

Brinkburn and Hesleyhurst Parish Council

MINUTES OF MEETING

Meeting on: 10th January 2023
Meeting at: Longframlington Memorial Hall
Meeting Time: 7.30 p.m.
Present: Cllrs: Steven Bray (SB), Lesley Hall (LH), Vincent Milburn (VM), -Vice -Chair, Jamie Whicker (JW).
In attendance: Clerk: Garth Rhodes.

The meeting opened at 7.30 p.m. The meeting was chaired by Cllr Vincent Millburn in Cllr Owen's absence.

1. **Apologies for Absence.** David Owen- Chair (DO), Jackie Scarpa (JS)
2. **Minutes of Previous Meeting** - The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 27th September 2022 were reviewed, unanimously approved as a true record and signed as such. (Proposed SB, Seconded LH, All in Favour)
3. **Matters arising out of Minutes.**
 - a. Rothbury Woodland Creation. The Council were still awaiting feedback on this, but it had been reported that the decision on the proposed woodland would be published within the next 10 days.
4. Parish Council Climate Change Toolkit and Parish Climate Change Action Plan. As the Coquetdale Cluster Group had deemed it was not an appropriate agency, to act on behalf of the parishes in the group, to develop a Coquetdale Action Plan, the members agreed to set up its own Steering Committee, including residents of the Parish, to develop and lead on a Parish Climate Change Action Plan. It was agreed to produce an informative/invitational letter/flyer to distribute to residents to invite them to join the Climate Change Committee which would be formally approved at the next meeting. JW agreed to arrange distribution. **Action: JW/Clerk**
5. **Correspondence** – As all major items were regularly included within the agenda, the Correspondence List circulated with the Clerk's Report and specific emails of interest, immediately forwarded to members on receipt, it was agreed that Correspondence as an agenda item was superfluous and should be removed from future agendas. **Action: Clerk**
6. **Finance**
 - a. To confirm the approval of the Clerk's annual pay award 2022-23 and consider the annual review of the Clerk's salary. Members confirmed its earlier decision, taken by email and through Chair's action to formally agree the National Annual Pay Award 2022/2023 for the Clerk's salary, backdated to 1st April 2022. The terms of the LGA agreement on pay included the following:
 - With effect from 1 April 2022, an increase of £1,925 (FTE) on all NJC pay points 1 and above. This resulted in the clerk's hourly rate being raised from £11.73 to £12.73 at Spinal Point 12
 - With effect from 1 April 2023, an increase of one day employees' annual leave entitlement
 Members also considered the annual review of the Clerk's salary (incremental rise). It was agreed to accelerate the Clerk to Spinal Point 14 on the National Pay Scale raising the hourly rate to £13.21. This to be backdated to the anniversary of the Clerk's appointment (12th June). **Action: Clerk**
 - b. Notification of receipts since the last meeting. None
 - c. Approval of Clerk's salary, expenses, PAYE & NI and approval of Other Payments since the last meeting. Approved.

03/10/2022	Longframlington Memorial Hall	Donation towards screen and trolley	100.00
03/10/2022	GNAAS	Donation	100.00
03/10/2022	Jamie Whicker reimbursement	NFU Insurance Marquee 31/05/2022	245.45
03/10/2022	North Northumberland Hospice	HospiceCare Donation	100.00
10/10/2022	Julie Ayre	Strimming of playing field	22.50
11/11/2022	NTC	Donation	100.00
27/11/2022	Julie Ayre	Mowing playing field x 8 Aug - Oct	320.00
01/12/2022	Rothbury Parish Council (RJBC)	JBC Payment Second Half	256.50
31/12/2022	Garth Rhodes	Salary & Expenses (Oct - Dec)	545.25
31/12/2022	HMRC	PAYE (Oct - Dec)	132.60
03/01/2023	Thropton Parish Council	Coquetdale Cluster Fee	17.12
03/01/2023	Stephen Carey Fund	Donation defib training	100.00
		Total	2039.42

- d. Bank Reconciliation to 3rd January 2022. Approved.

Balance per E- bank statements at 3rd January 2023			2691.71
Less unrepresented cheques			
	03/10/2022	Thropton Parish Council	17.12
	03/10/2022	Stephen Carey Fund	100.00
			117.12
Uncredited Deposits -			0.00
Balance			2574.59
Balance per cash book			2574.59

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- e. To agree Budget and Precept for y.e. 31/03/24. The Budget and Precept of £5500 for 2023/24 was agreed. **See Appendix 1.**
- f. Notification of external auditor appointment for the 2022-23 financial year for the 5-year period until 2026-27. Appointment of new External Auditors 2023 -2028. The appointed auditor was MAZARS LLP. who work out of Newcastle.
- g. To consider quote for the mowing of the Playing Field at Embleton Terrace for 2023. Quote of £855 from Julie Ayre for 2023 was agreed. Normally, as the estimated work was over £500, the Council would require a minimum of three quotations. However, it was agreed, that in past years, attempts to acquire more than one quotation had been unsuccessful and as the quotation was reasonable that this condition could be waived. **Action: Clerk**

