

Minutes of Slaley Parish Council on
Monday 13th January 2014 at 7.30 p.m. in Slaley Commemoration Hall.

1. Apologies. Cllr. D. Allsop.

Present: Councillor C.A. Brooks in the Chair. Councillors I.E. Milburn, C.E.M. Goldring, N. Green, D.M. Bell & Clerk Mrs P. Wilson. County Councillor CW Horncastle for second part of meeting
Public: Richard Ferguson. Northumbria Police: None: Courant Reporter: None. Community Trust: None.
Slaley Notes: None.

2. Declaration of Interests and Hospitality Record.

County Councillor CW Horncastle for agenda item 10.

3. Minutes of December Parish Council Meeting (circulated pages 920 – 924 + appendix 1, page 925, appendix 2, page 926, appendix 3, page 927 & appendix 4 page 928).

The Minutes were proposed as a true record by Cllr. E. Milburn and seconded by Cllr. N. Green.
The minutes were dated and signed.

At this point the Chairman made a Statement about Parish Council Procedure Guidelines. The reason for making this Statement will become apparent during the course of the various agenda items.

Parish Council Procedure Guidelines

- Clerk produces Agenda – min 3 working days before meeting (usually at least a week) & draws attention to any items which require reading/research before meeting so that we are ready to discuss and make a decision.
- Only items on the Agenda can be discussed in detail at the meeting. Anything brought up in AOB which requires further discussion can be put on to the Agenda for the next meeting.
- When a decision has been made, the same subject cannot be revisited for 6 months.
(Standing orders - Slaley)
- Following a meeting, the clerk will circulate draft minutes to all councillors who were present at the meeting for review – councillors are requested to make any amendments and re-circulate to all other councillors present as well as the Clerk. The clerk will amend minutes and send them out (usually with the Agenda) prior to the next meeting when they will be approved. Amendments can still be made at this time but it is not an opportunity to revisit/challenge decisions.
- In order to be able to pass some information to the Parish sooner, the Chairman edits some notes for use by Slaley News in between meetings, readers are referred to approved minutes via Slaley website or P.W. Only approved minutes should be quoted on other media eg Slaley Website or FB.

- (From The Parish Councillor's Pack – NALC Councillors Training 2003) *Between meetings: while respecting the confidentiality of certain business, councillors should take steps to sound out opinions, monitor problems, talk to people and be adequately prepared for meetings. Councillors should NOT attempt to act as 'spokesman' for the parish council, unless they have been specifically authorised to do so.*

Between meetings, the official business of the parish council – such as writing letters and contacting local authorities – is usually handled by the clerk.

- Also between meetings, E-mails relevant to Parish council business should be circulated to all parish councillors & if there are any issues which a Councillor would like to raise, they should contact the Clerk to have them added to the agenda for discussion at the next meeting
- The press is often present at P.C meetings and may contact the Clerk or Chairman for follow-up information/clarification. If any other Councillors are contacted by the press they should refer them back to the Clerk or the chairman for an official response.

4.Matters Arising.

a) 4a 9/12/13; 4c 11/11/13; 4f 14/10/13' 4g 2/9/13; 6c 12/8/13: Lloyds Signatory Form was returned as a completely new form and needing yet another signature from Cllr Brooks and ex Councillor J.K Robson. This was completed.

b) 4d 9/12/13; 9b 11/11/13: Joint Slaley & Healey Parish Councils Fund Raising for Slaley Commemoration Hall. A Bingo session will be held on Saturday March 29th - Cllr Green confirmed that the date was OK. Time to be 3 – 5 p.m. Prizes, who does what etc – to be agreed at February meeting. Cllr Green to purchase game cards and pens will be used rather than counters.

c) 13g 9/12/13: A reply has been received to our letter to Post Office Limited requesting one of the new vehicles – Drew McBride firstly apologised for the recent failures then went on to say that Slaley would indeed receive the first of the new fleet when they became available. Mobile Operations Manager, Phillipa Newey, can be contacted on 07850 982407 for an update.

d) 17c 9/12/13: Thank you reply from Adam Keen for the PC letter of rejection to the offer of a glass recycling skip. If any of the skips are refurbished or different containers become available he will get in touch again.

e) 17c 9/12/13: Cllr Allsop emailed The Clerk and Cllr Goldring (December 12th) with his comments on the PC's rejection of the glass recycling facility and the lack of explanation for the rationale behind the decision. The initial request for a decision on December 9th was made by email on December 5th (that is within the statutory 3 days as the Chair described at the beginning of the meeting). The clerk took advice from DF and the PC Chair and circulated to everyone on December 7th explaining that they may have to declare an interest if they were shareholders, because the venue was the R&C. The Clerk circulated (December 8th) background information on previously proposed glass recycling sites within the village/parish (outside the statutory 3 days). However three of the four Councillors confirmed they had read the correspondence and were able to make a decision on December 9th rather than make it an agenda item for the January meeting.

