

MINUTES OF MEETING

Meeting on:	10th September 2024
Meeting at:	Longframlington Memorial Hall
Meeting Time:	7.30 p.m.
Present:	Clrs: Steven Bray (SB), Lesley Hall (LH), Mark Fenwick (MF), David Owen - Chair (DO), Jackie Scarpa (JS), Jamie Whicker (JW)
In attendance:	Clerk: Garth Rhodes.

Meeting opened at 7.32 p.m.

1. **Apologies for Absence.** None
2. **Brinkburn & Hesleyhurst move into the Longhorsley Division.** Cllr Glen Sanderson had felt uncomfortable coming to the meeting as the outcome of the County Council election in May 25 was uncertain and he may no longer be the County Councillor for the division. However, if elected he would very much like to attend the first meeting of the PC following the election. The Chair said that he was very disappointed to receive this last-minute notification, and that the Council had invited him, (in light of the decision by the Boundary Commission to place our parishes in the Longhorsley Division), to provide the PC with information about the division rather than about him as councillor. We would need this information to help us in our transition in May next year. It would be very helpful to receive, in advance of the transition, a review of the division covering such things as: polling arrangements, population centres, transport links, social and economic activities, emergency response arrangements, communications, environmental activities, social media links, links with other Parishes, and any other significant characteristics which might help the Council become part of the expanded division. DO agreed to write to him to this effect and to extend an invitation to him to attend our meeting on 12th November to discuss these issues to help us integrate after the transition.
Action: DO
3. **Table Urgent Business to be discussed in 21 below.** None
4. **Declaration of Interests.** MF: Planning application: 24/02747/FUL, The Old School House, Longframlington NE65 8HY.
5. **Gifts and Hospitality.** None
6. **Minutes of Previous Meeting** - The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 9th July 2024 were reviewed, unanimously approved as a true record and signed as such. (Proposed DO, Seconded LH, All in Favour).
7. **Matters arising out of Minutes.** To receive updates on matters not appearing elsewhere on the agenda including:
 - a. **Councillor Vacancy.** No-one in Hesleyhurst had agreed to submit themselves for co-option. It was agreed that residents of Brinkburn be approached. LH said that the Brinkburn resident who attended the May PC meeting may be willing to stand. She was asked to speak to them and ascertain that they were willing and eligible to stand. The co-option would then take place at the start of the next PC meeting. **Action: LH**
 - b. **Sale of Rothbury estate.** No further information to date. Clerk to write to land agent to request an update. **Action: Clerk**
 - c. **Emergency Planning: Community Flood Plan & Flood Warden applications.** A meeting had taken place with Colin Hall and a colleague from the Environment Agency, attended by MF, JW and the Clerk, to identify the key flood risk areas and issues in the Parish; to develop a strategy to implement a Flood Plan/ infrastructure and to produce a draft map of the key areas of concern which were:
 - i. **Properties in danger of Flooding.** Five properties were identified and mapped
 - ii. **The area of the Parish South of the Coquet** was considered most likely to suffer from serious effects from flooding.
 - iii. **Road Closures due to Flooding.** Three key flashpoints were identified and mapped, which were the fords along the C165 (Lee Ford, Maglin Burn, Tod Burn) which when flooded effectively dissected the southern side of the Parish into three areas effectively cutting off these areas, isolating residents and making accessibility by emergency services and access to authorised refuge centres impossible. Fords out with the parish made this even more problematic.
The Actions & Possible Solutions that were agreed were:
 - i. **The Production of Flood Plan and flood maps.** Plan to include details of flood warning systems and procedures and details of key links/ services/ access routes etc. CH agreed to draft a plan and produce maps (on receipt of draft from BHPC). BHPC to finalise details of draft map identifying flood risks and points of egress etc.
 - ii. **Establish a team of flood wardens and to develop a communication system** via WhatsApp or similar. Important that there were flood wardens for each of the three southern zones.
 - iii. **Make links with other Flood Plan teams** to set up advance warning.
 - iv. **Explore the possibility of flood warning signs and use of cameras at key points.**
 - v. **Consider the purchase of Starlink or other telephony arrangement** for properties (particularly those at Butterknowes) who did/would not have copper cables.

