

ALLENDALE PARISH COUNCIL

Agreed Minutes of a meeting of Allendale Parish Council at Allendale Village Hall on Thursday 2 October 2025 at 7pm

Present: Present: Cllrs Archer (Chair), Beck, Charlton M, Charlton S, Coulson, Dobson, Dunn, Foster, Jackson (part-attendance), Kirk, White, Mrs Naylor (Clerk), Co Cllr Horncastle

1 Parking Survey [from Agenda Item 15]

Mr Jared Dunn (who had been part of the working group working on the parking survey) had asked to address the meeting to share his experiences of the past three weeks of working with the council regarding the parking public consultation, and this had been accepted by the Chair. After outlining his previous contributions to Allendale, he referenced comments made on and around 12 September 2025 on the Allendale Area Notices Facebook page by Cllr Kirk which, in his opinion, were misrepresentations and untruths and undermined the consultation and himself. After this, he requested an apology from Cllr Kirk. Cllr Kirk declined. Mr Dunn expressed his disappointment at this outcome but thanked the parish council for giving time in the meeting to this. He said that he still felt the survey should represent a useful opportunity to gauge public opinion.

The discussion moved on to issues of data collection and processing. Cllr Kirk asked Mr Dunn if he is a registered as a data processor with ICO. He replied that he was not. Cllr Coulson asked if there would be an online interactive version of the questionnaire. The current provision was an editable pdf which had to be submitted by email because the webpage did not permit direct submissions. Mr Dunn had outlined various options which had been circulated, these included Survey Monkey (subscription only) and JotForm (free version limited to 100 submissions per month). Google Forms, Microsoft Forms were also possible, proceeding with the free version of Jotform was discussed and seemed acceptable to the council – however, Cllr Kirk asked where the online form would be hosted. The parish council would need to be the data holder if personal data was collected. Cllr Beck noted the need to avoid duplicate responses. It was noted that without collecting personal data on the online form such duplicates could not be avoided. However, there was a need for the data to be processed and held in accordance with ICO regulations. Cllr Kirk noted that the council would be audited next year on data handling. Cllr Beck proposed a vote on an interactive online form. Nine councillors voted for the form, Cllr Foster against, Cllr Charlton S abstained. The online form would need to have identical questions to the paper versions. It was agreed that Mr Dunn would to put together such a form. Clerk would then check it and circulate it to councillors for approval. Cllr Dunn suggested that Mr Dunn and Cllr Kirk liaise re data protection issues. It was noted that Mr Dunn had produced and signed a non-disclosure agreement with the parish council, which had been returned to the Clerk. Any decisions involving spending in terms of a survey subscription would need to be discussed at a full council meeting.

As regards the analysis of data, Mr Dunn noted that this had been discussed at the working group and would take place over the month to 15 November 2025 and Mr Dunn and the Clerk would work together on it. Mr Dunn would generate a spreadsheet for recording the responses. The Clerk would input the data in an anonymized form, such that no personal data would be stored. Contact details would be removed from any retained forms, discrepancies and queries would be discussed with Mr Dunn. Mr Dunn would then conduct the analysis in accordance with a proposal that had been circulated to councillors.

There had been various items of correspondence related to parking [Correspondence 10.6]. It was agreed that the Clerk should reply, thanking them for their input, which had been circulated and taken on board. If they have not done so already to fill in the questionnaire. The responses would not be added to the questionnaire data as this would be a duplication.

Cllr Dunn thanked the members of the working group for their time on the project.

2 Public participation

There were over ten members of the public present. In relation to parking, one member of the public noted a number of vehicles with flat tyres and one with no registration plate (Allendale).

