

**Minutes of Allendale Parish Council Meeting  
held on Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2024 at 7pm  
at Allendale Village Hall**

Present: Cllr Philipson (Chair), Beck, Coulson, Graham, Gray, Howard, Johnson, Kirk, Simmonds, Swaile (Vice-Chair), White and H Newsome (Clerk).

**Annual Meeting of the Council**

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

Apologies were received from Cllrs Bron, Villiers-Stewart and Co Cllr Horncastle.

**2) Declarations of interest**

See APC's website for a full list: <https://bit.ly/3JevZZb> Cllr Johnson declared an interest in Allen Valley Bowling Club.

**3) Nominations for the Chair**

Cllr Philipson proposed to elect Cllr Swaile as Chair, seconded by Cllr Howard, and this was unanimously agreed by the Council.

**4) Nominations for the Vice Chair**

Cllr Swaile proposed to elect Cllr Coulson as Vice-Chair, seconded by Cllr Beck, and this was unanimously agreed by the Council.

**5) Signing of Declarations of Acceptance**

Cllrs Swaile and Coulson signed their declarations of acceptance following their election, and all the other councillors present at the meeting did too.

**6) Adoption of Standing Orders**

Cllr Philipson proposed to adopt the Standing Orders, and this was seconded by Cllr Howard, and this was unanimously agreed by the Council.

**7) Adoption of Financial Regulations**

Cllr Graham proposed to adopt the Financial Regulations and seconded by Cllr Johnson, and this was unanimously agreed by the Council.

**8) Appointment to Committees**

Cllr Kirk proposed to rename the Allendale Neighbourhood Development Plan (ANDP) Review committee as the Affordable Housing Committee now that the review was complete, seconded by Cllr White, and this was unanimously agreed by the Council.

**Affordable Housing:** Cllrs Swaile, Coulson, Kirk, Philipson, Simmonds, Swaile, Villiers-Stuart (tbc) and White  
**Allenheads Trust** – Cllr White

**Allotments** – Cllrs Coulson, Beck, Bron (tbc) & Villiers-Stuart (tbc)

**Allendale Education Endowment Trust** – Cllr Swaile and Cllr Coulson

**Allendale Village Hall** – Cllr Coulson

**Arnison Jubilee Almshouses** – Cllr Simmonds

**Cemetery** – Cllrs Howard, Philipson, Simmonds, Graham, White and Bron (tbc)

**Environment & Climate Change** – Cllrs Swaile, Coulson, Beck, Bron, Johnson (and, informally, Gray)

**Finance** – Cllrs Philipson, Simmonds, Graham, Kirk, Howard & Gray

**Haydon Bridge & Allendale Medical Practice, Patient Participation Group** – Cllr Johnson

**High Forest Community Association** – Cllr Howard

**Rights of Way & Access** – Cllrs: Beck, Coulson, Gray, Johnson, and Villiers-Stuart (tbc)

**Towns & Villages (to include electrical vehicle charging and parking)** – Cllrs: Beck, Graham, Gray, Johnson & Swaile

Everyone to consider ways in which other members of the community could contribute to the Council's committee work.

## **Meeting of the new Parish Council**

### **9) Planning Committee – planning applications**

#### **24/01143/FUL - Lonkley Head Farm Lonkley Head Allendale**

Cllr Gray declared an interest and left the room. The Council discussed the application and agreed that the scale of the turbine and its location was not in proportion to its need. Cllr Kirk proposed **to object** to the application with Cllr Beck seconding this as it was not in keeping with **Allendale Neighbourhood Development Plan (ANDP) Policy 10: Small Scale Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Schemes** bullet point two, and the motion was unanimously carried by the Council.

#### **24/01141/FUL - Allendale Sewage Works Catton**

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

#### **24/01105/FUL - Thorn Green Bunkhouse Allenheads**

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

### **10) Public participation**

There were **no** members of the public in attendance.

### **11) Minutes of the previous meetings held on 4<sup>th</sup> April 2024**

Cllr Coulson agreed, and Cllr Johnson seconded that the minutes of the meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> April 2024 be signed by the Chair as a correct record with one amendment under Public Participation: 'Cllr Swaile said that if residents believed protected species had been disturbed or destroyed then they could report it to the Police who could investigate and they could also report it to Natural England as the authority who can issue licenses to allow such activities to take place'.

