
Brinkburn and Hesleyhurst Parish Council

MINUTES OF ANNUAL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Meeting on: 14th May 2024
Meeting at: Longframlington Memorial Hall
Meeting Time: 7.30 p.m.
Present: Steve Bray (SB), Lesley Hall (LH), David Owen (DO), Jackie Scarpa (JS), Jamie Whicker (JW)
In attendance: One member of the public, Clerk: Garth Rhodes

The meeting opened at 7.30 p.m.

1. **Apologies for Absence** – Mark Fenwick (MF)
2. **Minutes of the Annual Parish Council Meeting 9th May 2023**- were approved as a correct record and signed as such (Proposed VM, Seconded JW, All in Favour).
3. **Annual Review: Cllr Owen gave a summary of issues from the past year:**

This had been a busy year for the PC and the Parish. The proposed sale of the Rothbury Estate had affected a large number of people. And for the PC, the original proposal to include the sale of the playing field (which was on lease from the Estate) was of concern. However, following our approach to the landowners, the retraction of sale of the field had been a welcomed success. The intention was that that the landowners would contact the PC regarding the future arrangements for the field following the sale of the estate, but currently the sale seemed to have stalled. The proposed Rothbury Forest development had also been very worrying, as the loss of the traditional open landscape would have a very real negative impact on our flora and fauna. This proposal seems to have been put into abeyance during the sale of the Rothbury Estate, but the PC would need to be mindful that this may come back if and when the estate is sold. The closure of the B6334 for most of the year had made a significant impact, particularly for residents at Todstead who had to deal with the danger and damage caused by heavy vehicles and those using Villa Lane as a rat run. Generally, the roads in the Parish were in a sorry state, although repairs were underway in various places, now that the better weather had come.

The main development this year had been the development of the Biodiversity Committee which, with the involvement of the community, had successfully achieved a number of projects including the hedge laying in the playground, the building and siting of bird boxes, wildflower planting and water quality testing of the Coquet. None of this would have been achieved without the significant contribution from the Wingates Windfarm Community Fund.

The production and circulation of a parish newsletter had enabled the PC to share important issues with the Parish and had enabled members to develop links into the community.

The development of the Emergency Action Plans at Longframlington and Rothbury had been a benefit for the Parish. Longframlington did actually activate its plan during the Storm Babat power cuts. Rothbury's plan seems to have been less proactive of late.

The Boundary Commission's decision to move Brinkburn out of the Shilbottle Division and Hesleyhurst out of the Rothbury Division had been extremely disappointing. The PC and residents had fought hard to get the Commission to put both parishes into Rothbury, but this had been completely ignored. The next local government elections in 2025 would see Brinkburn & Hesleyhurst moving into the Longhorsley Division with Glen Sanderson (if elected) as our county councillor.

On behalf of the Parish Council, DO thanked the Clerk for his work.
4. **Council Membership.** Vincent Milburn after serving the Council for many years had notified that he was standing down from his position as Councillor and Vice Chair (See minutes of Parish Council 14th May 2024 for further information).
5. **Election of Officers**
 - a) **Election of Chairperson.** DO indicated that he was both willing to stand or stand down as Chairperson for a further year. There were no further nominations. LH nominated DO and SB seconded. All in favour.
 - b) **Election of Vice Chairperson.** LH agreed to stand as Vice-Chairperson. DO nominated LH and JS seconded. All in favour.
 - c) **Agree new Cheque Signatories and complete forms.** DO, and the Clerk to remain as bank signatories for the forthcoming year. LH to become new signatory.
 - d) **Councillor responsibilities for the coming year were agreed:**

• Chairperson	DO
• Vice Chair	LH
• Climate Change & Biodiversity Committee	JW/JS/MF
• Cluster Meetings:	JS & LH agreed to stand in if/when JS not available

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- Highways and Footpaths JS
- Rothbury Joint Burial Committee JW
- Longframlington Cemetery MF
- Millennium Field JW
- National Park DO
- Wingates Wind Farm Community Fund Committee SB
- Parish Noticeboard SB
- Defibrillator SB
- Longframlington Emergency Planning Group DO
- Rothbury Emergency Planning JW
- Communication & Media DO

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.05 p.m.

Garth Rhodes

Clerk

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