

**Minutes of Slaley Parish Council, Monday February 14th 2011,
in Slaley Commemoration Hall.**

1. Apologies. Cllr M. Palmer

Present: Councillor I.C. Hancock in the Chair. Councillors L. Norris, C. A. Brooks, S. Davison & Mrs A. S. Robson. Clerk P. Wilson. County Councillor: Colin W Horncastle. Public: Michael Darrington & Richard Ferguson. Courant Reporter: Rosalind Saul. Slaley Notes: Michael Elphick. Community Trust: Norman Watson. Northumbria Police: PC George Knight (West Tynedale Neighbourhood Police Team).

2. Declaration of Interests and Hospitality Record.

Cllr I C Hancock for agenda item 8u, 8ad & 15.

CC C W Horncastle for agenda item 10

3. Minutes of January Parish Council Meeting (circulated pages 663-666 + appendix 1 page 667)

After an amendment the minutes were proposed as a true record by Cllr. A. Robson and seconded by Cllr. C.A. Brooks. The minutes were approved and signed.

4. Matters Arising.

a) 8d 10/1/11 Slaley article in Tynedale Visitor 2011 edited by Cllr Hancock and emailed to Myles Hodnett.

b) 12a 10/1/11: 31 people enjoyed the meal at The Travellers Rest. Everyone remarked on the friendly atmosphere. The additional 3 people paid directly on the day. A PC thank you letter has been sent to The Travellers Rest. A thank you letter was read to the meeting from Gwen Ridley.

c) 12b 10/1/11: A reporter and photographer from the Newcastle Journal recorded the presentation of a bottle of champagne and a congratulations card to Margaret Ward prior to the meal. To-date this has not appeared in the Newcastle Journal.

5. Public Participation.

a) PC George Knight (West Tynedale Neighbourhood Police Team) was introduced.

b) Highway pot holes now so extensive, on every road from minor roads to the A68, that members of the public are asking how the inevitable vehicle damage can be ascribed to any one pot-hole. The road from Slaley Hall entrance to Townfoot corner is due for a resurface. CC Horncastle replied that this is the result of decades without substantial highway maintenance. Ditches are not cleaned out and repaired, water stands on the road surface and frosts break up the frozen road surface. Highways budget has been slashed by £1.3m. A member of the public proposed that parishioners should establish a report and claim system until each and every pothole and damaged road is repaired – put pressure on the Council and hurt them where it hurts most.

c) Several members of the public expressed the hope that Margaret Ward would be able to go to London to accept her MBE. The PC was asked if a Reception/Party could be organised for Margaret once her MBE has been received. Cllr Hancock suggested the Community Trust should be involved with this.

6. Community Trust Report

Circulated by email and attached as appendix 1/140211, page 675.

a) Rose & Crown Inn: The CT had made an offer for the premises prior to Christmas. Marstons Brewery did not accept the offer because the premises had a greater book value than the offer. Water damage repairs and upgraded fire doors are currently being undertaken for new tenants. The CT confirmed that if and when the Inn came into the ownership of the CT it would be run as a commercial enterprise and not on a volunteer basis as the Humsahugh Shop venture was. Cllr Hancock confirmed that the Parish Council supports the efforts of the CT with the R&C.

7. Matters for Discussion with County Councillor

- a) Richard Ridley of Dipton Foot farm has requested help before he applies for planning permission under the new farm guidelines for workers cottages to convert some old farm buildings into a dwelling for his son and daughter in law who are currently forced to live in Co Durham. Steven Ridley works full time on the farm. Richard has been unsuccessfully trying to make contact with CC Horncastle since before Christmas. Clerk to provide telephone number.
- b) Northumberland News is seen as unnecessary spending. It goes straight into the Recycling bin in many of the 142,000 households, and its continuation in the light of economies needed by the CC appears nonsense to the public. CC Horncastle replied that the publication was likely to be axed completely or reduced to a quarterly circulation.
- c) CC Horncastle was asked for more information on the County Council's response to the government's announcement of a £560m (over 4 years) Sustainable Transport Fund.

