

## NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL

### CASTLE MORPETH LOCAL AREA COUNCIL

At a meeting of the **Castle Morpeth Local Area Council** held in the Council Chamber on Monday, 13 May 2019.

#### PRESENT

Councillor E. Armstrong  
(Chair, in the Chair)

#### COUNCILLORS

Bawn, D.L  
Dickinson, S.  
Dodd, R.R.  
Dunn, L.  
Foster, J.D.

Jones, V.  
Ledger, D.  
Sanderson, H.G.H.  
Towns, D.J  
Wearmouth, R.

#### OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE

Bennett, Mrs L.M.  
Bulman, M.  
Horsman, G.  
Millard, J.  
Mowatt, R.  
Sinnamon, E.  
Wardle, S.

Senior Democratic Services Officer  
Solicitor  
Senior Planning Officer  
Communications Officer  
Apprentice, Communications  
Senior Planning Manager  
Neighbourhood Services Area  
Manager  
Senior Planning Officer

Wood, Tamsin

#### 1. MEMBERSHIP AND TERMS OF REFERENCE

The committee noted the following membership and terms of reference for the Castle Morpeth Local Area Council which were agreed by Council on 1 May 2019.

The membership is made up of the county councillors who represent the 13 electoral divisions in the Castle Morpeth area:

**Chair: E. Armstrong**

**Vice Chair: J. Beynon**

**Vice Chair (Planning): S.J. Dickinson**

**Quorum - 4**

Ch.'s Initials.....

Conservative	Labour	Bedlington Independents	Liberal Democrat	Independents (Non-grouped)
E. Armstrong	S.J. Dickinson			
D. Bawn	L. Dunn			
J. Beynon	J.D. Foster			
R.R. Dodd	D. Ledger			
P. Jackson				
V. Jones				
H.G.H. Sanderson				
D. Towns				
R. Wearmouth				

### Terms of Reference

- (a) To enhance good governance in the area and ensure that the Council's policies take account of the needs and aspirations of local communities and do not discriminate unfairly between the different Areas.
- (b) To advise the Cabinet on budget priorities and expenditure within the Area.
- (c) To consider, develop and influence policy and strategy development of the Council, its arms-length organisations, and other relevant bodies, to ensure that they meet local requirements and facilitate efficient and transparent decision making.
- (d) To receive information, consider and comment on matters associated with service delivery including those undertaken in partnership agencies, affecting the local area to ensure that they meet local requirements, including matters relating to community safety, anti-social behaviour and environmental crime.
- (e) To consider and refer to Cabinet any issues from a local community perspective with emerging Neighbourhood Plans within their area, and consider local planning applications as per the planning delegation scheme
- (f) To consider and recommend adjustments to budget priorities in relation to Local Transport Plan issues within their area, and to make decisions in relation to devolved capital highway maintenance allocations.
- (g) To engage, through the appropriate networks, with all key stakeholders from the public, private, voluntary and community sectors to facilitate the delivery of area

priorities. This will include undertaking regular liaison with parish and town councils.

- (h) To inform, consult and engage local communities in accordance with Council policy and guidance, through the appropriate networks.
- (i) To, as appropriate, respond or refer with recommendations to local petitions and councillor calls for action.
- (j) To make certain appointments to outside bodies as agreed by Council.
- (k) To determine applications for grant aid from the Community Chest, either through Panels for individual Local Area Councils, or through the Panel of Local Area Council Chairs for countywide applications.
- (l) To refer and receive appropriate issues for consideration to or from other Council Committees, and as appropriate invite Portfolio Holders to attend a meeting if an item in their area of responsibility is to be discussed.

**The following section is subject to approval by Council on 2 May 2018.**

- (m) To exercise the following functions within their area:-
  - (i) the Council's functions in relation to the survey, definition, maintenance, diversion, stopping up and creation of public rights of way.
  - (ii) the Council's functions as the Commons Registration Authority for common land and town/village greens in Northumberland.
  - (iii) the Council's functions in relation to the preparation and maintenance of the Rights of Way Improvement Plan.
  - (iv) the Council's functions in relation to the Northumberland National Park and County Joint Local Access Forum (Local Access Forums (England) Regulations 2007.
  - (v) the Council's role in encouraging wider access for all to the County's network of public rights of way and other recreational routes.

## **2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor P.A. Jackson.

## **3. MINUTES**

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of the Castle Morpeth Local Area Council held on Monday, 8 April 2019 as circulated, be confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

#### 4. DISCLOSURE OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

Councillor D. Ledger declared an interest in Minute No. 7 as both the agent and himself had worked together with military associations. He left the meeting at that point and took no part in the discussion or decision making.

Councillor D. Towns declared a prejudicial interest in Minute No. 8 as the agents are a client of his firm. He left the meeting at that point and took no part in the discussion or decision making.