Brinkburn and Hesleyhurst Parish Council



8. **Police Update** No report received. However, an email from Sgt Darren Stapleton had been received to say he was moving to the Prevention Department and sent his thanks and best wishes. His replacement was Sgt 2167 Tracey Brown. Agreed to send a note of welcome to Tracey.

Action: Clerk

9. **Finance**

- a. Notification of receipts since the last meeting Approved.

23/08/2024	CAN	WWCF 116 Initial grant	7500.00
04/09/2024	NCC Ref 6376837	Precept Second Half	3250.00
		Total	10,750.00

- b. Approval of Clerk's salary, expenses, PAYE and approval of Other Payments since the last meeting. Approved.

15/07/2024	Colliedog Computers	Extra Mailbox server annual fee	39.00
12/08/2024	NCC 018647/287988	Insurance renewal	265.71
04/09/2024	Longframlington Memorial Hall	Room booking 24/25 PC & CC&B Committee	252.00
12/08/2024	Julie Ayre	Mowing x 6 (£270). Painting fence/gate/benches (£292). Tidy playing field entrance (£80)	642.00
01/09/2024	Northumberland Estates	Annual rent Playing field	50.00
01/09/2024	Wingates Village Institute	Catering CC&B Information Day 2024	250.00
01/09/2024	W Sutherland	x 6 Scythes/sharpening stones/training	1348.00
01/09/2024	Ryehill Community Ventures	construction 45 nest boxes	450.00
01/09/2024	Roger Powell	Construct/weatherproof 50 nest boxes	946.92
07/09/2024	Jamie Whicker-reimbursement	Stanton Hall Gardens: Purchase of Trees for Paying Field hedging	291.00
09/09/2024	Colliedog Computers	Annual fee 5Gb Exchange Basic	60.00
04/09/2024	Ryehill Community Ventures	Bailer	200.00
		Total	4794.63

- c. Bank Reconciliation. Approved.

Bank Reconciliation at 9th September 2024	
Balance per e-bank statement at 9th September 2023	9918.81
Less unrepresented payments	0.00
Uncredited Deposits	0.00
Balance	9918.81
Balance per cash book	9918.81

- d. Signature update for Bank account. Forms had been completed and now awaiting a visit to the bank to finalise the mandate.

Action: LH/Clerk

- e. Requests for donations. The Parish Council considered a request from North Northumberland Hospice Care. JS proposed, seconded by JW that we did not give a donation this year but that whenever the Council had a public event it would put out collection boxes in aid of HospiceCare. The motion was passed by a majority decision.

Action: Clerk

- f. Annual Insurance & Insurance for Volunteers. The Clerk had eventually received a reply from Zurich via NCCs to say that all suggested activities detailed in our correspondence seemed to be reasonable activities for a Town or Parish Council to be undertaking. The definition of employee within the Zurich policy wordings was extremely broad and provided the same cover to volunteers as it did to full time paid members of staff. The main requirement was that volunteers were under the direct control and supervision of the authority HSE requires volunteers be given suitable training, risks assessments, etc. JW/Clerk to following this up with CAN's development officer to ensure that the correct procedures for volunteers were in place.

Action: JW/Clerk

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

Reference	Address	Status	Parish Council Comments
24/02747/FUL	The Old School House Longframlington NE65 8HY. Demolition of rear/side extension and construction of rear extension to dwelling	Application Registered	No objection