8. Correspondence.

Hard copy:

- a) NCC letter dated 10/1/11 : Service costings within each parish and the 2011/12 budget (circulated by Email 11/1/11) Slaley: Bus Shelters £150.00 Litter £3,132.74.
- b) Quote from Alex Evison for the 2011 grass cutting : For a model season = £824.10 + a further £12 for strimming the B6306 immediately prior to Slaley Show. Circulated. No further tenders received. Mr Evison's quote was accepted. The Clerk to inform him that his tender has been successful.
- c) NCC The future of Taxi Licensing Zones in Northumberland + Taxi Ranks Provision within Northumberland : Comments by 26th April 2011.
- d) NCC Provision of Local Services and the 2011/12 Budget : NCC will NOT be considering proposals to reduce or stop delivering in the current financial year any of the local services listed within recent letters. *See 8b(hard copy) & (emails) 8c & 8l of January 10th meeting + 8a above (hard) & 8b below (email)*
- e) Request from Age Concern Northumberland asking for financial support (no balance sheet attached). Cllr Hancock reported income, grants and operating surplus from the Web Site. It was agreed not to give any grant.

Emails:

The following emails were noted - actions as indicated

- a) 11/1/11 Regeneration Service Funding Bulletin Issue No 2
- b) 13/1/11: NALC special newsletter re NCC budget deliberations
- c) 13/1/11: Localism Bill -13/12/10- Real Planning Powers handed to the Parishes.
- d) 13/1/11: Spinal Injuries Association – second annual Fish and Chip Supper also given to Slaley Notes reporters
- e) 13/1/11: Mick Miller: Guidance note and model Notice of Vacancy for a casual PC vacancy.
- f) 16/1/11: NALC website developing a new NALC website asking if we would like a link to our site. Replied yes. Norman Dunn confirmed link achieved.

- g) 18/1/11: NCC invitation to Meeting of Communities & Place Overview & Scrutiny Committee on 25/1/11.
- h) 19/1/11: DCK Beavers Ltd – Update on Government Requirements – Disclosure of Expenditure over £500. Availability on the web meets the requirements.
- i) 21/1/11: PC George Knight – new local neighbourhood officer. Invited to meeting.
- j) 25/1/11: RSN January Parish News
- k) 25/1/11: Northumberland Public Alliance Meeting – January – Alnwick – Reminder.
- l) 25/1/11: CAN – DF has completed 25 years service in February do we wish to participate in a financial donation towards a gift to mark the achievement? No.
- m) 25/1/11: Regeneration Service Funding Bulletin Issue No 4.
- n) 25/1/11: ADAPT - January 8 page Newsletter and Membership Form
- o) 25/1/11: Joanne Edwards, Northumberland Sport - ‘Get Active Northumberland Physical Activity Strategy’ draft online e-survey for completion by March 4th 2011.
- p) 25/1/11: NALC E-News Issue 7 (5 pages)
- q) 25/1/11: VoiCeS meeting at Seaton Sluice on Feb 3rd.
- r) 26/1/11: RSN weekly Digest 25/1/11
- s) 26/1/11: North East’s Housing Leadership Conference – 17/2/11 - £110 per ticket.
- t) 27/1/11: Environmental Law Foundation – Flooding – what are my options 16/2/11.
- u) 1/2/11: Lucy Phillips, Forestry Commission – Consultation on the future of the Public Estate in England (*see agenda item 15 below*).
- v) 1/2/11: Sue Andrew – Royal Garden Party – Tuesday 19th July 2011 – Slaley Chairman declined to have his name put forward for attendance.
- w) 1/2/11: Lynn Watson, Freeman Hospital – Information on the new A&E centre at the RVI, Newcastle. Investigate possibility of including access map in the Slaley News.
- x) 1/2/11; KC Leisure - challenging children’s development through play. Circulated to play group.
- y) 2/2/11; North Pennines AONB first E-news Bulletin.
- z) 2/2/11; Northern Voice – National Housing Federation – January 4 page edition.
- aa) 2/2/11; RSN weekly digest
- ab) 2/2/11; Allison Moore-Gwyn – QE11 Fields Challenge : appears to be a possible source of funding for village play/sport facilities.
- ac) 2/2/11; Anne Moyle – West Area Partnership – Big Society Summit 11/2/11. Councillors Hancock and Robson had agreed to attend.
- ad) 4/3/11: Lucy Phillips of the FC: Public consultation at Hexham Mart on 1/3/11 at 9.30 a.m. on The Future of the Public Forest Estate in England. Reply slip for completion. **Anyone going?**
- ae) 4/2/11: White Hill Direct: Picnic tables & chairs.
- af) 4/2/11: Lynne Nelson – Northumberland PSA meeting, Ashington 16/2/11
- ag) 4/2/11: Steve Shaw – Sustainable Communities Act Update.
- ah) 4/2/11: Sarah Martin – Hadrian’s Wall Heritage Site Conference 3/3/11.
- ai) 4/2/11: Regeneration Service Funding Bulletin Issue No 5.
- aj) 7/2/11: Richard Powell – West Area Partnership ‘The Big Society Debate’, 11/2/11. Cllr I. Hancock attended am and Cllr A Robson attended full session. They reported that it was interesting to hear the success stories – Humshaugh etc. Much was said about enhancing the local community but nothing about how these enhancements are funded/achieved. Negotiations can fall down if staff change - help from infrastructure is needed. It seemed like a PR exercise there were no plans for a follow up meeting.
- ak) 7/2/11: RSN weekly digest Feb 7th.

