

**Minutes of Allendale Parish Council Meeting
held on Thursday 7th September 2023 at 7pm
at Allendale Village Hall**

Present: Cllr Philipson (Chair), Beck, Coulson, Graham, Halliday, Kirk, Swaile (Vice-Chair), White, County Cllr Horncastle and H Newsome (Clerk).

1) Apologies for absence

Cllrs Henderson, Howard, Simmonds, and Villiers-Stuart and sent their apologies prior to the meeting.

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

23/01927/FUL Sparty Lea Methodist Church, Sparty Lea

Cllr Philipson proposed **to object** to the application on the same grounds as Allendale Parish Council objected before at its meeting held on 3rd November 2022 (application 22/03483/FUL - Sparty Lea Methodist Church, B6295 Sparty Lea Main Road that was subsequently withdrawn), with Cllr White seconding this, as there was no main sewerage in Sparty Lea and because the existing water supply was unlikely to support the extra demand. The Council unanimously carried the motion.

23/03081/VARYCO Land West Of Lea Hall Cottage Splitty Lane, Catton

Cllr Kirk proposed **to object** to the application with Cllr Coulson seconding this on the grounds that the traffic survey showing that it was a quiet road was conducted before the additional housing was proposed, and, that the new properties required safe access to public transport, and it was therefore not in keeping with **Allendale Neighbourhood Development (ANDP) Plan Policy 1: General Development Principles**. Whilst acknowledging that the installation of a footpath could cause problems for road users at the junction, including heavy farm traffic, because of the narrowness of the road, the Council unanimously carried the motion.

23/03202/VARYCO Black Cleugh Allendale

Cllr Kirk proposed **to support** the application with Cllr White seconding this and the motion was unanimously carried by the Council.

23/03301/BT O/S DIRT POT HOTEL PCO1 ALLENHEADS – removal of public payphone

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

23/02089/LBC Ellershope, Cottage Sparty Lea

Cllr Kirk proposed **no objections** to the application with Cllr Philipson seconding this and the motion was carried by Allendale Parish Council.

Allendale Parish Council - 23/02449/FUL 1 Scotch Meadows Allenheads

Cllr Philipson proposed **no objections** to the application with Cllr Howard seconding this and the motion was carried by Allendale Parish Council.

Allendale Parish Council - 23/02492/FELTPO 6 Denelands

Cllr Philipson proposed **to support** the application with Cllr Howard seconding this and the motion was carried by Allendale Parish Council.

Allendale Parish Council - 23/02716/VARYCO Studdon Dene House, Allendale

Cllr Philipson proposed **no objections** to removing condition 27 from the application with Cllr Kirk seconding this and the motion was carried by Allendale Parish Council.

4) Public participation

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

5) Minutes of the previous meetings held on 6th July 2023

Cllr Beck agreed, and Cllr White seconded that the minutes of the meeting held on 6th July 2023 be signed by the Chair as a correct record with one amendment, to replace the sentence at Item 10) para b) with: *The work Hexham Ramblers' did on the path toward Pia Troon, unfortunately did not "fix the steps". The removal of overgrowth vegetation exposed the need for the steps to be renewed and repaired. Although, undoubtedly the work had made the path up/down the bank more accessible to walkers.*

This amendment provided the context for the Hexham Ramblers' application under the Small Grant Scheme for the materials to complete the job.

6) Matters Arising

Assets of Community Value update

The Clerk said that NCC's Iain Hedley had called to say that the nominations had not been successful whilst accepting that all four parish pubs were important for community cohesion, tourism, and local employment. He said that the review panel expected the nominator, in this case the parish council, to conduct detailed research work with users to provide the evidence and make the case for listing them as ACVs. Mr Hedley said that fresh applications would be accepted but suggested that the group in Allenheads were best placed to apply to list the Allenheads Inn as an ACV. The Council agreed to discuss the matter further at its October 2023 meeting.

Allendale Neighbourhood Development Plan (ANDP) Review update

The ANDP Review Committee had met on 31st August and agreed to work towards delivering more affordable housing in the parish. The Committee would be reviewing the existing list of potential areas suitable for new housing as well as looking for new areas where landowners might be willing to sell for affordable housing schemes. Whilst the county council housing list was a way of measuring how many people in the parish needed social housing, the Council acknowledged that this was not an accurate reflection of everyone in the parish in need of affordable and secure housing as it did not include those that have reluctantly left the parish as they could not afford to rent privately. The Council therefore agreed that it should encourage local people to register for housing with Northumberland Homefinder either online <https://www.northumberlandhomefinder.org.uk/> or using a paper copy application form.

