

**Minutes of Meeting of West Allen Parish Council**  
**Thursday 9th June 2022 at 19:00 - Ninebanks Church and Community Hall**

Present: Steve Agar, Helen Adams, David Adams, Lee Sutterby and NCC Councillor Colin Horncastle

Apologies: Rowland Hull

- 1 **Welcome and minutes of meeting held on 3 March 2022-** Minutes were approved as being correct.
- 2 **Matters arising from previous meeting:**
  - a) **Co-opting of new Parish Councillors-** The Clerk received a letter on 24<sup>th</sup> March 2022 from Elections at NCC to say that there had been no signatures received to call a by-election for the recent vacancies. Therefore, David Adams, Rowland Hull and Lee Sutterby were co-opted as new councillors.
  - b) **Clerk role and changes to bank signatories/account access-** Joanne Sutterby has been appointed as the new Clerk. The clerk now has full access to online banking alongside Steve Agar and Helen Adams, and has taken on the role of Responsible Financial Officer.
  - c) **To consider responses to community resilience questionnaire-** David Manson provided a written summary of the responses to the West Allen Community Resilience Survey prior to the meeting. These were distributed to all houses within the parish in response to issues arising from Storm Arwen in November 2021. The chair noted that he also met in person with the Resilience Group-David Manson, Lis Dales and Pauline Elliott prior to the meeting to discuss the summary of responses. 35 surveys were returned- a little over a third of the regularly occupied dwellings (ie excluding rarely used second homes, holiday lets and empty houses) and thus provide a reasonable response rate. Overwhelmingly, the responses noted what would have been of most use, was reliable information from Northern Powergrid.

Some discussion ensued about the need for local resilience centres or hubs in pre-planning for future events. Ninebanks Church Hall, the Youth Hostel in Mohope and Carrshield Community Hall were identified as possible centres. The Chairman stated that equipment would need to be procured for any resilience centre- including gas stoves and a generator. He noted that the recently refurbished Ninebanks Church Hall has specific power points required for a generator hook-up. The Youth Hostel has its own resources, however Carrshield Hall has very little equipment currently. Cllr Horncastle noted that Northumberland County Council would only support one resilience centre within the parish.

It was unanimously decided that the Parish Council should take the lead role in carrying this forward, acting as main point of contact for NCC to co-ordinate how local contingencies are put in place, should an extreme weather event or other significant event happen again. The Chair had previously asked Rowland Hull to take this on, on behalf of the parish council. Rowland has agreed to do this. The chair commented that the parish council will be looking to NCC for guidance in funding and support for all future community resilience planning.

Cllr Horncastle then gave a brief summary of the ongoing NCC investigations into Storm Arwen. A report will come out in due course – possibly in Autumn 2022, which will have guidance and ideas for local and parish councils.

Cllr Horncastle was also asked whether NCC have a list of vulnerable people, and if so, could the parish council have access to this list if the need arises in the future. NCC does have a register of vulnerable people, however Cllr Horncastle was unsure if this would be accessible due to GDPR and stated that he would find out.

The Chairman expressed that communication systems were a real issue- especially if mobile networks go down. He asked if a local resilience centre would be equipped with a satellite phone or a fixed landline which could be used in an emergency.

### 3 **Correspondence:**

- a) *Insurance* – renewed from 01/06/22 at a cost of £192.95 (2021 - £233.45)
- b) *NALC Annual Subscription* – renewed at cost of £160.55 (2021 - £175.46)
- c) *Dissemination of information, consultations and advice received via email to the wider community*- All agreed it would be a good idea to make better use of the Parish Council website. Clerk to add message via 'Allendale Area Notices' Facebook group informing local residents to consult the website. David Adams suggested the parish 'What's App' group could also be used to pass this message on.
- d) *2023-24 Local Transport Plan programme consultation*- Much discussion was had over the proposed LTP and state of the road surface from School Bank to Wardway. Patching is not an option, re-surfacing is necessary as this is seen as a serious safety issue. Helen Adams also reported the condition of the ditch along Wardway and David Adams noted concerns about a ditch at Mohope. Cllr Horncastle recommended taking photos of all issues and use 'What Three Words' to identify exact geographical location of concerns. Lee Sutterby volunteered to take photos. The Clerk will add these points to the LTP consultation, along with any relevant photographs and contact will also be made with Andy Olive at NCC Highways dept.

