A meeting of Lowick Parish Council was held on 19th February 2015 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall

Present: JA Huddart, Mrs A Worlock, Mrs L Bradbury, Mrs MA Bell, Mrs F Burn, Mrs S Graham, P Hanson

1. The Chairman welcomed everyone and opened the meeting

2. Apologies for absence were received from W Perks and SA Mather

3. Declarations of Interest – none

4. Minutes of previous meeting – these were agreed as being correct

5. Matters arising – community speed watch notice – JA Huddart asked who was responsible for putting this notice up – no one knew, clerk to contact community police officer

6. The Common – JA Huddart reported that, along with Mrs A Worlock, he’d met with Mark Butson (the Colgan’s solicitor), Hugo Hughes (Mrs Taylor’s solicitor) Mr Hughes also represented Mr & Mrs Currah as their solicitor was unable to attend the meeting.

Without prejudice discussions took place on a 12 point plan with decisions taken and reported on promptly. JA Huddart reported The First Tier Tribunal has summoned all concerned to a Case Management Conference and all are anxious to put the matter to bed. Mr Huddart also pointed out that the Parish Council has no funding for legal help and stressed that the County Council has been very unhelpful.

A number of points raised in the discussions were noted, these were

- It accepts that the Respondent has a case to have the present easement it benefits from widened by 1 metre, this was unanimously agreed
- It accepts the adverse possession claims of the Applications as sketched on the submitted plan
- It will seek costs from the Respondent to pay for any legal documentation required
- If the Respondent proposes continuous heavy agricultural use, which is not the case at present, it will review this, Parish Councillors unanimously agreed to this point
- It will seek to update the easement so that it reflects the current uses made by all parties concerned

Points discussed by Parish Councillors were

- The solicitors believe it would be impossible for an agricultural use only easement and a more modern drawing up of the easement is needed to cover all vehicles. The Colgan’s wish to reserve the right to build one house. JA Huddart commented that he felt a general easement would make future access on the track easier. It was unanimously agreed that there should be a single deed of easement for all parties and not to include agricultural vehicles and also to restrict access to one new house
- Northumbrian Water is now responsible for drains once they leave your boundary and would pursue those they thought liable
- Reciprocal agreement – a path to the Community Orchard along the edge of a field from the village is not acceptable to the Colgans. JA Huddart and Mrs Worlock had suggested to Mr Butson that he put this request to Lowick Hall Estates, pointing out that the Parish Council is not asking for a right of way just a permissible footpath. More discussion with the Colgan’s is required over this issue. It was unanimously agreed that it was not acceptable for the Colgan’s to walk away from reciprocal arrangements which Parish Councillors believe is the norm. It was also unanimously agreed that if the footpath suggestion wasn’t acceptable the Colgan’s should be asked to make an alternative proposal. JA Huddart said he would draw up a proposal with regard to permission for use of the suggested footpath
- There was unanimous agreement to the proposal that the Colgan’s install a product called grass guard on the widened section of the track which would allow the grass to grow through it and protect the ground from the passage of vehicles.

It was agreed that JA Huddart and Mrs A Worlock will put together the Parish Council’s proposals for the solicitors and hope that it will avoid a Case Management Conference or attendance
7. **Play Park** – Mrs A Worlock reported that she had been in discussion with Emma Evans at Northumberland County Council with regard to the transfer of the Play Park from the County Council to the Parish Council. If transferred under an agency agreement there would be no cost for this arrangement. The land and ground maintenance would stay with NCC and the Parish Council would take on responsibility for the play equipment and any safety surfacing, seats etc.

Once any transfer takes place the special expense added to the Lowick Parish Council precept would stop and the Parish Council would need to make provision within the precept to make provision for Insurance, weekly play area safety inspections and annual independent inspections.

As the Parish Council has already set the precept for 2015/16 it was unanimously agreed to leave the transfer until April 2016

8. **Black Bull** the pub is now on the market for offers in the region of £250,000. P Hanson reported that Diane Chisholm has sent a letter to Hawthorn Leisure requesting information on trading figures and is now awaiting a response. This information is needed so that a credible business plan can be put together.

There are a possible 2 options

- The pub is let at a peppercorn rent to prove it’s feasible
- Buy it freehold.

It is necessary to wait for a full response from Hawthorn Leisure before calling a committee meeting. JA Huddart commented that although the pub has become a community asset the Parish Council should not be the leaders in raising money and organising meetings with regard to the pub.

9. **Barmoor Wind Farm Community Fund** – JA Huddart said there was a training day for panel members on 23rd March and the first panel meeting would be on 27th April. He’d received no word on who was to be the panel Chairman and who the other panel members were.

10. **Matters to report on potholes, repairs/maintenance to highways, street lights etc.** – Light at Common not working.

11. **Speed Indicators** – P Hanson reported that one person has been recorded at 70mph and 3 at 65mph. Filters are now installed which stops branches etc triggering speeds and the number of vehicles recorded has decreased.

12. **Correspondence** – Planning – Geoff Paul has circulated Parish Councils with proposals to streamline the planning application process which removes the statutory right for consultation with Parish Councils. JA Huddart circulated a letter criticising this proposal, all agreed with the points made.

13. **Any other business** – JA Huddart and Mrs A Worlock thought it was essential that the Parish Council brought together a neighbourhood plan. JA Huddart said he proposed to do a history of the community/survey of buildings/mapped age and significance so that the best possible buildings can be built.

P Hanson had a large poster demonstrating how to do CPR, it was agreed the village hall could be a possible site for it.

14. **Date of next meeting** – 19th March 2015

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.35pm.

19th March 2015