5.Public Participation.

A member of the public had concerns over recent events involving Northumbria Police (NP) when the officers attending to the incident did not know the area.

1) Attempted break in at Holly Hill studio (see December minutes agenda item 17d) – NP did not know where Springhouse Caravan Site was.

2) Date (December 15th) & Incident Number ? – Unauthorised motorcycles using Slaley Forest tracks. NP telephoned complainant several hours later at Wooley asking for directions to Slaley Forest.

3) Sunday January 12th No incident Number: Racing motorcross vehicles from 4 vans/trailers reported at 11.45 a.m. The racing went on all afternoon and at approximately 4 p.m. the vans exited the forest passed Holly Hill. NP were telephoned on Monday 13th a.m. to ask if any action had been taken and was told that an officer had gone to Blanchland at 2p.m. to see if offenders could be spotted

Cllr Green suggested that a 6 digit Ordnance survey reference could be used to pinpoint NP to the exact spot when addresses were difficult to explain without Postcodes.

Cllr Brooks explained that evidence of prolonged abuse of BOATs was needed before NCC would consider a temporary TRO and only evidence that the route could not recover from temporary TROs would a permanent TRO be considered.

The PC was asked if the Newsletter and Slaley Notes could remind the public that if they felt in danger from unauthorised users of the tracks in Slaley Forest they should telephone 101.

The PC was also asked if a request be made for more people to report grey squirrel sightings to the local branch of RSNE (Red Squirrel Northern England)) and for people to allow Grey Squirrel traps to be placed on their land.

6.Community Trust Report

No official report this month although Norman Watson confirmed by email that Michael Elphick was looking into better broadband provision for the parish.

7.Matters for Discussion with County Councillor

See agenda item 13 c below c) Request to County Councillor Colin Horncastle that a small grant towards the mobile post office hard standing – possibly for Highways to undertake the lowering of the kerb. Cllr Horncastle confirmed he would make a grant providing the PC could show that the parish would benefit from the work.

8.Correspondence.

Hard Copy:

a) Youth Work Northumberland (This is statutory guidance issued by the Secretary of State for education under Section 507B of the Education and Inspections Act 2006. It relates to the duty to secure services and activities for young people aged 13 to 19, and those with learning difficulties to age 24 to improve their well-being, as defined in Subsection 13). 42 page information booklet and a meeting provisionally booked for March 13th. **Cllr Goldring volunteered to read and report back at the February meeting.**

b) CAN News winter issue.

c) Royal Voluntary Service – Do you need help with transport – Getabout Community Transport service leaflets.

d) NHS 2014 Calendar – cost 82p to post and what a waste of vital money that should have been spent on nursing staff or similar.

e) Viking catalogue, Clerk & Councils Direct January 2014, Healthwatch Northumberland leaflet. Adapt News December 2013.

Emails:

- a) 16/12/13: Northern Gas Networks Stakeholder Workshops on ‘Tackling Fuel Poverty and Improving Carbon Monoxide Awareness’ held at York on January 20th 9.30 – 3.45 or Newcastle on January 27th.
- b) 16/12/13: Shotley LQ PC – Update on Hoodsclose opencast application.
- c) 16/12/13: Dragonfly Film & Television Productions – Channel 4 documentary asking if we have any complaints about a customer service.
- d) 16/12/13: RSN weekly digest
- e) 16/12/13: Gordon Stewart Northumberland Community Development Network update.
- f) 17/12/13: Sue Howie, Northumberland & Newcastle Society – Response to Core Strategy.
- g) 20/12/13: External funding Bulletin No 48
- h) 20/12/13: RSN, RVS – transport
- i) 20/12/13: NALC Subscriptions for 14-15 5% increase
- j) 20/12/13: VCS workshop at Hexham on January 17th
- k) 21/12/13: Northumbria Police – missing person request for help
- l) 23/12/13: RSN weekly digest.
- m) 6/1/14: RSN weekly digest.
- n) 7/1/14: NCC Nichola Turnbull – West Area Committee meeting 14/1/14 at Corbidge.
- o) 7/1/14: Sue Andrews – Royal Garden Party nominations for Chairman of PC’s.
- p) 7/1/14: NALC events for 2014.
- q) 8/1/14: CAN VCS Support services Commission meeting at Hexham 1 – 4 p.m.
- r) 8/1/14: RSN ROB January 2014.
- s) 8/1/14: Shotley LQ PC updated plans for Hoodsclose opencast can be viewed on line.
- t) 8/1/14: Forestry Commission: Yorkshire and North East workshop at Newcastle 14/1/14 9.30 a.m.– 4 p.m.
- u) 12/1/14: Defibrillators – Parish Council offer for a parish machine. Clerk passed to Slaley Commemoration Hall Chairman. Only when the information was received was it revealed that there was a charge for the equipment and the training and that it was not an NHS incentive. **The Councillors decided against the installation of a Defibrillator in the parish.**
- v) 13/1/14: Richard Hall – Get Going community transport funding round 7.
- w) 13/1/14: RSN weekly digest.
- x) 13/1/14: Carrol Hessey – Playground Inspection Training Course Feb 26-27 at Bewick £250 per delegate. Operational Inspector exam (RP11 qualification) Feb 28th £195. Cllr Green and Cllr Milburn are both interested in this. **Both Councillors to read the information at home and see if either wishes to take it further**

