LOWICK PARISH COUNCIL

A meeting of Lowick Parish Council was held on 16th July 2015 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall

Present: JA Huddart, Mrs A Worlock, P Hanson, W Perks and SA Mather

1. The Chairman welcomed everyone and opened the meeting

2. Apologies for absence were received from Mrs MA Bell, Mrs LA Bradbury, Mrs S Graham, Mrs F Burn, Councillor RJD Watkin

3. There were no declarations of interest

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

5. Matters Arising – The Black Bull – it’s believed that there could be some interest from someone wanting to buy the building

6. The Common
   • Following the suggestion from the Colgan’s solicitor that the Parish Council obtain the advice of a solicitor Ms Elaine Miles from Wellers Law Group is now acting on behalf of the Parish Council
   • Ms Miles agreed that there should be a requirement that the easement is for agricultural use only
   • The Local Government Act makes provision for restitution for an easement and Ms Miles could see no reason why this should not happen in this case
   • Costs should be borne by the Colgan estate
   • The draft easement prepared by Ms Miles was considered and sent to all solicitors. The solicitors representing Ms Taylor and the Currahs responded immediately and thought the easement fitted the bill but the Parish Council received yet another 11th hour reply from M Butson, solicitor representing the Colgans.
   • JA Huddart has discussed the issue of bullying to exhaust all other respondents with Ms Miles. There does appear to be evidence that this has taken place.
   • Ms Miles has received a map from Northumberland County Council and is preparing a first registration application to regularise the edge of the common
   • M Butson is trying to protect the Colgan estate but it was suggested that
     o He could accept the Parish Council’s word that the registration would be made and the easement granted
     o If the Colgan estate doesn’t trust the statement they can insure against the Parish Council going against its word
   • It was thought it was important to resolve the legal issues as Ms Miles has advised it would be illegal to grant easement without registration
   • The Parish Council is legally obliged to put best possible reciprocal agreement into easement document and an evaluation should take place beforehand – the easement granted to Burnhouse in 1979 cost £500. If the Colgan estate don’t want to grant an in kind reciprocal agreement the Parish Council would be agreeable to a cash settlement
   • Ms Miles thinks the Parish Council has been very reasonable in dealing with the issue
   • The Parish Council is very keen to grant the easement but have to register the land to make the easement lawful and regret the delay
Following Mr Butson’s assertion that the Parish Council has made no attempt to seek help with its legal fees from other parties it was pointed out that other parties are not involved in the easement so should not be involved in the legal costs with regard to this matter.

It was agreed that Ms Miles correspond with M Butson regarding the points above.

7. Neighbourhood Plan – Lowick Parish is now accepted as a neighbourhood. JA Huddart will talk to D English at Northumberland County Council to find out what resources are available.

8. Speed signs – P Hanson said that 90% of accidents caused are by people stepping onto the road, they can be badly injured by a car travelling at 40mph – there has been no change over the last 5 months of number of cars travelling at 40mph.

9. Matters to report on potholes, repairs/maintenance to highways, street lights etc. Contact the Council re cutting of grass verges, especially at road junctions, on the Wooler road.

10. Local Transport Plan 2016/17
It was agreed to make the same request as for 2015/16
• Resurfacing B6353 from A1 to cross roads with C18
• Resurfacing U1044
• Repair surface and fencing on footpath from Barmoor Corner to Lowick Vicarage
• Street light on footpath at east end of the village to the football field.

11. Planning Application : Ref 15/02302/FUL : New access to create off street parking : Holmwood Cottage, 55 Main Street, Lowick. The Parish Council supported this application.

12. Correspondence – a letter was received requesting the Parish Council’s attendance at a tribunal regarding adverse possession by Ms Taylor and the Currahs for parking at the edge of the common. Mrs Worlock agreed to contact the Tribunal to ask why the Parish Council had become involved as there have been no requests for an opinion from the Parish Council and no invitation to be involved in any of the past discussions.

13. Date of next meeting – to be agreed.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.20pm.

10th September 2015