### **12) Matters Arising**

#### **Section 106 funding for outdoor sport**

Cllr Beck wished to express thanks to the Chair of Allendale Village Hall, Chris Garner, who had responded efficiently and effectively in securing section 106 funding to buy and install a basketball hoop for the Recreation Ground. Those now using the hoop had responded enthusiastically to its installation and it was proving very popular.

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

Co Cllr Horncastle sent his apologies prior to the meeting with the following update:

After the County Council AGM yesterday my portfolio has slightly changed. So, at short notice I'm up north this afternoon and probably going to miss the Parish meeting. I will shortly be emailing you (and my other parishes) an annual report for South Tynedale for your records. Matters for tonight's meeting:

#### **Catton traffic safety**

I have arranged for a Highways Officer to come out and look at Catton and Station Road. He quite rightly has said that the visit will take place after 30 mph signs go up on Station Road. Different speed limits allow for different speed reduction methods.

## **Road repairs**

Now that the weather has improved proper Road repairs are underway. Already a big improvement on road to Hexham. Some work has taken place at Thornley Gate and Allenheads to Coalclough resurfacing is taking place. The road into Whitfield currently has road closure signs up but traffic is still going through. I visited it the other day and couldn't see any signs of a landslip, but Officers must have concerns.

## **Catton sewage works.**

Work at Catton sewage works progressing well and hopefully will put an end to the discharges into the river.

## **14) Affordable housing**

The Council agreed to write to Vince Walsh of Community Action Northumberland's Rural Housing Enabler and Sarah Brannigan of Northumberland County Council's Neighbourhood Planning Team to ask them to a) investigate land east of Catton Foot Methodist Chapel and land off Lonkley Terrace as areas of land already identified for additional housing development in the parish, and b) ask if the Former First School could be repurposed for an affordable housing scheme. See also 19) Correspondence with Amanda Dalton below.

## **15) Allotments Committee**

### **Review of allotment fees**

The Council discussed the need to increase its allotment fees and agreed for the Clerk to write to the tenants and say that it was looking at a new fee structure in line with similar allotments ready for implementation in January 2025.

## **16) Cemetery Committee**

### **Re-location of stone**

The Council to offer the leftover stone to local dry stone wallers as payment in kind for wall repairs in the parish.

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

### **Old Man Bottom Project**

Cllr Beck said that she had visited the site, and she was pleased with the improvements that had been carried out at Old Man Bottom.

## **18) Towns & Villages Committee**

### **Bus shelter update**

Cllr Philipson said that the Northumberland County Council's Planning department had extended the consultation period by three weeks as it had noted that the application was advertised as affecting the Conservation Area, although it should have been advertised in addition as affecting the setting of Listed Buildings. The new date for it determining the planning application was now 16<sup>th</sup> May.

The Council considered whether they should provide a southbound bus shelter, alongside passenger information provided by Northumberland County Council and a petition presented by Cllr White, signed by thirty residents of Allenheads, asking the Council to reconsider its earlier decision not to provide one.

After discussion the Council agreed to a staged approach to providing more comfort for all passengers, but it would have to be planned and budgeted for, and that it would review providing a second shelter for Allendale later in the year when setting its budget for 2025/2026 and after the northbound shelter was installed. In the meantime, the Council advised southbound passengers not to shelter in the northbound shelter then cross when the bus was approaching, and recommended people use the app for smart phones that accurately plots the location of the bus on its route.

### **Dog project**

The Council agreed to Cllr Gray's proposed project to improve general signage to encourage and remind people to pick up after their dog and to bin it, but also to improve signage on individual bins so it's clear

what types of rubbish it takes. The Council agreed that Cllr Gray takes this forward when the Towns & Villages Committee next meet.

#### **Flower planters**

The Council agreed for Valeria Dunn to work with Allendale Primary schoolchildren to prepare the planters with flowers. Cllr Graham to order and collect the plants from Down to Earth and get prices for three new planters to replace the damaged/broken ones.

#### **New equipment for grass cutting.**

Cllr Howard proposed, and Cllr Simmonds seconded that the Council buy a new strimmer and lawn mower for grass cutting, and the Council unanimously agreed.

