
Brinkburn and Hesleyhurst Parish Council

MINUTES OF MEETING

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| Meeting on: | 12th March 2024 |
| Meeting at: | Longframlington Memorial Hall |
| Meeting Time: | 7.30 p.m. |
| Present: | Cllrs: Steven Bray (SB), David Owen - Chair (DO), Jackie Scarpa (JS), Jamie Whicker (JW) |
| In attendance: | Bill Crawford NCC Elections Office (BC), Clerk: Garth Rhodes. |

The meeting opened at 7.34 p.m.

1. **Apologies for Absence.** Lesley Hall (LH), Vincent Milburn (VM), Mark Fenwick (MF).
2. **Parish Boundary Commission proposals update: Review of Parliamentary polling districts and polling places.** Bill Crawford from the County Council's Elections Office explained that NCC had prepared a set of draft proposals for polling districts and polling places that align with the new Parliamentary constituencies and the new electoral divisions that would operate from May 2025. He described what was to happen regarding polling stations following the Local Government Boundary Commission's decision to move Brinkburn & Hesleyhurst into the Longhorsley Division and asked the PC for their advice on the best place for voting to take place. He provided the members with maps of the new polling district. The situation was a mess. The Parliamentary Constituency in its review had kept Brinkburn & Hesleyhurst in the Berwick Constituency, yet many of the parishes in the reformed Longhorsley division sat within the Morpeth Constituency. The Elections Office was loathe to keep the same voting arrangements for Brinkburn (which had used the Longframlington Memorial Hall for voting, being in the Shilbottle Division) and Hesleyhurst (which has used the Rothbury Jubilee Hall being in the Rothbury Division) as this would be extremely complicated for them whenever parliamentary and local elections coincided. So, they were consulting with the Parish Council, informally at this stage, but in a formal way later in the year or order to identify possible venues for a Polling Station for those parishes in the Longhorsley Division sitting within the Berwick Constituency. The PC were able to provide a few suggestions but it was unable to make these public as the County Council had yet to approach these venues.
3. **To clarify procedures for handling matter in accordance with Standing Orders**
 - a. Review of Structure and contents of the Parish Council Meeting Agenda to include Standing Items. The following items were agreed as Standing Items.
 - i. Table Urgent Business to be discussed.
 - ii. Declaration of Members Interests.
 - iii. Declaration of Gifts & Hospitality.
 - iv. Climate Change & Biodiversity.
 - v. Emergency Planning.
 - b. Emergency Business of the Council and its Committees. Should it not be appropriate to convene an extraordinary meeting then any emergency business to be handled by a designated person, usually the Clerk, the Chairman and one other councillor. The scope of the delegated authority to be minuted and periodically reviewed. Actions to be reported promptly to the Council.
 - c. Declaration Pecuniary Interest. Clerk was unable to locate the current online copies of members' Declaration of Pecuniary Interests. It was agreed if these could not be found then forms to be circulated to members in advance of the next meeting for their completion. **Action: Clerk**
4. **Minutes of Previous Meeting** The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 9th January 2023 were reviewed, unanimously approved as a true record and signed as such. (Proposed JW, Seconded SB, All in Favour).
5. **Matters arising out of Minutes.** To receive updates on matters not appearing elsewhere on the agenda including:
 - a. Sale of the Rothbury Estate & nominations for Community Assets update. No new information on this matter had been received. JS reported that she had been approached by a resident on the Rothbury Estate who informed her that as a result of the sale, the water supply to housing in the estate had been tested and found to have bacteria. Some residents had been required to install water filtration systems at their own cost. Clerk to investigate with Northumbria Water. **Action: Clerk**
JS also reported that residents in properties beyond Butterknowes had no internet connection. It was agreed that JS report this at the next Cluster meeting and ascertain what help may be available, as internet and phone connections were on the agenda. If no provision was planned, it was agreed that the PC should consider submitting a further request for funding from WWCF to provide internet connections to these properties. **Action: JS**
6. **Police Report.** None received. It was agreed to invite the police representatives to attend the July meeting. **Action: Clerk**
7. **Finance**
 - a. Notification of receipts since the last meeting. None.