#### DEVELOPMENT CONTROL

#### 5. DETERMINATION OF PLANNING APPLICATIONS

The attached report explained how the Local Area Council was asked to decide the planning applications attached to this agenda using the powers delegated to it, and included details of the public speaking arrangements. (Report attached to the signed minutes as **Appendix A**)

**RESOLVED** that the report be noted

#### 6. 19/00520/CCD

**Proposed construction of 20 stone surfaced camping pitches; 7 grass tent pitches; vehicle access tracks; waste water disposal facility; small modular building; electricity hook up points  
Land South Of Ladyburn Lake, Druridge Bay Country Park, Hadston,  
Northumberland, NE61 5BX**

This item was withdrawn from the agenda and will be considered by the Local Area Council North on 21 May 2019.

#### 7. 19/00485/CCD

**Construction of car park with 27 parking bays with associated private access junction, drainage infrastructure, street lighting and landscaping.  
Morpeth Station, Coopies Lane, Morpeth, Northumberland**

Geoff Horsman, Senior Planning Officer, introduced the application and provided a brief overview. This application was referred to Members as it was an application by the County Council seeking planning permission for development on County Council owned land.

There were no public speakers and no questions for officers.

Councillor R. Wearmouth moved the officer recommendation to grant the application for the reasons and subject to the conditions outlined in the report.

Debate then followed and key points from members included:

- It was hoped that the improved parking facilities would encourage more use of Morpeth Station.
- The current informal crossing would be relocated closer to Shields Road

On being put to the vote, it was agreed by 8 votes for to 0 against with 1 abstention, that it be

**RESOLVED** that the application be **GRANTED** for the reasons and with the conditions as outlined in the report.

**8. 18/03367/FUL**

**Alterations to the existing stable building and summerhouse approved under planning references CM/97/D/412 and 12/03885/FUL respectively and change of use to provide 1 no. dwelling for rural workers  
Land South Of West Duddo Farm Cottages, Stannington, Northumberland,**

Tamsin Wood, Senior Planning Officer, introduced the application and provided a brief overview.

**Councillor K. Carins (Stannington Parish Council)** spoke in the local member slot and her main points included:-

- Stannington Parish Council supported the application for the conversion of farm buildings to provide accommodation for the farmer who had reared rare breed sheep and alpaca over the last 7 years.
- She commended the patience of the applicant as they had first sought advice from the planners in February 2017.
- It was believed that the application adhered to the Stannington Neighbourhood Plan and policies relating to the Green Belt in supporting expanding business use and contribution to the local economy.
- It was important that rural businesses had the opportunity to expand.
- When the breeding programme expanded there would be a need for additional labour on the farm and to live close by to deal with any emergencies.
- The independent adviser consulted regarding the tests to identify whether very special circumstances existed for a rural worker's dwelling was not an expert in animal welfare and husbandry.
- The Parish Council believed that there was a functional need for the dwelling especially when the breeding programme was established.

**Tony Carter (agent)** then spoke in support of the application and his key points included:

- The application was supported by Stannington Parish Council and a lot of local residents.
- The applicants were not housing developers and only wanted a simple dwelling on the site to assist them with the upkeep of their rare breed animals.
- They supported visits from local school children.
- It was important that small businesses like this were able to establish themselves and expand.

- The applicants had indicated that they were happy to tie the dwelling to the agricultural enterprise.
- Concern had been expressed as to the permanence of the dwelling, however, it had been proven that the buildings were able to be converted.
- Where was the harm in this development? There was none.

**Laurie Wilson** spoke in support of the application and her key points included:

- She was the applicants' closest neighbour.
- The applicants were honest and hard working people who were committed to caring for their livestock.
- The land was in pristine condition.
- The applicants welcomed visitors to their farm and this included children with autism and challenging young people.
- They were an asset to the community and she felt honoured to have them as neighbours.
- She hoped that Members would support the application.

Members then asked questions to officers and the key points from responses included:

- The actual acreage of the site was not relevant to consideration of the application. When assessing an application for an agricultural dwelling the tests set out in the Castle Morpeth Local Plan were relevant. The information submitted by the applicant was assessed against those tests and it was considered that the case was not made out. Other conversion applications which had previously been approved were usually aimed at protecting traditional rural buildings and any features worthy of protection. Conversions of barns more like pole barns may have been allowed under the General Permitted Development Order.
- Conversion was not considered acceptable if it was felt that substantial work would be required to make the building sound. If a site was located outside a settlement boundary, even if immediately adjacent to the boundary, it was considered to be in the open countryside. A site that was further afield would be considered as an isolated site.
- With regard to the number of staff required, it was up to the applicant to provide as much information as possible including a Business Plan.

Councillor R.R. Dodd moved the officer recommendation to refuse the application for the reasons outlined in the report. This was seconded by Councillor V. Jones.