- a) 7/2/11: Nigel Walsh, County Tourism & Cultural Development Manager – NCC draft Cultural Strategy ‘Stronger Together through Inspirational Culture’ 2011 – 2016 (27 pages) + 2 page response form for completion by April 8th. **No one wished to read and comment.**
- am) RSN Weekly digest for 14/2/11

9. Financial Report.

Cheques to be signed

No 430 ADAPT - Membership Form £10.00

No 431 RR Pickering snow clearance at Parkside bungalows 30/11/10 £29.38

Proposed by Cllr L. Norris and seconded by Cllr. A. Robson the cheques were signed.

b) Interim cheques/DD: Zen internet annual payment £57.46

10. Current Planning Applications.

20101040: Part retrospective (raised timber structure to north elevation) and alterations and extensions to property including alterations to roof including 2 dormers and reformation of conservatory. Moorland View, Lead Road. **Rainwater & drainage should be given careful consideration.**

20100585: Double garage to south elevation at 52 Slaley Park Pending

Decisions from Planning Authority

Note: Planning department has been asked how the record of permitted development applications are kept and if it is the practice to inform PCs. A planning advertisement for agricultural determination of prior notification under Part 6 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 for construction of a general purpose shed at Low House ref. no 20100967 appeared in the Courant and on the on-line planning register, but subsequent current permitted development work at the same site was not advertised and does not appear on the Council's new on-line planning register. Jenny Green's initial reply was to clarify what was being asked and no further correspondence has been received since the clarification. CC Horncastle was unable to provide an answer and asked for a copy of the correspondence. He agreed that without a record of permitted development, buying/selling any property would be difficult.

11. Update netted games/play area within school grounds

a) CT Chairman, Norman Watson, has taken this over from Catherine Lincoln. Mike Osborne, landscape architect has been contacted. Nigel Sanger has verbally told Cllr Hancock that he is prepared to complete the funding application on behalf of the school.

b) The CT were reminded that the project must be completed by November 2011 or the Reaston View housing developers can claim back their contribution (as described by Catherine in her e-mail to everyone on November 11th 2010 under agenda item 7 Timetable). Val Knowles informed the PC as early as June 4th that funding comes from housing developers for specific areas, the level of funding will depend upon the amount available at the time and likely requests for funding from other projects in that area. Val also confirmed by email on June 30th that the £9,000 for play and the £4,272 for sport has to be spent (project completed by November 2011).

Does this mean October 31st or November 30th? Clerk to check.

12. Slaley Web Page Update.

a) Receipt from Zen Internet for £57.46 as collected by DD on January 25th 2011.

b) Copy of letter sent to parish groups for a short introductory article.

- c) Training for Clerk on how to paste information onto new web site completed.
- d) New site available for Councillors to view.
- e) Domain name was paid for two years in February 2010. Clerk to write to Webfusion and cancel existing account.

