

BRANXTON PARISH COUNCIL

Parish Council website: www.branxtonparishcouncil.org

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 27th September 2022 In Branxton Village Hall at 7pm

PRESENT: Chairman I MacGregor, Vice-Chairman N Wood
Parish Councillor A Darbyshire
County Councillor M Mather
Clerk I Hunter
6 members of the public

The Chairman read out the following statement before opening the meeting:

Over the summer County Councillor Mark Mather & the Parish Clerk have been looking into all avenues to get people to come forward to join the Parish Council
If nobody steps forward to become a Parish Councillor and if for any reason one of the current Parish Councillors resigns there will be only 2 Parish Councillors which will mean the Parish Council will not be quorate
If this happens there will be a process which will need to be followed
All Parish Council business stops until a quorum is reached.
Advertise the vacancy
Hope 10 people on the electoral roll for Branxton Parish request a by-election
Northumberland County Council calls a by-election for the latest vacancy only
If there is only a call for a by-election and only one person stands the costs may be under £1K.
However, a full by-election including polling day the PC could be looking at a cost between £2-5K
If there is no call for a by-election, then Northumberland County Council will need to look at nominating a member to sit on the PC and try to get the PC up and running again. This option will take time as it will need to go through a full committee process.
The only other option would be a governance review where Branxton PC looks to join with another PC This could be a lengthy process There could be costs involved which Branxton PC may need to pick up and it might not come into force until the next PC elections in 2025.

Public Question Time: Members of the public asked about amalgamating with another Parish Council and spreading the word informally with residents who may be interested.
It was agreed amalgamation could be investigated however there would need to be another interested Parish Council, it would take time and the level of precept would be set by the new Parish Council.
On spreading the word Parish Councillors speak to residents who may be interested.

Community Police – The Clerk read out the following report:
Nothing to report this month. No crimes or incidents of note and nothing ongoing that would either cause any concern or raise tension in the area.

Apologies for Absence: None.

Declaration of Interest: None

Request for Dispensation: None

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting: The Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 10th May 2022 previously circulated were agreed as a true record, the Chairman to sign a hard copy.

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Any urgent matters arising from the minutes if not already on the agenda-

Min 581- Fly Tipping- The Chairman referred to the fly tipping of domestic waste on the edge of the road towards Branxton Hill Farm. County Councillor M Mather agreed to report this.

Min 582-Parish Council vacancy

- Parish Councillors received the resignation of Parish Councillor R Clark
- Parish Councillors ratified the display of the vacancy notice.
- Parish Councillors agreed to now co-opt to fill the Parish Councillor vacancy.
- A member of the public indicated that she would be interested in joining the Parish Council. Parish Councillors considered the request and agreed to Co-opt Ms S Rudge onto Branxton Parish Council.
Ms S Rudge to sign the Declaration of Acceptance at the end of the meeting.

Min 583- County Councillor report- County Councillor M Mather gave the following verbal update:

Bus service- Northumberland County Council have advised Border Buses they need to fulfil their contract, this provides 2 services per day into Branxton, 1 north & 1 south, at times which suits the school connection service. A 6-month trial starts on 31st October, and the road into Branxton will be monitored during the winter months.
Highly Protected Marine Areas- The proposed DEFRA trail if agreed will mean there will be no lobster/crab fishing from Holy Island, as well as impacting on the fishing from Berwick to Seahouses. The consultation closes this week.
Storm Arwen- Northern Powergrid are looking to be more storm resilient in the west. Northern Powergrid and Berwick Community Trust have grants available to help communities and community buildings be more storm resilient in the future.
Northumberland County Council Communities Together are available to provide advice for anybody who are suffering hardship. I am asking Northumberland County Council to provide better support for Parish Councils. Warm Hubs will be in Wooler 5 days a week.

Min 584- Bus Service/ Bus Shelter- Parish Councillors agreed the bus service was covered at Min 583, and the bus shelter should be added to the Insurance Policy.

Min 585- Damaged barrier- The damaged barrier had been replaced.

Min 586- Annual Insurance Premium- Parish Councillors agreed the payment of £168.56 to Northumberland County Council for the 2022/23 Insurance premium. The Clerk reported there may be an additional premium for adding the bus shelter.

Min 587- Financial Statement-

- Bank of Scotland Account £1391.75 Includes £148.88 for defibrillator

Min 588- Accounts for Payment –

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| • E I Hunter | £ 104.18 | Clerk's Salary 10.25 hours @ £12.70 per hour |
| • HMRC | £ 26.00 | PAYE |
| • E I Hunter | £ 17.64 | Expenses |
| • Northumberland CC | £ 168.56 | Annual Insurance premium |
| • Branxton V Hall | £ 50.00 | Annual rent |

Min 589- Planning Approval

22/00791/FUL- Construction of detached 11/2 Storey dwelling House- Land West Of
Braeside Branxton Cornhill-On-Tweed TD12 4SW

Min 590- Correspondence

- 1- **NCC- Town & Parish Council Climate Change toolkit.**
- 2- **Greener Berwick/Climate Action Berwick and Borders-** Request for information on bus services.
- 3- **NCC-** Information on free tree giveaway
- 4- **Northern Powergrid-** Information on energy resilience grant funding
- 5- **Wooler U3A-** Summer bulletin.
- 6- **NCC-** Northumberland Local Plan (hard copy)
- 7- **NCC-** Call for volunteers
- 8- **NCC Community Hub-** Invite to Community Resilience event 29/9
- 9- **Healthwatch Northumberland-** Invite to AGM 19/10
- 10- **GNAA-** Request for a donation. Parish Councillors agreed the Parish Council does not donate due to the low precept raised.

Min 591- Conclusion of Annual Audit 2021/22- The Clerk informed the meeting that as no questions had been raised by residents' the Annual Audit for 2021/22 is now concluded. The Clerk also, reported that the Annual Accounts for 2021/22 are now approved. Parish Councillors agreed the Annual Audit for 2021/22 is now concluded.

Min 592- Local Transport Plan Programme 2023/24-

Parish Councillors ratified the submission of the following 3 priorities as the Parish Council's top 3 priorities for 2023/24.

- a) Resurfacing of the road from Branxton Church to Branxton Building cottages.
- b) The re-instatement of the bus service through Branxton village
- c) Signage from Branxton village to Flodden car park to warn drivers of pedestrians. This is a safety issue.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS:

Min 593- Highways- Parish Councillors raised concerns about the state of the following roads:

- Branxton to Branxton Buildings
- Branxton Village to Branxton Hill

County Councillor M Mather agreed to report the issues on receipt of information from Parish Councillors.

Min 594- Future Parish Council meetings- County Councillor M Mather asked if it would be possible to revise the Parish Council meeting dates to allow him to attend all Parish Council meetings.

This was agreed. County Councillor M Mather to provide his availability for the December meeting.

The next Parish Council will be held on 13th December 2022 at 7.00 p.m. in Branxton Village Hall.

Meeting closed at 7.50 p.m.

Mrs S Rudge signed a Declaration of Acceptance form.

Chairman_____