Batey Terrace – most of the public in attendance wished to discuss the Batey Terrace Junction in Catton. Correspondence item 10.5 was also noted here. It was noted by Mrs Doody and others that this issue had been raised multiple times over many years, and after a recent accident there were concerns that someone will be killed at the junction. Various suggestions and specific concerns were stated: better signage if coming from the Allendale direction; rumble strips; reduce the speed issues on this blind corner; particular concerns about elderly residents; particular concerns about cyclists; speed limit concerns; concerns about surface water due to a dropped kerb; the dematerialization of the footpath from Allendale to Catton at this point. Co Cllr Horncastle was in attendance and noted that the area of the junction was Village Green. Around 2001 there had been different problems on the VG in Catton and a legal professional (Mr Ricketts) had been brought in to advise. Co Cllr Horncastle explained that the finding had been that the Village Green cannot be touched as they are protected by statute. Since the junction was Village Green, it could not be altered. Co Cllr Horncastle also recommended people contact him about the problems. He also questioned why Catton residents parked on both sides of the road. However, Mr Huddleston noted parking on only one side of the road would lead to a speeding chicane - parking on both sides of the road slows traffic down. Co Cllr Horncastle noted that the Highways officer would be coming out again to look at Catton problems and that he had spent £18,000 on traffic within the parish which could have been spent on community groups and/or in other parishes (he has six parish councils in his area). He also explained that the 20mph limit in Allendale related to the school. He also suggested that the police could be contacted with complaints. It was agreed that the parish council would come out in the next fortnight, probably on a Saturday afternoon to look at the site and possibly have a sit down meeting in the Village Hall. The Chair would liaise with Mr Huddleston to arrange. **[Note: Miss Fairless had written to say that two crashes were mentioned in this discussion]**

Ms Ashman raised concerns re a previous planning application for the Allendale Inn and asked for an explanation of the wording of the minutes in respect of the voting, which was provided. She requested that a copy of the ADNP be put in the library. Clerk to action.

3 Apologies for absence – Cllrs Swaile and Dalton

4 Declarations of interest - no new declarations of interest. A full list of Declarations of interest may be found here
<https://northumberlandparishes.uk/allendale/documents?search=declaration&type=All&year%5Bvalue%5D%5Byear%5D=>

5 Planning applications

25/02579/FUL Replacement roof and frames to rear conservatory at Peth Head Cottage The Peth Allendale NE47 9ND

The parish council noted that the property is actually called Peth House. Cllr Coulson proposed the motion no objection. This was seconded by Cllr Beck. Nine voted in favour of the motion no objection, Cllr Dunn abstained. The motion of no objection was carried.

25/03120/FUL Change of use of self-catering holiday cottage/and additional bedrooms to full residential at Thorn Green Bunkhouse Allenheads Northumberland NE47 9JQ

Cllr Kirk noted that the extension had been the subject of another application. This application seemed to be only a change of use. The vote taken was therefore on the change of use. Cllr White proposed the motion no objection. This was seconded by Cllr Kirk. Seven councillors voted in favour, three abstained (Cllrs Charlton M, Dunn and Dobson). The motion no objection was carried.

25/03146/FUL Erection of single self-contained Shepherds Hut to be used as a short term holiday let with associated Parking, cycle store, amenity

space and refuse/recycling storage area at Land North Of Sparty Lea Farm Sparty Lea Northumberland NE47 9UA

Cllr Dunn stated that this contravened ANDP 1 (General Development Principles) as being not in keeping with the surroundings, being next to a Sparty Lea Farm which may be listed. Cllr Dunn proposed the motion to object under the grounds of Allendale Neighbourhood Development Policy No 1. This was seconded by Cllr Foster. Three voted in favour of the motion to object (Cllrs Charlton S, Foster, Dunn). Five voted against the motion to object (Cllrs Kirk, Beck, White, Coulson, Charlton M). One abstention. The motion to object was not carried.

25/03261/VARYCO Variation of Condition 4 (Biodiversity Mitigation) on approved application 24/01141/FUL in order to change the wording of the...

Cllr Kirk noted that this was a request to replant new trees on the land. Cllr Kirk proposed the motion to support the application. This was seconded by Cllr Dunn and unanimously carried by the council.

25/03408/VARYCO Variation of Condition 2 (approved plans) on approved application 24/00400/FUL in order to retain 1no window from existing building (previously shown as removed) and include one additional window to the first floor of the south gable elevation Wentworth Farm Shield Street Allendale NE47 9BU

This related to changes in windows. The new window is not overlooking anything. Cllr Kirk proposed the motion no objection, this was seconded by Cllr Coulson and unanimously carried by the council.

6 Minutes of the meeting held on 4 September 2025

The minutes were agreed to be an accurate record of the meeting. (Proposed Cllr Beck, seconded Cllr Coulson). Agreed.