11. **Highways**

- a. Highways and Footpaths Report No issues to report

- b. Report on any issues raised/ to raise with Highways Department
- i. Fencing Panels at Weldon Bridge. JW had asked for these to be removed. Inspector had looked for these along the road not under the bridge. JW to contact Highways to get them removed. **Action: JW**
 - ii. Track on roadside has very large stones and due to incline regularly rolling onto B6344 (adjacent recent roadworks). Reported again on Fix my Street on 30/07. NCC had asked contractor to clear the stones which had been reported had been undertaken. Uncertainty about whether the large stones on the track had been removed. LH to investigate. **Action: LH**
- 12. Wingates Wind Farm Community Fund** Meeting had been postponed until 23rd September. SB had been in touch with Julia Plinston regarding the unadopted road at Embleton Terrace. She had indicated that the Parish Council as a constituted authority could apply on behalf of the Embleton Terrace residents. It was agreed that the Parish Council would in principle agree to submit an application on behalf of the residents (proposed MF, seconded JW) . Residents would need to consider their commitment and level of matched funding. **Action: SB**
- 13. Climate Change & Biodiversity Committee.** To receive a report from the Committee
- The WWCF application for £10k for 2024/25 had been successful and 75% (£7.5k) of the funding had been transferred into the Parish Council account. Activity was already well underway for a number of projects.:
- The Information Event had been a great success
 - Hedge Laying: JW had carried out a survey of four possible hedges for the 2024/25 project. The only one which was suitable as a training aid was at Thistleyhaugh. The Committee agreed to the use of this hedge due to its suitability and that it adjoined a public bridleway/footpath. Hopefully the training would take place in November. If there was project funding still available after this work, further activities could be considered.
 - Nest Boxes: 113 boxes now made. Next step was to carry out siting of the boxes. This would take up to 10 days or more between now and March.
 - Meadow seeding, scything, and baling: Scythes, baler and other equipment now bought, and training underway. Proficiency with the scythes will take time but lots of enthusiasm and interest. Other scything groups in the area taking interest and it was agreed that working together was a very beneficial approach.
 - Baseline survey and data recording. Significant areas of the 'Pink Whale' and other areas in the Parish had now been surveyed.
 - Litter reduction awareness project: This will continue in an informal way at present. Leaving the verges uncut has helped to reduce the amounts of litter seen by the side of the roads.
 - River quality testing. Testing is progressing with checks the first Monday of each month. MF to provide feedback from CRAG regarding E-coli testing and to agree purchase and implementation arrangements of tests. The CRAG Launch was to take place on Thursday 12th September. JW agreed to attend. **Action: JW**
- It had been agreed that a meeting be arranged with Julia Plinston, WWCF, to discuss the possibility to vire funds between projects and use funds for other CC&B activity e.g. Publicity, Landowner Protocol, support and policy & procedure for volunteers, media communications . JW/Clerk were also to meet with the CAN projects officer to discuss an Organisation Health Check with special reference to arrangements and requirements for volunteers. **Action: JW/Clerk**
- The PC agreed that a meeting with the Duke of Northumberland estate's land agent be sought to discuss potential biodiversity projects within the Rothbury Estate. **Action: JW**
- 14. Coquetdale Cluster Meeting**
- a. Items to discuss from the latest Cluster Meeting A team representing a government initiative had made a presentation about a potential walking and cycling route through the Coquet Valley; along the route of the old disused railway. The decision concerning the Definitive Map Modification Order (No 3) 2024 (dismantled railway between Wagtail Farm and Brinkburn Station Parish of Brinkburn) have a significant part to play within such a proposal. (See 16 b below). The Parish Council were very keen to support and be involved in such a development It was suggested that it would be of benefit to discuss this issue with Sue Rogers who had a vast knowledge about footpaths and bridleways in the area. **Action JS**
 - b. Items for next Cluster Meeting Agenda
 - i. Broadband/Copper telephone line
 - ii. Footpaths & Bridleways with respect to Definitive Map Modification Order (No 3) 2024 (dismantled railway between Wagtail Farm and Brinkburn Station Parish of Brinkburn) as part of the potential walking and cycling route through the Coquet Valley **Action. JS**
- 15. Cemetery & Joint Burial Committee Reports**
- a. Longframlington Cemetery. All legal documents for cemetery extension were now complete and signed off. Chair of LPC to meet with Archdeacon on 16th September to discuss final arrangements for the consecration of the land.
 - b. Rothbury JBC. Since taking over as BHPC representative, JW had attended two lengthy meetings where matters concerning the internal audit had been a focal point. The Rothbury Parish Council had found it very difficult to engage an auditor and the one they had, had been very expensive and exacting in her approach. A drainage problem had been identified and there were concerns that untreated effluent may be entering the Coquet. Discussions were ongoing which involved the landlord and Environment Agency about the re-routing of the stream to provide additional burial spaces .