13. West Area Committee Meeting January 18th Report circulated & Update.

- a) Report circulated and **attached as appendix 2/140211, page 676**. Cllr Hancock suggested to CF Chairman, Brian Massey, that our Community Forum grouping have a joint meeting with NCC budget representatives.
- b) NCC letter dated 18/1/2011 re provision of Local services and the 2011/12 Budget. *See 8b(hard copy) & (emails) 8c & 8l of January 10th meeting + 8a above (hard) & 8b, 8d (email)*. Hard copy tabled at the meeting on the 18th and on checking an email copy came onto the Clerk's computer at 17.11 (only 49 minutes before the start of the meeting). Very bad reports in the press "Parish power prompted an embarrassing climb-down by NCC's top brass on Tuesday". Will be discussed further at the Community Forum meeting 15/2/11.

14. Community Forum Meeting Tuesday February 15th.

- a) First speaker is Melanie Hall who replaces Jane Hart as the West Area Community Action officer. Susi Goncu the Development Locality Officer will also be in attendance.
- b) Request by Shotley Low Quarter PC to support their objection to the Hoodsclouse Opencast Mine planning application. Cllr Hancock read through the documents and produced the attached Slaley PC comments. **This was tabled and agreed by the Councillors.**
- c) Cllr I. Hancock will attend, as will Clerk, P. Wilson who may be representing Healey PC

15. Forestry Commission woodland in Slaley parish. (Note email circulated 31/1/11 re 'Consultation on the future of the Public Forest Estate in England' - Ends 21/4/11)

Cllr I Hancock left the meeting while this agenda item was discussed.

- a) The 64-page consultation document was circulated on 31/1/11. The 15 questions begin on page 45 and end on page 60. **Cllr Norris agreed to read and provide a draft reply for consideration at the March meeting?**
- b) Much media coverage about this on February 8th the Newcastle Journal recorded that staff consultation had started on proposals to close the Forestry Commission offices in Rothbury and Hamsterley – management of Hamsterley, Chopwell and Slaley Forests would be in Pickering, Yorkshire. The full-page article of the Hexham Courant of 11/2/11 reported that public forests in England had operated at a net loss of £16m last year.
- c) The future of the Public Forest is not a new question see agenda item 8f and appendix 2/130709 of July 13th minutes 2009 when a Public Forest Estate Consultation Event was held at Hexham Racecourse on July 10th 2009 to make suggestions on how the £15m shortfall could be compensated. Prior to 2009 see 4a 10/3/2003, 4c 10/2/2003 (two members of Forest Enterprise attended SPC meeting), 4f 13/1/2003 & 13d 9/12/2002 (discussions on increased usage of public forests).
- d) Hunting family retained the mineral rights when the land was sold to the FC so whoever purchases the land the mineral rights are not included in the sale.
- e) Members of the public expressed concern that the market value of the woodland makes it an attractive commercial venture. The tax saving implications were discussed. Charitable Trusts were mentioned. Fighting to save the nation's forestry land and employing people to make forestry profitable were given as reasons for retaining ownership.

f) Rights of Way are protected by law and any change of ownership would not alter this. Freedom to roam off the RoW network could be affected depending upon new owners.

16. Parish Plan – Annual Speeding Review

a) Parked vehicles whilst producing a nuisance in the village do produce a natural speed control. Cllr Robson asked if a reminder could be given in the News sheet asking people to park on their drives as opposed to the village street.

b) PC Knight was asked to check if the random check had been made on the U8080 & U8081 to make sure that only vehicles accessing the private residences were using the old coal broad had been undertaken. If not could it be re-scheduled as there were still taxis and delivery vehicles using the route.

c) Request a move of the speed sign to Townhead pole.

17. Proceeding with our decision on the Four ‘U’ classified roads as discussed July 2010 meeting.

a) Article and photograph in Newcastle Journal regarding the proposed Shield Hall BOAT.

b) Letter and report from the RoW Committee of January 21st. NCC believes that on a balance of probability, public vehicular rights do not exist over BOAT 37 and the Council will be asking the Inspector to modify the Order to assess the route as a public bridleway instead. Alex Bell is asking if the PC's objections can be withdrawn because if not a Parish or County objection automatically triggers a public local inquiry, with implications for unaffordable legal costs to the CC and PC. After discussion it was agreed that there was no option but to withdraw our objections. However it was felt that the Inspector should be made aware that this course of action was taken out of necessity rather than desire.

