

**Minutes of Allendale Parish Council Meeting  
held on Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> November 2023 at 7pm  
at Catton Village Hall**

Present: Cllr Philipson (Chair), Beck, Coulson, Graham, Halliday, Howard, Kirk, Simmonds, Swaile, Villiers-Stuart, White, Co Cllr Horncastle and H Newsome (Clerk).

**1) Apologies for absence and councillor news**

There were no apologies for absence. The Clerk confirmed that there were no applications received for councillor vacancies by the date of the deadline.

**2) Declarations of interest**

See APC's website for a full list:

[Declarations of Interest \(new council 2022\) 0.pdf \(northumberlandparishes.uk\)](https://northumberlandparishes.uk/Declarations%20of%20Interest%20(new%20council%202022)%20%20.0.pdf)

**3) Planning Committee – planning applications**

**23/03589/FUL Land East Of South View Thornley Gate**

Cllr White proposed **no objection** to the application with Cllr Howard seconding this and the motion was unanimously carried by the Council.

**23/03919/FUL and 23/03920/LBC Residential Premises Post Office, Sparty Lea**

Cllr Simmonds proposed **no objection** to the application with Cllr Beck seconding this as it was in keeping with **Allendale Neighbourhood Development Plan (ANDP) Policy 7: Conversion of Buildings in the Open Countryside**, and the motion was unanimously carried by the Council. The Clerk to inform Northumberland County Council (NCC) that the Foul Drainage Assessment Form (FDA) states that the water is supplied from the public mains which is incorrect as the water is supplied by a spring that is shared with five properties, and to ask NCC to correct the address on the application as it should read Old Post Office.

**23/03951/FUL Land North Of Bridge End The Peth**

Cllr Kirk proposed **no objection** to the application with Cllr Howard seconding this, provided that the applicant carried out the work to clad and incorporate the green roof and shelter as soon as possible, as the container had already been in situ (in a conservation area) for some time, and the motion was unanimously carried by the Council.

**4) Public participation**

There were **four** members of the public in attendance.

**5) Minutes of the previous meetings held on 5<sup>th</sup> October 2023**

Cllr Kirk proposed to accept that the minutes of the meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> October 2023 be signed by the Chair as a correct record, and the Council agreed unanimously with the following correction under 11) Village tree works:

The Council agreed that when more substantial tree surgery was needed it would obtain quotes after the job had been identified, so that work did not automatically go to the arborist identifying the work. However, the arborist identifying the work should not be prevented from quoting for the work and may be awarded the work on a successful quote.

**6) Matters Arising**

**Allendale Neighbourhood Development Plan (ANDP) Review update**

Cllr Swaile said that the ANDP Review Committee had met on 6<sup>th</sup> November and reviewed NCC's detailed comments on the document **ANDP – Guidance Note on Reviewing the Neighbourhood Plan** in which was said that the ANDP was out of kilter with NCC's Local Plan. After consideration it agreed to formally respond to the document and proposed no change to two of the comments made, but maintain ANDP's

existing policies that were stronger, and in keeping with living in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The ANDP Committee further agreed that it did not wish to undertake either a material or substantial modification review of the ANDP, but it did agree that a minor review of the Plan to improve the formatting would be useful, and that it would take advice from NCC's Sarah Brannigan.

Cllr Howard proposed to accept the recommendation of the ANDP Committee with Cllr Swaile seconding this and the motion was unanimously carried by the Council.

## **7) County Councillor and Northumberland County Council update**

### **Budget cuts**

Co Cllr Horncastle said that the biggest issue that NCC was currently dealing with was sorting out the budget for next year. He said that NCC had made £30 million savings over the next two years with no cuts to frontline services and no redundancies.

### **Former Allendale First School**

Cllr Coulson said that the delay in Higher Ground signing its new lease was due to errors in the new lease, but he expected these to be resolved soon. The Clerk said that the clean-up of the school including removing graffiti, promised by NCC by 18<sup>th</sup> October, had not taken place and Cllr Horncastle said that he would follow this up with Estates.

### **Household Waste Recovery Centre**

Co Cllr Horncastle said that Northumberland County Council would be a) removing its charges for disposing of rubble at its Household Waste Recovery Centres from April 2024, and b) introducing food recycling from April 2025.

### **Proposed bollards in front of the Co-op Shop**

Cllr Horncastle confirmed that NCC would not be meeting the costs of installing a drop kerb and bollards outside the Co-op as it would be setting a precedent, and that it would be up to the Co-op to find the budget needed to install these. Cllr Horncastle said that NCC, that had already provided an estimate for the work, would still do the work or the Co-op could consider using an alternative contractor who would need to be qualified to work on public roads and highways (that is hold a Street works ticket).

### **Relocation of bus stop in Allendale**

Cllr Horncastle re-confirmed that he would contribute a minimum of £2k to the costs of installing a new bus shelter on the north-west side of the road in Allendale.