4 **Audit:** Annual audit documents were received from PKF Littlejohn who are the appointed auditors. All documents relating to the audit were made available before and during, the meeting. As part of the audit process the Council was requested to:

- a) *Consider and agree any actions arising from the report of the internal auditor* - Internal Auditor completed report on 13/05/22- No actions were noted.
- b) *Approve the Annual Governance Statement* - Approved
- c) *Approve the annual accounts for 2021/2022*- Accounts were finalised by the Clerk as Financial Officer on 12/05/22 and sent to the Internal Auditor on the same date. The accounts were restated for 2020/21 due to the removal of a historical 'Communal TV Fund' account which is no longer active.
- d) *Approve the Accounting Statement and Explanation of Variances*- Approved
- e) *Confirm and approve the Certification of Exemption* – Confirmed and Approved
- f) *Confirm the dates of the period for the exercise of public rights*- These were set as commencing Monday 13<sup>th</sup> June to Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2022

5 **Planning:** Applications can be viewed at:

<http://publicaccess.northumberland.gov.uk/online-applications>

<b>Applicant:</b>	<b>Address:</b>	<b>Details:</b>	<b>Application no:</b>
Mr & Mrs Wilson	Spartywell, Ninebanks	Retrospective – siting of caravan, Change of use from agricultural to temporary short term residential use for family, friends and farm help.	22/00320/FUL <b>Pending</b>
Mr W Young	1 Farneyside Cottages, Ninebanks	Retrospective Change of Use of land to residential garden land and construction of garden building	21/03504/FUL <b>Granted</b>
Mr Jesse Doyle	Temperance Farm	Change to windows –amended plan	21/02666/LBC <b>Granted</b>
Mr Terrence Page	2 New Houses	Variation on approved application –	21/02798/VARYCO <b>Granted</b>
Mr Joseph Colin Reed	Land South West of Woodbine Cottage, Carrshield	Restore and re-build existing derelict dwellings to create single dwelling house with attached holiday-let and erection of ancillary workshop/agricultural storage building	21/03532/FUL <b>Refused</b>

6 **Any other Business:** *Introduction of 30mph signs in Ninebanks and speeding concerns due to several recent accidents.*- This point was raised by Lee Sutterby on behalf of a concerned local who had recently been involved

in a road traffic collision in Ninebanks. In addition, concerns about speeding vehicles were verbally raised by two different residents to the Clerk prior to the meeting, and an email of support for some form of speed restrictions was received from another resident.

Cllr Horncastle suggested contacting NCC to find out the current speed limit through the hamlet and to see if the parish council could apply for speeding restrictions to be implemented. He also suggested adding speeding concerns and road signage to the Local Transport Plan consultation. The Clerk agreed to contact NCC about this matter. On a related issue, David Adams reported that the 'slow' signs in Mohope had recently been re-done.

*Ash Die Back disease*- In relation to ash die back, David Adams raised the question of whether NCC has any plans for replanting trees that will be removed due to the disease. Parish Councillors reported being acutely aware that ash die back is in the valley. Cllr Horncastle mentioned the 'Great Northumberland Forest' scheme as a way of possibly getting advice. Clerk will look into this on behalf of the council.

*Wider work of NCC*- Cllr Horncastle gave an over-view of all the positive work being undertaken by NCC within the county of Northumberland. They have a key focus on affordable housing.

**7 Date and times of next meetings** – the dates and times for the next two meetings were set as **Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> September 2022** at 19:00 and **Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> December 2022** at 19:00. Venue will be Ninebanks Church Hall.