#### **Payphone kiosk**

The Clerk to work with Valeria Dunn and report to the Payphone Team what maintenance was needed for the payphone kiosk in Allendale.

### **19) Correspondence**

**Lesley Campbell** – Cllr Coulson to look at the trees on Catton Green and make any recommendations for pruning.

**Catton resident** – The Council discussed the work carried out in Catton where tarmac had been laid in front of Newton Lea Farm house and it agreed that the area of land where the work had been carried out was on land identified as Catton Village Green and therefore the work did not comply with the law on village greens. Catton Village Green was registered as a Village Green by Northumberland County Council in accordance with the Commons Registration Act 1965 and the Commons Act 2006, and management of the Green was handed over to Allendale Parish Council in 2012. However, the Council agreed that the landowner had breached the terms of the management agreement and that it should ask the landowner of Newton Lea Farm to remove the tarmac and reinstate the area back to how it was. If the landowner was not prepared to do this then the Council would ask for the assistance of Northumberland County Council's Planning department.

**George Doody** – The Council agreed that as Allendale Parish Council was responsible for the management of Catton Village Green under the Commons Act 2006 and Scheme it had authority to permit the reinstatement of a footpath across the Green, and the installation of the new path from Doric House to the turning circle. It also agreed to take responsibility for the maintenance of these footpaths and liability for any injury, for example, from flying stones. The Council asked the Clerk to write to Lesley Campbell and express its disappointment that she had gone ahead with installing the new path before the proposed site meeting had taken place.

**Amanda Dalton** – The Council discussed the issues raised by Amanda and whilst it had every sympathy with her position the sale of houses was subject to market forces and could not be controlled, but acknowledged that more affordable homes were needed in the parish as set out in its recently commissioned housing needs assessment: <https://northumberlandparishes.uk/sites/default/files/parish-councils/documents/2023/September/106/Allendale%20Housing%20Needs%20Assessment%20-%20Final%20Report.pdf>

Cllr Kirk said that Northumberland County Council would be changing how council tax was charged on second homes from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2025 making it less profitable to run houses as holiday lets:

<https://www.northumberland.gov.uk/Tax/Empty-Homes-and-Second-Home-Premium.aspx>

The Council agreed to continue to discuss affordable housing on a monthly basis so that local people could keep track of any developments. See also 14) Affordable housing above.

**Iris Priest** – The Clerk to refer Iris Priest to the Planning department as the authority responsible for granting planning permission for the Helipad under the ten year rule.

**Andrew Doccarr** – Cllr Philipson to ask Melvin Robinson to move the lawn mower trailer from the rear of the King's Head/Lion House to the Cemetery where it would be stored in future. The Clerk to thank him for bringing it to the Council's attention.

**Gary Black/Colin Horncastle** – The Council agreed for Northumberland County Council to use the area in front of the external boundary of Arnison House for around six months whilst it carries out refurbishment work provided that it would leave the area in as good a state as it found it and take photos before and after to demonstrate this.

## **20) Finance Committee**

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

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

<b>Treasurer's Account</b> bank balance as of 30 <sup>th</sup> April 2024.	<b>£21,123.4</b>
<b>Business 30-Day Notice Account</b> bank balance as of 30 <sup>th</sup> April 2024	<b>£10,894.23</b>
<b>Public sector Deposit Fund of CCL</b> bank balance as of 30 <sup>th</sup> April 2024	<b>£60,000.00</b>

### **Natural Ability fees increase**

Cllr Philipson declared an interest. The Council agreed to the proposed increase to £120 for eight hours work per calendar month for its Handyperson's litter picking Service. The Clerk to inform Suzanne Keen that there was no need to continue to collect litter from the Recreation Ground as this work was already being carried out by Village Hall staff.

### **Financial Regulations**

The Finance Committee to review its Financial Regulations.

## **21) Matters for 6<sup>th</sup> June 2024 agenda.**

### **The Annual Parish Meeting**

### **The Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) 2023/24**

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

There was one item.

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

The Annual Parish Meeting and next monthly Parish Council meeting would take place on **6<sup>th</sup> June 2024** at 7pm at **High Forest Community Centre, Sinderhope**.

The meeting ended at 22:30