### **Traffic safety at Allendale Primary School**

Cllr Horncastle said that following on from a request from the Headteacher of the school, that NCC were looking at installing a crossing with a fence on the school side of the road, opposite the entrance to the Recreation Park, to prevent children from running from the school on to the road at that point.

### **Traffic safety in Catton**

Cllr Horncastle confirmed that he had done all that he could do to push Highways into improving traffic safety in Catton.

## **8) Allotments Committee**

There were no actions.

## **9) Cemetery Committee**

### **Cemetery wall**

Cllr Howard confirmed that Alan Murray would be re-building the stone wall at the entrance to the cemetery at weekends starting on 18<sup>th</sup> November. He and Cllr Philipson had visited Alston Stone Quarry and ordered six tons of walling stone and four tons of through stones that had since been delivered, which was sufficient to re-build the whole wall.

## **10) Rights of Way & Access Committee**

There were no actions.

## **11) Towns & Villages Committee**

### **Bus stop seating and shelter**

The Bus Shelter working group had met to look at the design options for a suitable bus shelter but were not yet ready for making a recommendation to the full Council. The Clerk to plan for a follow up meeting on 23<sup>rd</sup> November to review the options for presentation at the 7<sup>th</sup> December parish council meeting. The Council agreed that it was important to get the right design even if that meant there would be some delay in getting it installed.

### **Village tree inspection**

Matty Robson to conduct the second of two visual inspections of the trees each year in Allendale centre, and the annual visual inspection of the Cemetery trees, as soon as practically possible.

## **12) Correspondence**

**Phil Walter** – The Council discussed the traffic safety issues raised by Phil Walter that it too was concerned about and agreed that the school and authorities were monitoring the situation and acting with traffic wardens visiting the village recently and plans to install a crossing. The Council also acknowledged that its Grass cutter had previously apologised for the grass cutting not being up to his usual high standards, but this had largely been due to the wet weather that had set him back.

**Gavin Hunt** – The Council upheld its former decision that it would not carry out tree works to avoid leaves from blocking the gullies and causing flooding to his garden as there were many homes in our rural parish that were in the same situation and that it did not wish to set a precedent.

**Chris Garner** – The Council acknowledged that there were a lot of residents that don't have debit/credit cards and they rely on using cash for goods and services. As banks are required to provide cash withdrawal points in rural areas, the Council agreed to write to the owners of the ATM (outside the Post Office) and urge it to fill it and maintain it more frequently.

**Linda Handcock** – Cllr Howard had examined the grave turf issue of Ms Handcock's late parents and noted the bare soil issue on several of the graves. He said that the problem was caused by adjacent graves settling over the years that causes the grass mower to dip into the settled graves resulting in the mowing blades scraping the grass of the adjacent graves. He said that there were signs that the grass was recovering and that it was likely to come away again in the Spring.

**Dr Alan Donaldson** – The Council was sorry to hear about the problems that Allenheads residents had been experiencing including a second home resident blocking access to the riverbank and fell and were relieved to hear from Dr Donaldson that this issue was likely to be resolved shortly. In relation to the anti-social behaviour of visitors to the area, particularly since the Covid lockdown, the Council recommended that residents should keep reporting these issues by using Northumberland County Council's <https://fix.northumberland.gov.uk/> portal. Dr Donaldson wished to record how grateful he and his fellow residents were to Cllr White who had been very helpful in listening to them and advising them.

The Clerk to use the Council's Facebook page to encourage residents to come forward should they have any information relating to environmental crime (eg fly tipping), for example, identifying vehicles.

**Valeria Dunn, AVLHG** – The Council listened to AVLHG's plans for refurbishing Isaac's Well and the immediate area around it that had the support of Roger Morris and confirmed that it would contribute to these costs when the time came. The Clerk to ensure that Isaac's Well was listed as a Parish Council asset.

## **13) Finance Committee**

### **Accounts for payment/bank reconciliation**

Cllr Kirk proposed that the accounts for payment, seconded by Cllr Howard.

**Treasurer's Account** bank balance as of 31<sup>st</sup> October 2023. **£15,306.81**

**Business 30-Day Notice Account** bank balance as of 31<sup>st</sup> October 30<sup>th</sup> 2023. **£11,042.17**

**Public sector Deposit Fund of CCL** bank balance as of 31<sup>st</sup> October 30<sup>th</sup> 2023. **£60,000.00**

## **Finance Committee meeting**

The Finance Committee would meet on 17<sup>th</sup> November (later changed to 28<sup>th</sup> November).

### **14) Matters for 7<sup>th</sup> December 2023 agenda.**

**Arnison Jubilee Almshouses trustee appointment**

**Bus shelter update**

### **15) Confidential agenda item (for Council only)**

There was one item.

### **16) Date of next Parish Council**

The next monthly Parish Council meeting would take place on **7<sup>th</sup> December 2023** at 7pm at St Cuthbert's Church Hall.

[The meeting ended at 22:00](#)