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

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| 12/01/2024 | Thropton PC | Cluster Fees 2024 | 20.90 |
| 12/01/2024 | Garth Rhodes (reimbursement) | Amazon x20 bin bag holders | 139.80 |
| 01/02/2024 | Longframlington Memorial Hall | CC&B Meeting | 16.00 |
| 03/03/2024 | Longframlington Memorial Hall | CC&B Meeting | 16.00 |
| | | Total | 192.70 |

- c. Requests for donations. The amount set aside for donations for the current year had been £500 of which a donation for £100 had already been made to Friends of Rothbury First School. Two further requests had been received from CAB Northumberland and the Great North Air Ambulance. However the Council had set aside £400 not included in the budget forecast for Climate Change & Biodiversity projects (to support activities which were not funded by WWCF), of which £222.40 had been spent on litter picking equipment. It was agreed not to support funding requests from the Council's funds for the forthcoming year as this would significantly reduce the Council's contingency fund, placing it in a vulnerable position. However, whenever the PC held public events, it would provide collection boxes for the GNAA. The position to be reviewed annually.
- d. Bank Reconciliation to 11th March 2024 Approved.

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| Balance per bank statements at 1st February 2024 | | | 5550.81 |
| Less unpresented cheques | | | |
| | 12/01/2024 | Garth Rhodes | 139.80 |
| | 01/02/2024 | Longfram Mem Hall | 16.00 |
| | 03/03/2024 | Longfram Mem Hall | 16.00 |
| | | | 171.80 |
| Uncredited Deposits - | | | 0.00 |
| Balance @ 11/03/2024 | | | 5379.01 |
| Balance per cash book | | | 5379.01 |

Whilst the above balance appeared to be somewhat greater than previous years, a significant element of this was made of monies which had been donated by WWCF for Biodiversity projects and which was already allocated expenditure.

8. Publicity, Information & Communication with Residents

- a. March Letter to residents had been well received. One letter of endorsement and several positive comments had been received. The Chair thanked members for undertaking delivery of the letters. It was agreed that the next newsletter include information about the Hay Show and Country Fair. Members agreed it was important to demonstrate stronger links with the Country Fair.
- b. Regular reports in local parish magazines An article concerning the work of the CC&B Committee had been published on the Northumberland Green Hub online magazine. This article to be used for the local parish magazines. JW was also working with CAN/WWCF to produce a similar article. **Action: JW**
- c. Actions to improve communication through parish webpage The Clerk had written to Northumberland NALC to ask if there were any plans to improve the website and had been informed that this was under consideration. It was agreed that the PC populate the Community section of the webpage with interesting local news and information and that regular information reports be included following each PC meeting. A member would be identified at each meeting to take responsibility for writing this. JW agreed to produce the first of these. The Clerk would upload all relevant information onto the webpage and take responsibility for editing. Any issues of contention to be discussed with the Chair in advance. **Action: JW/Clerk**
9. **Planning** – To note and discuss any planning issues since previous meeting. There were currently no requests for consultation that had not already been commented on.

| Reference | Address | Type | Status |
|--------------|---|-------------|-----------|
| 23/04408/FUL | The Old School House Longframlington NE65 8HY | Application | Withdrawn |

10. Highways

- a. Highways and Footpaths Report. Style adjacent Embleton Terrace still not repaired. Footpath sign at Sunnyside needing repair. **Action: JS**
- b. Report on any issues raised/ to raise with Highways Department
- Overflowing drain from manhole between Lee School House and Suers Hill. Work not yet been done. **Action: JW**
 - C165 Lee Farm – Embleton Terrace. Preparation work was complete. Awaiting resurfacing.
 - B6344 New Houses to Weldon Bridge , Villa Lane, Todstead Roadworks and traffic diversions. PC had been informed by Trevor Thorne that B6344 at Todstead will reopen 16/17 March.
 - Litter, litter picking and siting of waste bins. NCC would not support the placing of waste bins in rural areas such as laybys as this encourages fly tipping. They may support/provide signage. Awaiting the Enforcement Officer to respond on this matter.