- h. Donations:
To discuss BHPC's position on donations. This was an outstanding issue from earlier in the year. Prior to discussion, members read through a short paper provided by JS. The members present agreed that the JS paper raised some very important issues, particularly about the use of public money. However, donations to worthwhile charities and ventures was a normal practice across many local councils throughout the country and that whilst those charities to which we had subscribed in the past may well be part of national bodies, their main source of income was through local fundraising. It was agreed after considerable debate that £500 would remain within the 2023/24 budget for charitable works but that a greater scrutiny of funding requests be made, with grants awarded on the principle that they must have a direct relevance and impact on the residents of the parish. The JS paper also raised issues concerning parish events, fund raising events & activities, and publicity of parish business. There were no resolutions made on these matters which may well be a feature of a future agenda item(s), if members so wished.
Update on recent donations made. At the September meeting it had been agreed that a donation of £100 to hospice care be donated to St Oswald's Hospice, at that time it was thought that this was the hospice to which we had donated in the past. When the Clerk went through the records, he realised we had previously donated to the North Northumberland Hospice Care (NNHC). He spoke with the Chair, who advised that the donation should indeed go to NNHC. In October we finally made the £100 donation to the Stephen Carey fund (for the training event in the summer). As they never received this and there being no record of payment in the bank statement a replacement payment had recently been sent to them. Members were concerned to hear that it had taken a considerable number of requests for NTC to provide their bank details in order to process their £100 donation.
To consider any new donation requests. None.

7. **Planning – To note and discuss any planning issues since previous meeting.**

Reference	Address	Type	BHPC Comment
22/04078/FUL	Land South West Of Wardhill Farm House	Application Registered	NO OBJECTION
22/00834/FUL	Land West Of Wardhill Farm House	Application Withdrawn	See previous minutes for comments
22/01568/LBC	Cockshot Farmhouse	Application Registered	See previous minutes for comments
22/03097/FUL	Brinkburn High House	Application Permitted	See previous minutes for comments

8. **Highways**

- a. Highways and Footpaths Report No matters to report.
- b. Review of the Definitive Map and Statement of Public Rights of Way: Proposal to add a public bridleway 120 metres south west of Craghead to U4038 road. Following the study of this by JS, a letter of support had been submitted to NCC.
- c. Report on any issues raised/ to raise with Highways Department

Clerk had written to thank Highways for the excellent work that the team had done to greatly improve the road from the Lee Siding to the Garleigh Moor junction and raised the following:

- The condition of the road between the Lee Siding and Embleton Terrace junction and beyond towards Longhorsley was of very serious concern. Its condition was treacherous and deteriorating badly and there were many potholes with the road becoming dangerous and difficult to drive on and potentially damaging to vehicles. NCC response: Given that we have done two phases of resurfacing on this road from Garleigh Moor to Lee Siding, I assume it is on the consideration list for further phase(s). I'm afraid this does not guarantee that more work will be carried out next year or indeed subsequent years as we have many roads across the County that need improving, however it will be considered when formulating next years and subsequent programmes. Road has been inspected and repairs to any actionable defects have been scheduled.
- Following a complaint from a resident regarding the state of the road from Pauperhaugh bridge to the Lee Siding Clerk sent a further request for repair to NCC. No NCC response to date
- There had been a number of road works signs left at the Embleton Terrace junction and bollards near to the Lee Siding. NCC response: Signs removed
- On the B6334 at Map ref 117993 a car had come off the road and demolished the style and footpath sign. NCC Response: Countryside team informed but no response to date.
- We recently reported the need for the trees and bushes at the underpass on the B6334/A697 at Weldon Bridge to be cut back. We were grateful for this work to have been done but the area really could do with being tidied up. NCC Response: Highways have not carried out any clearance / verge work at Weldon Bridge.

9. **Wingates Wind Farm Community Fund.** Steve Bray was not able to attend the last meeting as he only found out on the day and had a previous engagement. Mark Fenwick was in attendance. The intention was that Steve would attend as a hand-over arrangement. This may happen at the next meeting. It was agreed that the Clerk write to WWFC to ask if they could send out the planned dates and venues of future WWFC along with relevant papers to both SB and the Clerk, so that we would be able to ensure that the PC was represented. Also, to request the dates of deadlines for grant applications were considered and to inform them of our intention to

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submit a new application for funding towards work to the Parish playing field. The report for the defib grant was still outstanding. David Owen (Chair) and the Clerk had been tasked with this but due to health and other issues they had not been able to get together to do this, but this was to be a priority once David was fully operational. **Action: Clerk**