16. Public Rights of Way

- a. Definitive Map Modifications update. No further updates regarding the Definitive Map Modification Order (No 3) 2024 (dismantled railway between Wagtail Farm and Brinkburn Station Parish of Brinkburn). Alex Bell, NCC had contacted the Northumberland Estate's legal representatives to see if they knew of any developments. They had replied to say they had received no new instructions and had passed his email on to Northumberland Estates.
- b. Draft Rights of Way Improvement Plan - Consultation. It was agreed that DO/JS, with the support of the Clerk, to complete the online consultation by 18th October. **Action: DO/JS/Clerk**

17. Honorary Titles To consider the arrangements for Honorary Freedom of the Parish Presentation Ceremony.

- a. Confirmation of date of event. Friday 16th May 2025 was agreed. DO to confirm with Vincent Milburn and Pater Roberts, JS to confirm with Wingates Village Hall. **Action: DO/JS**
- b. Confirmation of venue & refreshments. Wingates Village Hall had confirmed.
- c. Approval of draft Freedom Scroll & Parish Emblem Brenda Barker had produced five wonderful logos/emblems for the Parish. The members agreed to adopt Option D (which will be found in the header of the Minutes) and agreed the design and wording of the Logo. Production of the scrolls to be arranged closer to the Award ceremony. **Action: Clerk**

18. To consider the Local Transport Plan Capital Programme Priorities for 2025-26. (deferred from last meeting). The following three priorities were agreed. Clerk to consult with NCC as to whether previous year's priorities could be resubmitted.

1. **Maglin Burn Ford – solution to raise the road surface/vehicle crossing above flood levels.** The ford across the Maglin has been the scene of at least six car strandings in the last year: one involved a family with young children and another with disabled passengers. Without the response of the local community there would have been serious consequences. Over the last fourteen years at least 30 cars and their occupants have had to be rescued by local residents. Many of the vehicles have had to be scrapped after the event. During flooding of the burn, residents and visitors can be cut off and emergency services may be unable to reach the area. The Parish Council is currently developing its Flood Plan with the Environment Agency and the flooding of the Maglin Ford has been identified as a serious risk to life. Drivers are often unaware of the strength of flow of the burn and attempt to cross at times when it is impassable.
2. **Resurfacing of C165 junction between Embleton Terrace and the Gusset Farm.** This section of the C165 is badly corrugated across this area, and it would not be possible to improve it by patching.
3. **Resurfacing of road between Pauperhaugh and Lee Siding (including replacement of culverts at Suers Hill).** This section of road has deteriorated badly, and past patching and additional wear has led to a very poor surface which now requires more radical improvement. At Suers Hill the section of road has flooded for many years, and according to residents this problem was diagnosed as being the cause of 2 blocked culverts under the road area around 10 years ago. The blocked culverts were confirmed by a NCC Highways survey in November 2023. The surface is constantly being damaged and repaired on a regular basis. On less than heavy rainfall, the road becomes a river, which is hazardous to all road users. We were told by Highways in January 2024 the work would be carried out in the new financial year, but this is still outstanding. **Action: Clerk**

19. Simonside Show report.

The show had been a great success. There had been a problem with the weather prior to the event, delaying the erection of the marquee until the Saturday evening. There had been a fantastic turn-out of volunteers to get everything in place on time. There was around £4,500 raised for charity and the recipients of this would be agreed at the forthcoming Show meeting.

20. To consider a motion to sign up to the Civility and Respect Pledge and adopt the Model Code of Conduct 2020 (deferred from last meeting).

The Council unanimously agreed to sign the pledge and adopt the revised Model Code of Conduct. Proposed MF, Seconded AB, All in Favour). **Action: Clerk**

21. Town and Parish Council Autumn Conference Thursday 3rd October 2024

DO agreed to attend. **Action: DO/Clerk**

22. Policing & crime priorities: Request from Northumbria Police & Crime Commissioner.

The survey had now closed, so no further action required was required.

23. Bus Service Improvement Plan - Safe and Accessible Bus Infrastructure Funding.

Given the tight timescale and the limited nature of the funding, no further action was agreed. However, it was agreed that the Council needed to discuss the demolition of the old bus stop at the B6344 New Houses junction at its next meeting.

24. Any Urgent Business

None

25. Items for Next Meeting

- a. Demolition of the old bus stop at the B6344 New Houses junction

26. Date of Next meeting: Tuesday 12th November 2024 in the Memorial Hall Longframlington at 7.30 p.m.

Meeting closed at 9.49 p.m.

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