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11. **Review of GDPR procedures** – It had been agreed some time ago that the PC would await the outcome of Longframlington PC's (LPC) review and then to consider following their practice. LPC has now completed their process. It was agreed to send draft copies of the proposed BHPC GDPR documentation to the Chair for his scrutiny and the Social Media Policy to JW who would then report back to the Committee to recommend the next steps. **Action: DO/JW/Clerk**
12. **Climate Change & Biodiversity** – To receive a report on recent activities since the last meeting and present potential projects to be funded by WWFCF. Notes of the last two meetings had been sent out to members. JW reported that the hedge laying which was near completion and hedge laying training course had been a tremendous success. One problem had been getting rid of the brash. Professional advice had been taken and burning was the preferred method. This would take place under a controlled event. A number of indigenous deciduous trees had been found in the hedge and would now need protecting and it was agreed that the barbed wire fence on the outer side of the hedge would need reinstating. A litter picking event at each side of the roadworks at Todstead, prior to the reopening was to take place. The contractors had agreed to clear the litter with the confines of the roadworks. Areas for meadow seeding had been identified and seeding would take place as soon as the land was dry enough. Water testing kits had now been received and the start of testing was imminent. The CC&B committee were in the process of extending their current projects and would be making a further bid to the WWFC. The committee had agreed to concentrate their efforts for the forthcoming year along the eastern corridor of the Coquet, where they had received positive support from local landowners.
13. **Emergency Planning**
- a. Emergency Planning in respect to Flood Warnings. Copy of letter sent out to Whitton & Tosson PC (WTPC) residents had been received. It was agreed that the PC would look at WTPC's approach and see if it was something it could adopt. WTPC were to meet with Colin Hall from the Environment Agency to discuss a Flood Warning Plan. Agreed to await the outcome of this meeting before proceeding further.
14. **Wingates Wind Farm Community Fund.** There had been no items for consideration for the last meeting and so it had been cancelled. It was agreed to submit a bid for the erection of a stand/plaque/information board for the Embleton Terrace Playing Field. JW agreed to cost this out. **Action: JW**
15. **Coquetdale Cluster Meeting**
- a. Items to discuss from the last Cluster Meeting. There had been no meeting since the last PC meeting
- b. Items for next Cluster Meeting Agenda
- i. Lack of internet to properties within the Parish
- ii. Impact of the parish boundary changes on BHPC
16. **Cemetery & Joint Burial Committee Reports**
- a. Longframlington Cemetery. No current issues. Still awaiting Land Registry confirmation of land transfer and from Diocesan Office re consecration.
- b. Rothbury JBC. No report.
17. **To receive Definitive Map Modification MADE Orders.**
- a. No.3 2024 PB Nos 33 & 44.
- b. No.5 2024 -BOAT 26.
- Members were delighted that these orders for a public bridleway along the old railway track between Brinkburn Station Cottage and Wagtail Farm and a byway open to all traffic between C168 and Brinkburn Station Cottage had been made, which would now provide an excellent public right of way between the Forest Burn and Rothbury.
18. **To receive report on the recent Annual Joint Town & Parish Council Conference County Hall.** Deferred. Agreed to remove from agenda.
19. **Town and Parish Council Spring Conference Thursday 14th March.** A final reminder had been received. A no-one was available to attend the Clerk was asked to request any reports/information of the event. **Action: Clerk**
20. **Any Urgent Business** None
21. **Items for Next Meeting**
- a. AGM – Election of Officials- Review of the specific Officials and Committees of the Council
- b. Annual Accounts & Preparation of AGAR
22. **Date of Next Meeting and Annual Parish Council Meeting: Tuesday 14th May 2024 at 7.30 p.m. Longframlington Memorial Hall**

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