

**Minutes of a Meeting of Carham Parish Council held in St Cuthbert's Church, Carham at 6.30pm
on 18 May 2021**

230 Present: Cllrs Mr P Feerick, Mr J Court, Ms V Poland, Mrs Lynda Allan, Councillor M Mather and Mrs A Changleng (Clerk).

In attendance:

Sylvia Pringle, Business and Community Engagement Officer, iNorthumberland

Darryl Petch, Chief Technology Officer, BorderLink Ltd

Peter Straker-Smith, Area Co-ordinator for Broadband

3 members of the public

231 Chair's Welcome: Cllr Feerick congratulated councillors to the first meeting after the recent Local Elections, especially County Councillor Mark Mather who has been elected to represent the Wooler Ward. Representatives who had been invited to update Carham Parish Council on the broadband rollout were welcomed, as well as members of the public.

232 Apologies: Cllr J McGregor

233 Declarations of Interest: None

234 Update on the Broadband Rollout in Northumberland:

Sylvia Pringle, iNorthumberland, updated those present on the rollout of superfast broadband by BT and Open Reach. This had reached about 93.5% of its 95% of its goal. The scheme, most recently supplying fibre straight to the home, ended in 2019. However, a voucher scheme had been in place until the end of March 2021. A new UK Government voucher scheme is underway which is worth £1,500 to residential properties and £3,500 to business properties. Northumberland County Council hopes to introduce a top up scheme which will match fund this Government scheme. There is a big investment in new technology which has led to more suppliers providing ultra fast broadband.

The company of BorderLink Ltd started up 4 years ago and is expanding rapidly to deliver fast broadband across the Scottish Borders and Northumberland, concentrating on rural areas. Darryl Petch explained Borderlink has received a 10 million pound investment and works with voucher schemes on both sides of the Border. Both radio technology and fibre are used to reach remote properties. BorderLink own, install and maintain all equipment.

After responding to question by councillors and members of the public it was agreed that a package of information will be received by Carham Parish Council from both representatives and councillors will deliver it with a covering letter to appropriate properties in the parish. It is important to note that the delivery of fast broadband depends on the level of interest in the community and a firm commitment on the part of residents to take up the service. In this area that means between 20 and 40 positive responses. Delivery of fast broadband can be within 3 to 6 months.

235 The Minutes of the Council Meeting on 9 March were approved as read and signed. The Chair signed minutes of the meetings via the Zoom Platform held in November, January and March.

236 Matters Arising: No response has been received from NCC since a letter was sent by the Parish Council requesting traffic calming measures in Wark. Councillors agreed that a suggestion the Parish Council purchase plastic signs and attach them to lampposts etc. around the village, stating e.g. beware

children, please drive slowly, is unsuitable and NCC should be pressed to take proper measures. Further discussion took place on purchasing a litter bin in Wark lay-by. Councillors agreed a litter bin will not alleviate the problem of litter, which is mainly fly tipping, therefore it was agreed not to place one there. It would be more beneficial to the whole community to ask NCC for more grit bins for use in the winter. The Clerk will contact NCC. Cllr Allan is working with residents of Wark to place the flower barrels around the village once the weather improves. Permission has been granted for the Airwave Communications Mast at Downam.

237 Correspondence:

Local Elections in May: Councillors in Carham Parish were elected unopposed on 6 May.
Local Authority Treescape Fund
NALC emails

238 PROW – Abuse of Regulations

Type of Path: Byway Open to All Traffic

Number of Path on Map; 24

Attempts have been made to obstruct this path which runs from the B6350 to the south bank of the River Tweed by laying large stones across the path (which have now been removed). A bench has also been sited on the edge of the river by persons unknown but it is probably small enough not to create an obstruction should emergency services need access to the river. However, access to the bottom of the path next to the river is required by Northumberland Water to the sewerage plant overflow. An unauthorised notice has been fixed to a post pointing out that this path is a Byway Open to All Traffic, again by an unknown person.

Footpaths adjoining Cornhill Parish: The Clerk was informed by the Clerk of Cornhill Parish Council of a regular walker's concerns about the misuse of footpaths by cyclists and horse riders. There is also increased erosion and unauthorised signage has been posted. Most of the routes are in Cornhill Parish, except for a section from West Learmouth to the viaduct over the Duddo Burn and back road. The other section in our parish joining the track to East Learmouth needs to be confirmed as a right of way and has been reported several times. Philip Bradley, NCC, has been informed of all these concerns.

239 Wark Play Park: The Inspector reported that all the equipment had been cleaned in March in accordance with Covid-19 guidelines. Some rabbit damage to the fence had been repaired and leaves at the vehicle gate will be cleared. A loose chain on the climbing frame has been secured.

240 May Newsletter: Various items were discussed for inclusion in the newsletter.

241 Approval of Payment of Invoices: There is £5,311.89 in the bank. Councillors approved payment of NALC subscription (£90.89), Came & Co Insurance (£379.56) and WordPress (£51.00).

242 Date of Next Meeting: The next meeting will be held on Tuesday 13 July in St Cuthbert's Church, Carham at 6.30pm.