10. Coquettale Cluster Meeting

- a. Items to discuss from the December Cluster Meeting. JS submitted the following report:
'Interesting opportunities for community funding available from the NCC, if we have ideas for projects. Brinkburn and Hesleyhurst is requested to make a definitive decision on whether or not we will join the Northumberland Neighbourhood Plan. Their concern is that not to do so would cut us out of the Borders funding initiative. Also, if we work together we are more likely to achieve favourable results. The cluster meetings used to be quarterly but dropped to twice a year due to lack of attendance, some parishes dropping out of the cluster. Those present agreed that the meetings are valuable and enable us to invite speakers who will be of interest to parish councillors, but twice yearly means too much may have happened between meetings and so these have gone up to 3 times a year. The next cluster meeting will be in March.'
- b. Items for next Cluster Meeting Agenda.
 - i. How other member parishes dealt with requests for funding.

11. Cemetery & Joint Burial Committee Reports

- a. Longframlington Cemetery. The statement for completion of the land transfer to LPC had now been received. There remained the final registration of all the sections which needed to be completed before the ground could be consecrated. The Diocesan Office required a further formal response from NCC that there were no planning issues associated with the cemetery extension.
- b. Rothbury JBC. The revised constitution required signature by the BHPC Chair. The JBC member councils' financial contributions had been agreed. Other matters concerning maintenance, weed spraying and pest control were discussed.

12. Police Update.

Police invited to meeting but because of shift patterns were unable to attend. No report received.

13. Emergency Resilience Planning including:

- a. Northern Powergrid Feedback from Stakeholder Briefing meeting held on 15th December 2022. NPG had sent an email (previously circulated), which provided links to Q&As, slides and links to other helpful documents from the event.
- b. Update on Longframlington & Rothbury Emergency Action Planning. Longframlington, and the NCC Civil Contingency team, had undertaken a walkthrough of their emergency plan. Several small issues to improve its effectiveness were agreed and the contents for the emergency grab bag confirmed. Most of these have now been acquired and held within a locked cabinet in the Longframlington Memorial Hall. The final written revisions to the plan were awaiting completion. A similar desk top crisis management training day had been held in Rothbury where the emergency plan had been tested and this had proved to be very successful. Rothbury was to carry out a live simulation exercise in the summer.

14. Proposal for Hesleyhurst Parish to join the Coquettale Neighbourhood Plan (CNP).

A further request for Hesleyhurst to join the CNP had been received. Clerk had consulted with Rob Naples, Planning Officer at NCC who confirmed that as a grouped parish there were two options available; that either Hesleyhurst could join the CPN on its own or that Brinkburn & Hesleyhurst could join the CPN as a grouped parish, (if the other CPN members agreed). He also confirmed that agreement had to be made by the full Parish Council of Brinkburn & Hesleyhurst. Members present were favourable to the idea of joining the CPN, preferably as a grouped parish. However, although quorate, as there were a majority of Brinkburn members who were not present at the meeting, those present were uncomfortable in making a formal decision on this matter and deferred this until the next PC next meeting on 14th March. RPC/CPN to be informed of this outcome. **Action: Clerk**

15. Proposal for fundraising for renovations and cutting to hedging around playing field.

JW informed the members that the perimeter hedging and fencing around the playing field needed a considerable amount of cutting back and renovation. It was agreed that JW would undertake preliminary costings for work and materials and develop a bid to WWCF. JW agreed to lead on any further fund raising required. The Clerk to support JW in developing the application to WWCF. **Action: JW/Clerk**

16. Archiving of Parish Council Records.

It was agreed that the Clerk carry out an archiving exercise to reduce the amount of parish council records (which date back many years), kept at his home. This would require a scrutiny of the documentation to decide what to keep, what to send to the NCC Archives and what to destroy. **Action: Clerk**

17. NCC Enforcement Strategy Consultation.

This item was noted but no response to NCC was agreed.

18. Northumberland Sandstone Ridges and Vales: A Valued Landscape Technical Report.

The PC had received a copy of the report which may provide evidence and argument when dealing with future planning issues.

19. Any Other Business

- a. Printing of Council papers. To reduce administrative costs and for sound environmental reason it was agreed to trial an arrangement whereby individual member paper copies of agendas and minutes would not be provided at meetings. One hard copy of the minutes for signature would be available with online copies of the agenda and minutes being circulated to members in advance. Hard copy for individual members of the Clerk's Report (which follows the agenda structure) to continue to be provided for the time being. However, the Memorial Hall had recently acquired a large screen (partially funded by BHPC). Once fully operational it may be possible to move entirely to a paperless meeting scenario. T be agreed at a later date. **Action: Clerk**

20. Items for Next Meeting.

- a. Parish Climate Change Action Plan

21. Date of and Venue for Next Meeting. Tuesday 14th March 2023 at 7.30 p.m. in the Longframlington Memorial Hall

Meeting closed at 9.30 p.m.

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