley, Northumberland.

Status: Registered

Councillors noted that Planning Ref: 23/00516/FUL, Infill existing dry stone boundary wall to consistent height of 1.9m from 1.5m using natural random stone to match existing. Wooley House, Wooley, NE46 1TY, had been **Granted**.

10. Finances

The Parish Clerk presented the Councils finances to Councillors. All was in order and a bank balance of £17,373.12 was recorded.

11. Any Other Business

A request from Cllr Douglas to add the day of the week to meeting dates and page numbers to minutes was noted.


Action – Parish Clerk to address meeting dates and page numbering in relation to the Councils minutes.

12. Date of Next Meeting

Wednesday, 9th August 2023.

Prior to this meeting Councillors will undertake their annual village 'walkabout'. This will commence at 7p.m. from Slaley Commemoration Hall. The Parish Council meeting itself will commence at 8p.m..

Meeting closed at 9.16 p.m.

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Appendix 1

National Rural Crime Network (NRCN)

First Annual Rural Crime Conference

London, 27th June 2023

Key Takeaways

- i. Background to NRCN:
Established in July 2014, the Network is supported by 34 Police and Crime Commissioners and police forces across England and Wales. The Chair is **Tim Passmore**, Police and Crime Commissioner for Suffolk, and Vice-Chair is **Peter McCall**, the Police and Crime Commissioner for Cumbria

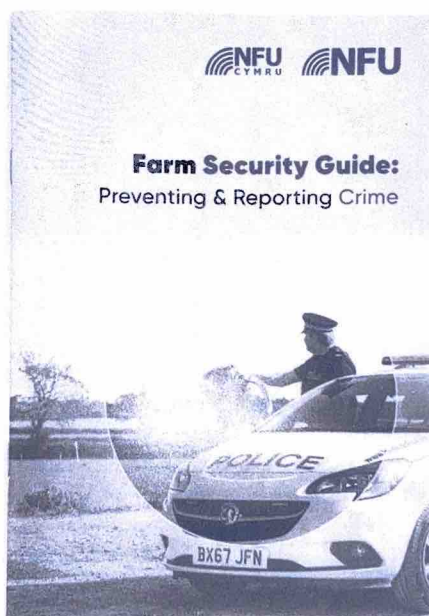
NRCN acts as a lobbying body and one that shares best practice.
- ii. All Police and Crime Commissioners should have a plan to tackle/address rural crime. *I need to see what Kim McGuinness, our PCC has included in hers*
- iii. A number of police forces have a dedicated rural crime unit. There was a general view that if yours didn't little would be done or get done to address the issue. *I need to see if Northumbria has one and if not we should consider lobbying for one*
- iv. There is a NRCN business plan and comms strategy for 2022/23. The comms campaigns are focusing on domestic abuse in rural settings, heritage crime in rural communities and food and farm security
- v. A National Rural Crime Unit has just been set up, which reports into the National Police Chief's Council. The purpose of the unit is to nationally co-ordinate and support policing and partnerships to tackle rural crime. It's led by Superintendent Andy Huddleston of Northumbria police
- vi. Fly tipping was referenced on a considerable number of occasions. It's perceived to be the scourge of the countryside and a blight for rural communities. It was clear that Councils and police struggle to bring prosecutions and when they do fines are miniscule and are thus not a deterrent

Recent research shows that most fly tipping occurs around lunch time or early evening, when small contractors finish a job and are on their way to the next one or heading home. 85% of fly tipping takes place from light commercial vehicles and 65% of it is linked to the travelling community



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- vii. The majority of rural crime is orchestrated by Organised Crime Gangs (OCGs) originating from Eastern Europe, many of which are also involved in drug dealing. Typically they descend on an area for a week (or so) and then move on before the police in that local can catch up with them
- viii. A very informative leaflet about the practical steps communities and individuals, especially farmers can take to prevent rural crime is available from the National Farmers' Union. Titled Farm Security Guide: Preventing and Reporting Crime. *I wondered if it was worth advertising this locally or obtaining copies that the Parish Council could 'distribute'*
- ix. The CrimeStoppers charity also plays a big part in this space, by giving people the opportunity to report rural crime (anonymously). They also follow reports up to make sure the police (who they report them on to) 'progress' them, something individuals calling 999 might not be able to do. *Again, I thought it might be worth promoting their services locally*



CrimeStoppers.

Speak up. Stay safe.

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Tom Adams 09/08/23.