7 Matters arising

7.1 To discuss the for sale sign on the Catton Village Green – it was agreed that the Clerk is to write to estate agent, noting that the sign is too prominent on the Village Green and asking them to relocate it adjacent the property. As it stands it looks as though the Village Green is for sale.

7.2 Re September/9.2 Cllr Dunn agreed to purchase wreath for Remembrance Sunday (to be reimbursed) and would lay it. Clerk to send link for purchase.

7.3 Re September/16.10 Cllr Dunn stated that Mr Graham's price would £35 per bench to refurbish.

8 County Councillor and Northumberland County Council update

Co Cllr Horncastle noted that a member of the public had been in touch with him and the Clerk re the Ridings works - the works have finished and the signs have been removed. Co Cllr Horncastle apologised to anyone who had had a missed bin collection. New wagons are on the way but this will be a stepwise process. Cllr Archer noted that the school's solar energy system has been switched off and Mr Vincent had asked when they can be put back on. Co Cllr Horncastle said he will look into this.

County – a new High School with SEND facilities is being built in Berwick at a cost of £50 million. The New Local Plan is being put in place and the call for sites ended last week. A working budget is being put in place for February with £20million savings needed.

9 Council general

9.1 To discuss refreshing the Parish Meeting and agree a date between 1 March and 1 June 2025 – it was agreed to do this and promote it widely. This would be separate from the main council meeting. The date agreed was Thursday 12 March 2026. Cllr Archer to put together ideas re a booklet denoting local businesses and interest groups and circulate it for discussion at the next meeting.

9.2. To discuss Community Governance review and agree APC's reply to the questionnaire (circulated 24 September 2025) response due 30 November 2025. The questions to the local

governance review were discussed and all answers unanimously agreed and noted by the Clerk who would reply.

10 Allotments

10.1 To discuss water supply arrangements – carry over to next meeting

10.2 To confirm the annual rental of £25 per plot and £15 per half plot and to confirm content of tenancy agreements – unanimously agreed. Clerk to liaise with tenants.

10.3 Hedges - It was agreed that Cllr Archer would speak to the resident with the boundary hedge regarding the height for it to be cut to. It was noted that there were two hedges that Matty Robson had quoted for separately, the beech hedge and the leylandii hedge. Matty Robson had been made aware of the correspondence re branches from Mr Colley.

11 Affordable Housing

11. 3 Update following housing needs survey drop-in

Cllr Kirk provided an update. The results will be in to CCHA by late October. After an audit process, the council should receive a report in late November in time for the December meeting. The Clerk would enquire as to whether one site could be progressed before the other.

12 Cemetery

Cllrs Dunn and Foster expressed concern about a grave that had been dug on the day of a recent burial. The Clerk, who had been advised by the gravedigger that this would be happening, noted that this was not uncommon, particularly in wet weather. It was noted that the relationship is between the undertaker and the gravedigger, rather than the parish council and the gravedigger. The grave had been dug on time and the burial had proceeded without problem. The Clerk thanked Cllr Foster for checking on the grave as she requested [though such checking was strictly speaking unnecessary given that the relationship is between gravedigger and undertaker].

13 Rights of Way & Access

Cllr Beck noted that there are some issues to be discussed at another meeting and this would need 20 minutes on the November agenda.

14 Environment & Climate Change

No issues.

15 Towns and Villages

15.1 Allenheads septic tank (fixed item until resolved) – Cllr White noted that this was receiving legal attention from NCC as to whether they inherited rights and responsibilities for it from Tynedale District Council.

15.2 To identify three traffic priorities (response due 17 October 2025)

There was a discussion about traffic priorities. It was agreed to put the following three traffic priorities forward. Clerk to action:

1. The dangerous junction at Batey Terrace, Catton, which has very poor visibility and would not meet current planning standards.
2. Speed limit and enforcement through Catton which has five different junctions onto the main road
3. Problem of parking on both sides of the road in Catton.

Cllr Dunn noted the speed through Thornley Gate. It was noted that the parish council could keep a register of near misses.