18. Trustee on the Commemoration Hall Management Committee representing the Parish Council.

At the Commemoration Hall Management Committee of Wednesday February 2nd, Cllr Robson was asked why no support had been given for a grant towards running costs for the Hall. The position of the PC "Representative" on the CHMC has now been clarified: All members of the management committee are Trustees for the charity and as such they sign an annual declaration of acceptance which details their responsibilities towards the Charity. David Francis of NALC confirmed that the PC nominee must declare a personal and a prejudicial interest in any discussion of the Commemoration Hall at the PC meeting and will need to vacate the meeting while the matter is discussed and voted upon. **Cllr Mrs A Robson does not wish to continue as the CH rep. There were no other nominations. Cllr I. Hancock explained that the PC could request that a non-councillor could be nominated by the PC. This was felt to be an acceptable compromise if copies of the Management Minutes could be received by the PC in future. Cllr Hancock proposed the Clerk, Mrs P. Wilson, Cllr Mrs A. Robson seconded the proposal. Mrs Wilson agreed to represent the PC if the CH Management Committee were happy with the arrangement.**

19. AOB

a) Cllr Hancock emailed everyone 26/1/11 regarding the local bus service between Hexham and Consett stopping on April 16th - he was told on the telephone that the PC will be consulted through NCC. Clerk to write to NCC and ask for a copy of the consultation document and request a copy of the user statistics.

b) Margaret Ward requested our help in clarifying the age limit for social housing. Further correspondence sent to Chris Brinton, Milecastle Housing & Clare Hancock the Northumberland Homefinder Project Manager. Reply from Clare Hancock tabled at meeting which reported that Milecastle Housing operates an allocation policy for older people's accommodation which states a minimum age of 60 years. A copy of the October 2009 letter to Mr Barker from Milecastle was also tabled which reported that the bungalows at Parkside were restricted for those aged 60 years although consideration was also given to applicants below that age who have a serious physical disability. Presumably Mr. Barker's disability was not thought to be sufficient to warrant his consideration.

c) A complaint was received regarding a Nightingale Mini Van parked in Slaley village during school hours and causing loss of sight-line vision when trying to access the village street from private driveways. Letter dated February 2nd was sent to the Stanley coach company, there has been no reply. Michael Darrington added his concern. He had asked the headmistress of Slaley School why it was parked in the village and had been told it was to save fuel costs.

d) Report in both Courant & Journal of a quad bike stolen from a farm in Slaley. PC Knight explained that these opportunist crimes are often two or three thieves working together and when ignition keys are left in the vehicle then it is very easy to steal a quad bike and either get it inside a larger vehicle/ trailer etc or drive it somewhere close and hide it for collection later. PC Knight went on to explain 'Farmwatch 2', which is managed from Bedlington. Farmers are encouraged to mark their equipment with postcodes and tack marks. The suggestion that 'trackers' are fitted to all machinery was made. Apparently 'trackers' are easily purchased from Google and even if out of date the Police can reactivate proving very worthwhile in the recovery of stolen vehicles. Crime in the West is significantly lower than this time last year. This could be explained by the imprisonment of local habitual criminals, which in turn prevents them influencing other members of society. Tynedale is still a very safe place to live. Local police officers live in Tynedale and have a personal interest in it remaining safe even when off duty, so they keep aware of things which are 'not quite right'. Any strange occurrences should be reported to the Police, from minor reports come large results.

20. BOATs update.

a) Correspondence from Pam Harris (YDGLA) asking if we could give support to a new group Peak District Green Lanes Alliance (PDGLA) on its experimental TRO at Chapel Gate. Without knowing the area it was felt that a blanket report would be of little benefit

b) Alert by Tom Warde-Aldam regarding the Defra consultation on National Parks 9/11/10 – 1/2/11 entitled "Consultation on the Governance arrangements for the National Parks and the Broads. Again this was considered outside the capacity of the BOATs committee.

21. Date of March 2011 meeting.

Monday March 14th.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.55 p.m.