

Brinkburn and Hesleyhurst Parish Council

MINUTES OF MEETING

Meeting on: 9th July 2024
Meeting at: Longframlington Memorial Hall
Meeting Time: 7.30 p.m.
Present: Cllrs: Steven Bray (SB), David Owen - Chair (DO), Jackie Scarpa (JS),
In attendance: One member of the public, Clerk: Garth Rhodes.

Meeting opened at 7.32 p.m.

1. **Apologies for Absence.** Lesley Hall (LH), Jamie Whicker (JW); Mark Fenwick
2. **Emergency Planning: To discuss the development of a Community Flood Plan. Colin Hall, Resilience Team, Environment Agency (EA) in attendance.** Colin (CH) informed the PC that the EA were seeing a significant increase in flooding due to climate change. There was a huge rise in surface flooding, as the nature of flooding was changing due to lots of hill run-off with flash flooding in streams and burns. Floods were not just happening in low lying areas and caused significant damage to properties and danger to members of the public. Colin's proposal for BHPC was to replicate what was happening in other parishes to create a Community Flood Plan. He showed the members a copy of the Whitton and Tosson Parish Councils (WTPC) Plan (WTPC had already agreed to share its emergency planning with BHPC). The Plan focussed on three areas: 1) Prevention, 2) Flooding as it Happened, 3) Flood Recovery. The Plan would align the Parish with the emergency services and provide direct links to emergency flood warning messaging, giving time to warn vulnerable people of potential flooding risks. For the plan to work it would need a small team of volunteers who would become the eyes and ears of the operation on the ground. They would not be called on to be actively involved in direct emergency engagement but provide information to the emergency services and to residents. EA could offer lots of training opportunities for volunteers and the PC. CH would lead on drafting the plan which would firstly require a meeting and tour of the parish to identify potential flooding 'hot spots'. He would then produce a draft for the PC to amend. He would provide the Clerk with volunteer application forms and flood prevention information for residents. It was agreed for this meeting/tour to take place at 10.00 a.m. on Friday 6th September. DO/MF/JW/CH to attend. JS asked if the EA were engaged in more long-term flood management programmes, and which used the environment to control flooding. Colin explained that the Agency was very actively involved in this type of work and that there was a government scheme known as ELMS (Environmental Land Management) which provided grants for this. Members were extremely grateful to Colin for his input and DO thanked him on behalf of the Parish. **Action: Clerk/DO/MF/JW**
3. **Table Urgent Business to be discussed in 21 below.** None
4. **Declaration of Interests.** None
5. **Gifts and Hospitality.** None
6. **Minutes of Previous Meeting** - The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 14th May 2024 were reviewed, unanimously approved as a true record and signed as such. (Proposed JS, Seconded SB, All in Favour).
7. **Matters arising out of Minutes.** To receive updates on matters not appearing elsewhere on the agenda including:
 - a. **Councillor Vacancy.** There had been no official requests made to the Elections Office for an election. Therefore, we could now go ahead, and co-opt. JW was seeking a potential member from Hesleyhurst. Clerk to ask JW if he had been successful, if not DO to pursue within Brinkburn. **Action: Clerk/JW/DO**
 - b. **Review of polling districts and polling places.** NCC were proposing The Gate pub as the new B&H polling station. It was agreed to post the Notice of Polling Districts and Polling Stations on the Parish Webpage and Noticeboard. **Action: Clerk/SB**
 - c. **Brinkburn & Hesleyhurst move into the Longhorsley Division.** Response from Glen Sanderson. GS had agreed to attend our September meeting. Members were asked to consider what questions/issues they would like to pursue with him. **Action: All**
 - d. **Sale of Rothbury Estate.** No further information.
 - e. **Declaration of Pecuniary Interests.** Clerk had received all copies that were held with Democratic Services, NCC. MFs was not recorded, so Mark had re-submitted this which had been forwarded to NCC.
8. **Police Update.** No report however members were receiving the regular Northumbria Connected Updates. Police to be invited to attend or send report to next meeting. **Action: Clerk**
9. **Finance**
 - a. **Notification of receipts since the last meeting.** Approved.
 - b. **Approval of Clerk's salary, expenses, PAYE & NI and approval of Other Payments since the last meeting.** Approved.