9. Financial Report.

- a) Cheques to be signed

Cheque No 511: Hadrian’s Wall Trust 10 stones @£3 (see December 2013 minutes) £30

Cheque No 512: Unipart Dorman Pro forma to look at and hopefully repair Townhead Speed sign £216.00

Cheque No 513: NCC playground inspections £177.84

Cheque No 514: ADAPt annual subs £15

Proposed by Cllr Milburn and seconded by Cllr. Bell the cheques were signed.

- b) Bank statement up to December 30th Balance £7,992.46

- c) Notification for Zen Internet £57.46 will be collected by DD.

- d) Request from Webfusion for ‘2 year’ Domain registration £5.78 due for payment on 17/2/2014 – Invoice including Vat to follow.

10. Current Planning Applications.

13/02715/CCM: Proposed winning, working and processing of Sandstone at Ladycross Stone Quarry, Slaley. NE47 0BY **Support**

13/03823/VARYCO: Variation to condition 2 (approved plans) and 7 (rainwater goods) of application 13/01300/FUL – land north west of St. Mary’s Church. **No objections**

13/01130/FUL: Retrospective: Extraction system on roof at rear of premises. R&C **Pending**

13/01131/LBC: Retrospective: Listed Building Consent: Extraction system on roof at rear of premises. R&C **Pending**

12/03599/FUL: Construction of two storey agricultural workers dwelling - land west of Dipton Foot Farm House, Slaley. **Pending**

Decisions from planning:

***12/03280/FUL:** Construction of a new two storey dwelling with garage in replacement of the existing out buildings adjacent to West Orchard House, Slaley. Full planning meeting on 18th December. **Granted**

13/03352/FUL: Loft conversion including two dormers to front and one dormer to rear and construction of a new entrance porch. Viewlands, Slaley **Granted.**

13/03431/LBC: Grade11 listed building: Alterations to rear elevation to provide accessible entrance in addition to internal refurbishment works to include installation of disabled WC, new male WC and new staircase. Rose & Crown Inn, Slaley. According to web site **Permitted**

11.Northumberland Local Plan Core Strategy: Housing, Employment and Green Belt Preferred Options. 31/10/13 – 2/1/14.

Cllr Brooks collated the responses from the December meeting and the agreed reply was circulated by email and attached as **appendix 1/130114, page 937**

12.Update games/play area within school grounds.

Nothing new to report. See agenda items 8x and 9a above

13.Mobile Post Office Van parking Update.

a) A second quote from Debmat Surfacing Ltd received for Gridforce at £7,145.00 this was circulated by email (December 10th) and a hard copy also arrived.

b) A request to Karen S Bragg & Ruth A Barnes at Post Office for confirmation that they would offer a grant towards the mobile post office parking. A £700 grant was confirmed by email payable on receipt of paid invoice.

c) A request to County Councillor Colin Horncastle that a small grant towards the mobile post office hard standing can be expected – possibly for Highways to undertake the lowering of the kerb.

d) Letter (December 11th) to Kath Heard of Isos Housing giving copies and details of our quotes and asking if Isos is happy for us to go with Hollybush quote of £3,770 and has Isos Housing any preference for the filling of the grid (top soil or small dusty gravel?). Kath has replied by telephone that *“it all looked perfectly acceptable unfortunately she has had no time since December 11th to reply or set anything in motion. Our plans were positive in principle in fact she thought that the funding could be brought forward to this financial year. Kath promised to get back to us as quickly as possible”*.