Debate then followed and the key points from members included:

- The number of animals was not sufficient to have a profitable business. At least 500 sheep would be required to make the business pay.
- Rare breeds were of interest but not profitable.
- Many similar applications had been refused in the past.
- The Planning Officer's report was very detailed and clear with a clear conclusion.
- There was sympathy for the applicants but the application did not meet the criteria and the level of activity did not justify approval.

On being put to the vote, it was agreed by 4 votes for to 0 against with 4 abstentions, that it be

**RESOLVED** that the application be **REFUSED** for the reasons outlined in the report.

**9. 18/03749/FUL**

**Erection of a rural workers dwelling including new access, landscaping and other necessary works**

**Land West Of Ashtree Farm, Heddon-On-The-Wall, Northumberland,**

Tamsin Wood, Senior Planning Officer, introduced the application and provided a brief overview.

**Craig Ross (Agent)** then spoke in support of the application and his key points included:

- The land was purchased from Northumberland County Council in 2011.
- The proposal would allow the business to expand and adapt and make effective use of the land.
- Up to two jobs would be created.
- There was currently no need for a resident employee but if approved the proposal would require one full time employee to be resident on the site.
- With regard to the reasons for refusal outlined in the report; the highways matter could be resolved; and similar types of development had already been approved elsewhere in the Green Belt. The case should be considered on its merits as there was a need for the development which would provide economic benefits.
- A S106 agreement could be entered into to ensure that the property was always linked to the farm.
- A worker was needed to be resident on site in the interests of the livestock.
- The principle of the development was acceptable and the property was well designed.

Members then asked questions to officers and the key points from responses included:

- The Planning Officers needed to be satisfied that there was a need for the dwelling.
- It was up to the applicant to demonstrate the need for the dwellinghouse as part of the business case.
- It was difficult to show this need if the business was not already in operation.
- Planning Officers had to take a cautious approach to avoid permitting a dwelling house with the business never coming forward.

Councillor R.R. Dodd moved the officer recommendation to refuse the application for the reasons outlined in the report. This was seconded by Councillor S. Dickinson.

On being put to the vote, it was agreed by 8 votes for to 0 against with 0 abstentions, that it be

**RESOLVED** that the application be **REFUSED** for the reasons outlined in the report.

## 10. PLANNING APPEALS UPDATE

To note the progress of planning appeals. **(Attached as Appendix B)**

## OTHER LOCAL AREA COUNCIL BUSINESS

*On the conclusion of the development control business, the meeting adjourned as the remainder of the agenda consisted of other Local Area Council business scheduled to begin at 6 pm.*

## 11. COMMUNITY CHEST PRESENTATIONS

The Chair welcomed the contribution of local groups and small charities to the daily lives of residents and, in formal recognition of this, a certificate was presented to each representative.

The organisations represented were as follows:-

- Mitford Cricket Club
- Morpeth Group Riding for the Disabled
- Barnesbury Cycling Club
- Northumberland Pride
- Ponteland Community Partnership
- Collingwood School and Media Arts College
- Morpeth Amateur Runners Association
- Coquet Shorebase Trust
- The Morpeth Antiquarian Society
- Pegswood Community Beekeeping Club
- Red Row Kickstart

## 12. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There were no public questions.

## 13. PETITIONS

Members were informed that, since the previous meeting, no new petitions had been received, there were no reports due on petitions previously received, nor any updates due on petitions previously considered.

**RESOLVED** that the report be noted.

## 14. LOCAL SERVICES ISSUES

Members received a verbal update from the Area Manager as follows:-

Ch.'s Initials.....

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- Garden waste collection was underway. Some slight changes had been made to the scheme since last year but everything seemed to be going well. There had been an increase in numbers taking up the service this year.
- The grass cutting season had commenced with four or five cuts having already been made.
- Seasonal staff were in position and were now working seasonal hours (44 hours instead of 37)
- Preparations for weed killing had been made and a start would soon be made.
- Grass verge cutting would commence in mid June using the same contractors as in 2018.
- A new sweeper would arrive soon and it was anticipated that this would be more efficient leading to improvements across the board.

**15. OUTSIDE BODIES**

Members were asked to make appointments to outside body organisations within the Local Area Council’s remit. A list of outside bodies is attached to the agenda for consideration. (Report attached to the signed minutes as **Appendix D**).

Councillor R.R. Dodd reported that further consideration was being given to the appointments to the Industrial Communities Alliance.

**RESOLVED** that the appointments as outlined in the report be noted.

**ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

**16. LOCAL AREA COUNCIL WORK PROGRAMME**

Members received the latest version of agreed items for future Local Area Council meetings. (Attached as **Appendix E**).

**RESOLVED** that the report be noted.

**17. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting will be held on Monday, 10 June 2019, at 4.00 p.m. in the Council Chamber, County Hall, Morpeth.

This meeting would deal with planning matters only.

**CHAIRMAN** .....

**DATE** .....