17/06/2024	Julie Ayre	Grass cutting (£180), tree tie x3 (£30), Removal of grass round flags (£80)	290.00
30/06/2024	HMRC	PAYE	161.80
30/06/2024	Garth Rhodes	Salary & Expenses	667.16
30/06/2024	Andrew Cockburn	Fencing Works - Hedge laying project	547.20
08/07/2024	Rothbury JBC	RJBC Precept payment 1sr half	262.00
		Total	1928.16

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c. Bank Reconciliation at 8th July 2024 Approved.

Balance per bank statements			4225.44
Less unpresented payments	08/07/2024	Rothbury JBC	262.00
Uncredited Deposits -			0.00
Balance			3963.44
Balance per cash book			3963.44

- d. Change of Bank Account Signature. Clerk had attempted several times to do this online without success, so he had been into TSB Morpeth who had requested paper copies of the bank mandate. This was still awaited. **Action: Clerk/DO/LH**
- e. Requests for Donations. Request for a Donation to Citizens Advice Northumberland was not approved. However, it was agreed that whenever there were PC events the Council would set out charity boxes for approved charities. It was agreed that Citizens Advice Northumberland would be a charity that the Council would support in this way.
- f. Annual Insurance & Insurance for Volunteers. After numerous requests, NCC had now informed us that the Parish Council policy had been renewed on 1st June 2024, and that we were unable to withdraw and we would be charged a fee of £265.71 for the financial year of 2024-25. If we chose not to renew for 2025-26, then that was completely our choice. Clerk had previously asked them to provide evidence that our specific volunteering activity was covered. Rather than doing this they had sent the whole policy document which required a thorough perusal. At first glance the policy did not refer to cover for the specifics we had asked for. We now had received a volunteer programme assessment checklist from Alan Geronio, CAN's Development Officer who had agreed to work with us in providing the best provision to support our volunteers. The insurance indemnity was mentioned in the checklist, and Alan informed us that a discussion would be needed with the insurer about specific volunteer activities. This was fast becoming a farce. Members were dissatisfied with the NCC response, and the Clerk was asked to follow this up further with NCC to clarify the situation, to ascertain why we were unable to withdraw from the policy and to ask if other parish council members of the scheme were happy with the explanation of cover for volunteers. **Action: Clerk**
10. **Planning.** To note and discuss any planning issues since previous meeting. There were currently no requests for consultation that had not already been commented on.
11. **Highways**
- a. Highways and Footpaths Report No new issues.
- b. Report on any issues raised/ to raise with Highways Department No further communications received since the last meeting. Agreed to write to NCC to request them to provide their policy on verge cutting. **Action: Clerk**
- c. To consider the Local Transport Plan Capital Programme Priorities for 2025-26 Item deferred. Members asked to consider priorities for the next meeting. **Action: All**
12. **Wingates Wind Farm Community Fund.** Our application for £10k for our Biodiversity work for 2024/25 had been agreed. We had been asked to submit a more detailed budget which was currently being prepared. All of 2023/24 projects except for the hedge laying project were now complete and 100% funding received. Plans for the completion of the hedge laying project were underway. SB reported that the fund currently held £60k and were anticipating a further £30-40 K for the current year. It was agreed to investigate the possibility of putting together a request for a grant for Starlink Satellite internet for those properties in the Parish that had no internet. **Action: JS**
13. **Climate Change & Biodiversity Committee.** In JW's absence, JS reported that the CC&B Information Event had been a very successful networking opportunity with 48 people attending. Refreshments had been provided by Wingates Village Hall, which had been excellent. It was agreed that this was a venture worth doing on an annual basis. Feedback from residents from Butterknowes was that they sometimes felt left out of Parish activity. Butterknowes was one area of the parish which was not connected by internet and who could benefit from the Starlink Satellite application to WWCF. The Chair, on behalf of the Parish Council thanked the members of the CC&B Committee and its volunteers for all the hard work they were doing.
14. **Approval and signing of CRAG constitution.** The members unanimously approved the CRAG constitution and its signing. MF/DO to be the signatories. **Action: MF/DO**
15. **Request from Northumberland Green Hub to include their details on BHPC website/information.** The unanimous view of the Council was that it would not support the proposal to put the text 'We Are a member of ... followed by the NGH logo' on our community / organisation website, and event materials. The view was that the Parish Council should be seen to be an independent public body representing the whole of its community. However, the council would continue, as it did already, to engage with appropriate NGH activity and promote NGH information through its webpage and other relevant literature. **Action: Clerk.**
16. **Coquettale Cluster Meeting**
- a. Items to discuss from the latest Cluster Meeting. No meeting since the last PC meeting.
- b. Items for next Cluster Meeting Agenda. Condition of the roads around the Parish. **Action: JS**
17. **Cemetery & Joint Burial Committee Reports**
- a. Longframlington Cemetery. Cemetery extension documentation was now complete. Next stage was to organise the consecration of the land.
- b. Rothbury JBC No report.
18. **Definitive Map Modifications**
- a. Order(No 3) 2024 (bridleway along the dismantled railway between Wagtail Farm and Brinkburn Station.) No further update.
- b. Order (No5) 2024- BOAT 26 (C168 Forestburn to Brinkburn Station) had been confirmed.