15.3 Dropped kerbs and other transport matters – the site visit from Neil Snowdon has not happened yet.

15.4 Update on parking survey so far and to discuss arrangements for analysis of data – see Item 1.

15.5 Review of policy re Listed Buildings and Conservation Area – carry over to November.

15.6 Provision of further bus shelters – carry over to December (once the shelter near the Allendale public toilets has been installed). Cllr Kirk noted that our funding applications are going through the internal audit department at NCC and that we should assume that any further bus shelters will need to be fully funded by the parish council.

15.7 To discuss weed-killing arrangements and qualifications therefor – carry over to December

15.8 To receive quotes for the extension of the mowing contract and discuss same – quotes for the extension of the contract had been received from Masterplan and circulated to councillors. It was proposed to extend the contract for two years (six months mowing per the current appendix), £12500 2026; £12875 2026. Proposed by Cllr Kirk. Seconded by Cllr Foster. Unanimously agreed. Clerk to liaise with Masterplan for the paperwork.
It was noted that NCC bill mowing reclaim bill needs sorting and that input on hours should be coming from Mr Gilbertson. Also the mole-ing at for Wentworth Park should be reclaimed.

15.9 To note the bramble removal at Sandhill and discuss the stump, receive quotes – the brambles had been dug out. Cllr Kirk indicated that the stump is not still growing and the wall has been rebuilt already round the stump. Cllr Coulson agreed it was dead, but there were some other trees going in the area. A quote for £225 had been received from Masterplan to grind out and remove the stump. Five councillors voted in favour, five abstained. Clerk to instruct Masterplan to remove the stump.

15.10 To receive an update re planters for Bullring and Shield Street – Cllr Dunn noted that there were three planters covered by the Isaac's well grant application. Therefore the ones from near the Well could be moved to the Bullring – subject to them being stable.

15.11 To confirm the Clerk should instruct the Autumn tree survey (Village and Cemetery) to take place after leaf fall - unanimously agreed.

15.12 To discuss use of the telephone kiosk and visit by electrician – carry over, telephone is still in situ and therefore completion statement has not been issued.

16 Correspondence

All correspondence received was noted.

Re item 10.6 see Minute Item 1.

10.9 – Clerk to reply and pre-advise them of the March meeting to which they would be invited.

10.15 – it was agreed that no change was needed to the polling stations.

17 Finance

16.1 Accounts for payment/Bank reconciliation

Cllr Kirk proposed to accept the accounts for payment. Cllr White seconded. This was unanimously agreed. This included the Bishop's bill (when received) and 2x £100 bill received today for moleing from Mr Rutherford. These would be put through together once the Bishop's bill had been received.

Community account balance as of 30.9.25 = £25,909.90

Commercial Instant Access Account as of 30.9.25 = £10,579.38

Public Sector Deposit Fund of CCLA balance as of 30.9.25 = £45,000.00

16.2 Audit conclusion The conclusion of the audit of accounts and certificate as received from the external auditor was noted.

16.3 Clerk salary review - this had been actioned by Cllr Kirk and the payroll manager.

16.4 Budget process for 2025/26 budget request for sub-committee input – Cllr Kirk noted the need for subcommittee input for the budget in advance of the November full meeting (fully costed projects). The draft budget would be discussed by the Finance Committee first in October, then at a full council meeting in December, then published for public comment. It would then be finalised at the January council meeting. Clerk to circulate current budget. In terms of budget v actuals so far, Cllr Kirk noted that grass cutting was higher than budgeted because the budget had been pre-contract (and only based on six months). Fuel costs were significantly lower than budgeted. Election costs were over. The bus shelter will be over because no grant has been forthcoming.

16.5 The precept installment (£23,000) has been received. Cllr Kirk proposed a transfer of £10K into the CCLA account. This was seconded by Cllr Coulson. All agreed. Clerk to arrange.

18 Matters for 6 November 2025 Agenda

- Budget input if needed
- Website update re trial and confirm go ahead
- Allotment water supply proposal from subcommittee
- Rights of way subcommittee-led discussion (20 mins)
- Listed buildings and conservation area

December

- Code of Conduct
- Weedkilling arrangements
- Discussion of draft budget and to confirm publication of the draft budget for public comment

Other items carried over as mentioned above

19 Private session/Confidential item(s) [Council only]

20 Next Parish Council Meeting: Thursday 6 November 7 pm, Allendale Village Hall

The meeting ended at 9.57 pm.