e) Cllr Goldring circulated his concerns that parishioners may not know why this expenditure was being undertaken. A history of the Post Office was circulated by email on December 17th and **is attached as appendix 2/130114, page 938.**

f) As early as March 2010 the Parish Council made a request to Milecastle Housing (taken over by Isos Housing) for additional parking spaces at Parks Side. The Post Office parking bay will be able to be used by residents when the mobile post office is not in operation.

g) In December 2008: Police Constable Ian Robertson was monitoring the safety of the mobile post office and the need for a designated lay-by. Unfortunately PC Robertson was moved to the North Tyne before his report was completed.

- h) NCC Highways were asked to quote for the dropped kerb. On December 9th the PC was told the Highway inspector would review the request in two weeks. A reminder was sent on January 13th – unfortunately the inspector was out of the office and could not respond.
- i) Cllr Allsop, emailed his concerns on December 12th regarding the cost and suggested that volunteer labour could be used to reduce costs. As this is not PC owned land and any comeback for an inferior job would be the responsibility of the PC it is common practice to have a qualified contractor quote and undertake the work.

14.Fly Posting (email circulated 22/12/2013)

- a) A telephone complaint was made to the Clerk on December 17th specifically about the Rose & Crown putting their advertising leaflets outside The Travellers Rest (TR) entrance. The PC Clerk went down and found two already blown off the telegraph poles into the grass verge and a third between Teasdale Cottage and the TR. Clerk spoke with David Francis (NALC) who advised that Ian & Darren of the TR could either make a formal complaint to West Area Planning or they could make a formal request to the PC to act as a broker to mediate with the various local fly posting users. This information was relayed by telephone to the TR. An email complaint was received by the PC (December 18th) from the owners of the Travellers Rest Inn regarding the prolific overuse of business and event fly posters on telegraph poles. The Clerk and Chairman both spoke to David Francis, Chairman of Northumberland Association of Local Councils (NALC) about the implications of this. DF advised the Clerk and Chairman to read NCC's outdoor advertising – review of policy and practice (27 page) document.
- b) The TR email was circulated on December 22nd together with notes explaining the current advertising appendix in our Standing Orders (agreed at the AGM on July 1st 2013). The available advertising spaces in the parish and others sources of advertising opportunities were detailed. The notes ended with the suggestion that the councillors may wish to make an Advertising Policy and this would be discussed at the January meeting. **Notes attached as appendix 3/130114, Page 939.**
- c) The January agenda was circulated to the Councillors together with additional papers that need to be read prior to the meeting thus enabling all Councillors to be able to make a prepared contribution to the discussion. Additional agendas were circulated to the Press, the local (Slaley notes) reporters, the Police, the Community Trust and for the January meeting Ian and Darren of The Travellers Rest together with a projected time when the item they raised would be discussed.
- d) A comment by a Slaley Parish Councillor was made to the TR Facebook page. This caused immediate concern and was forwarded to the PC Clerk on January 10th partly due to the fact that the recipients realised that private responses was not the normal practice of Slaley Parish Council and they had already been made aware of how the PC intended dealing with their request. Correspondence between members of the Parish Council and the public between meetings, regarding complaints, are not recommended. According to David Francis of NALC, NCC intends to discuss with NALC a policy on Councillors using Social Media sites for voicing their personal ideas.
- e) Provided to all Councillors at the meeting a copy of a Facebook page called Slaley village **attached as appendix 4/130114. Page 940.** The moderator, the site claims, is a Parish Councillor and will be expressing his views although not the views of the Parish Council. There is a protocol to follow in reporting anything to do with Council business. The Clerk takes minutes and these minutes are circulated to the members who attended the meeting for immediate verification. The Clerk is responsible for correspondence resulting from the meeting unless an item has been allocated to, and agreement to be undertaken by, a Councillor. **The Councillors felt that a Facebook page promoting events in the parish would be useful and reach people who do not normally read the News Sheet, the Courant or the web site, however as the 'New Councillor' training had informed everyone, great care has to be taken that PC business is not discussed**

or reported before those that need to know or be told have been given information/decisions by the legal channels. The moderator of the Village Facebook page was asked to remove all references to the Parish Council. Facebook page to be made a February agenda item.

f) The Councillors discussed the prolific fly posting of events and business activities especially during December. Two for R&C one for the GNAA event and one typed for the whole of December the latter were taken down on Sunday January 5th – apart from the Colpits which was still in situ on Friday January 10th. FOSS also displayed posters on the telegraph poles during December. The Councillors felt that there were more than enough places to advertise without resorting to telegraph poles and if the PC did not try and stop the practice, more and more would begin to use the system. CC Horncastle also pointed out that it was illegal to attach fly posters to telegraph poles.

g) An Advertising Policy for the parish of Slaley, which could be sent to all business and fund raising event organizers, to be placed on the February agenda. Clerk to circulate the NCC 27 page outdoor advertising review.