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- c. Order (No7)BOAT 29 (between B6334 via Cockshot to Rothbury Rd, Longframlington). We had been previously consulted, when the PC had made no comment. The order had now been made. The PC had no further comments to make. Any comments or objections to be submitted to NCC by 05/09/2024
- d. Order (No8) 2024 BOAT No 32 (B6344Coquet Brae to Healey Farm). The PC had no comments to make. Comments or Objections to NCC by 05/09/2024
- 19. To consider a motion to sign up to the Civility and Respect Pledge and adopt the Model Code of Conduct 2020.** A draft Civility and Respect Pledge had been forwarded by NCC to all Town and Parish Councils for them to consider along with the most recent revised Local Government Association Model Councillor Code of Conduct 2020. Item deferred until next meeting.
- 20. Honorary Titles (held in camera)**
- a. To consider and approve the Policy for Granting Title of the Honorary Freedom of the Parish . The Policy was unanimously approved. **Action: Clerk**
- b. To consider Nominees. Two individuals were considered, and it was unanimously agreed that both should go forward for nomination. Both nominees had indicated that they would accept the honour if offered.
- c. To agree sponsors for Nominees DO was agreed as sponsor for Nominee 1 and JS for Nominee 2
- d. To consider the arrangements for Honorary Freedom of the Parish Presentation Ceremony including:
- i. Date of event. Proposed week beginning 7th October 2024; preference being Tuesday 8th October. Date to be checked with venue and nominees. **Action: JS/DO**
- ii. Venue & refreshments. Wingates Village Hall agreed for both venue and refreshments.
- iii. Freedom Scroll & Parish Emblem. It was agreed that Freedom Scrolls be produced by Clerks and Councils Direct. Clerk to produce mock up. DO to ask Brenda Barker to produce a Parish Logo/Emblem. Drafts to be presented at next meeting. **Action: DO/Clerk**
- 21. Any Urgent Business.** None.
- 22. Items for Next Meeting**
- a. Brinkburn & Hesleyhurst move into the Longhorsley Division. Cllr Glen Sanderson in attendance. **Action: All**
- b. To consider the Local Transport Plan Capital Programme Priorities for 2025-26. **Action: All**
- c. To consider a motion to sign up to the Civility and Respect Pledge and adopt the Model Code of Conduct 2020
- d. To agree Freedom Scroll proofs & Parish Emblem/Logo and budget for the Freedom of the Parish Awards.
- 23. Date of Next meeting: Tuesday 10th September 2024 in the Memorial Hall Longframlington at 7.30 p.m.**

The meeting closed at 9.35 p.m.

Garth Rhodes, Clerk, 5 Wardle Terrace, Longframlington, NE65 8AB, Tel: 01665 570347, Email: Clerk@Brinkburn.net