15. Dukesfield Smelt Mill Arches Project Update

a) Bulletin No 2: Winter 2013 is available in hard copy and on line.

b) 2014 will be a year of community involvement covering issues such as Photography, Heritage Cook Off, Community Play. Lead Road Shows kicks off at Blaydon Library on Tuesday 21st January.

16. Precept for 2014 – 15 (circulated by email)

a) Revised Precept circulated by email on 10/12/13 with a suggestion by the Clerk that the estimated brought forward of £4,708.93 should be used to cover the post office parking expenditure and not kept to help the first school with outside painting or replacement windows.

b) On December 11th 2013 the quote from GMS was received for grass cutting in 2014-15. The quote showed an increase of £25 + vat of £5 for the grassed areas. The cycle track whilst up by £15 + Vat of £3 was still within our budget.

c) Cllr Goldring circulated an email on December 11th voicing his concerns about any changes to the Precept. The correspondence included many errors in information.

d) Cllr Brooks replied to Cllr Goldring on December 12th at 15.15 hours and again at 16.05 hours explaining some of the mistaken information.

e) Cllr Green replied to Cllr Goldring on December 12th at 20.30 hours explaining that the mobile post office van needs to hook up to its signal at Parks side. There is no signal elsewhere in the parish. The point was also made that Councillors have to make decisions on behalf of the parish and if the community are not happy then they will attend the meetings and say so. *(as Richard Ferguson has done so today)*

f) Cllr Allsop replied on December 13th at 22.29 hours of his annoyance that he had not received a copy of The Precept as discussed at the meeting and further reported that he was not happy with the way in which the Parish Council was operating.

g) On December 17th The Clerk emailed a break down of the different Precept amounts since 2006 and how they are financed taking into account various grants and Vat repayments etc. **Attached as appendix 5/130114, page 941.**

h) Agree Precept for 14-15 updated projection brought to the meeting. The state of St. Mary's Lych Gate gates were discussed and without a Vicar the upkeep of the churchyard may fall to the PC if the Parochial Church Council experienced difficulties. County Councillor Horncastle explained that it was necessary to review the Clerk's salary and prudent to keep funds in reserve for unforeseen expenditure. The December Precept suggestions were amended by a £100 increase to the Clerk's salary and a further £450 towards general running costs. Making a total Precept of

£13,849.77 with £8,100 coming from the Community Charge. **Precept for 14-15 attached as appendix 6/130114, page 942.**

17.Parish Plan Action Plan January 2014 Update

The Action Plan was agreed as circulated and attached as **appendix 7/130114, page 943.**

18.Text for Slaley entry into Hexham Courant ‘Tynedale Visitor’

The 2013 text was circulated by email and alterations made. The amended text to be re-circulated for agreement. **Attached as appendix 8/130114 page 944.**

19.AOB

a) Telephone report from Peter White (son in law of M. Ridley at Rose Cottage, Slaley village) that her bungalow foundations were filling with water from blocked village drains. Apparently the utilities manhole fills up with water, Clerk suggested he contact the utility provider (possibly Northumbria Water) and report. Clerk reported the need to clear out the village drains to Highways. Amanda Cryer acknowledged the report and has authorised some work. Paul Turnbull from NCC replied that the village will be swept then the gulleys will be done. **After discussion it was agreed that a sweep of the village was not needed the pipe between the gulleys needs cleaning from the top of the village to the bottom.**

b) Cllr Bell reported on the distress for all residents, especially the elderly, who have electric cookers and some electric fires, as well as needing electricity to run their central heating when the electricity was turned off on Monday January 6th 2014 between 9 a.m. – 4 p.m. to allow for the clearance of trees and vegetation from the high voltage overhead network. Although the interruption of the electric supply did not actually last the full seven hours, it was too long for some residents to be without power at Slaley in January. The PC to request that in future Northern Powergrid split this work over two days.

20.Date of February 2014 meeting Monday February 10th

There being no further business the meeting ended at 10.10 p.m.