If everyone in need of an affordable home were to register, then it would be easier to demonstrate the scale of the need. The Council would like to also encourage local landowners that may be interested in selling their land to come forward bearing in mind that their land must be close to local amenities and public transport. The Clerk to publish the report from the **2014 Allendale Local Housing Needs Survey** and AECOM's newly produced **Housing Needs Assessment June 2023** on the website.

7) County Councillor and Northumberland County Council update

Traffic safety in Catton

Co Cllr Colin Horncastle had met on site with his Highways colleagues to discuss what could be done about improving traffic safety in Catton, and specifically the junction at Batey Terrace and the lack of formal parking arrangements on the main road. He said that Highways did not favour the proposed double yellow lines solution that would require a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) because the process of administering and promoting the legal order was time consuming and labour intensive and involve expensive enforcement costs. Highways said that it did not believe it to be the right course of action and it was likely to attract strong objections from residents due to the lines spoiling the rural setting. Cllr Horncastle said that he had now done everything he could possibly do to try and resolve the matter whilst acknowledging that accidents would continue to happen unless Highways took further action. After discussion, the Council agreed to the following actions:

- a) Cllr Horncastle to ask Highways to send letters directly to those individuals that continue to park their vehicles in unsafe conditions asking them not to, and, to also send letters to politely ask all residents parking on the main B6295 road to only park on the south east side of the road.

- b) The Council to encourage local residents to report near misses and accidents and it would collate evidence by keeping a log of all incidents.
- c) The Council to use its Facebook account to highlight its concerns about road safety and urge residents to be considerate when parking their cars and vans.

Cllr Horncastle and the Council agreed that NCC should be held vicariously responsible for any future road accidents in Catton as whilst they had continued to flag up these concerns Highways had not taken active steps to try and resolve local concerns.

Traffic safety at Allendale Primary School

Cllr Horncastle said that he would be meeting the costs of installing a safety barrier on the school side of the road, opposite the entrance to the Recreation Park, to prevent children from running down the school on to the road at that point, and that NCC's Highways Programme Team would be conducting the work.

Proposed bollards in front of the Co-op Shop

The Clerk to send Co Cllr Horncastle the latest correspondence from NCC on this topic that included reference to the proposed works being located outside the extents of Allendale Village Green, and the uncertainty as to the actual extent of the Adopted Highway.

8) Allotments Committee

Since Cllr Henderson had handed back her allotment Cllr Coulson would be offering it to the next person on the allotments waiting list. Cllr Coulson hoped that he and John Short would shortly be meeting Eric Hutchinson to define the extent of the allotment that was adjacent to his property. Once this was done the tenancy agreements could be issued.

9) Cemetery Committee

Chapel of Rest update

Cllr Philipson recognised the work of Joan Morgan who had transformed the Chapel of Rest into a relaxed and peaceful space. Joan had also kindly agreed to open the Chapel on days when there was a burial for families to use should they wish to congregate there or shelter from the rain.

The Chapel would be kept closed outside these times with keys held by Cllr Howard, the Clerk and Joan.

Memorial safety update

Memorial safety inspections had taken place between 18th and 20th July by NCC's Compliance Officer, Gary Air, who had placed notices on all those headstones found to be unsafe. 658 memorials were inspected, 610 passed and 39 failed, and nine memorials were already down so there was no risk. The Clerk had posted a message on the parish council's website asking the families of the unsafe memorials to contact her if they would like more information on making safe their family members' headstones. The Council acknowledged the difficulty in being able to contact grave owners and family members as many had died or moved address and it agreed to instruct the Memorial Compliance Officer to make safe all memorials found to be unsafe whilst acknowledging that all responsibility for a permanent repair rested with the family. By making safe the memorials Allendale Parish Council had fulfilled its duty of care and responsibility to ensure that people were safe when they visited the cemetery.

Review of funeral plan arrangements

In light of the Co-op no longer selling funeral plans that include a reserved plot at a named cemetery, the Council agreed that it would revert to its former position of not accepting requests to reserve and pay for graves for future times, as there was ample room in the Allendale Cemetery and as such there was no need to do this.

Review of no dog's rule

The Council discussed the pros and cons of allowing dogs into Allendale Cemetery and agreed that dogs would be allowed into the cemetery provided they were kept on a lead.

Request for memorial tree

The Council considered a request to plant a memorial tree in the Woodland burial area and acknowledged that it would continue to consider each request on a case by case basis in order for the Woodland area not

be overwhelmed by trees but rather preserve a grassed woodland area. After visiting the burial spot, and after discussion, the Council agreed to look again at the approved list of native trees to see if there might be a suitable species that could be planted in the hedge area close to the burial plot.

10) Rights of Way & Access Committee

Riverside Path

The Clerk said that she had just been informed that work to repair the footpath close to the sewerage works was currently being conducted.

11) Towns & Villages Committee

Relocation of bus stop in Allendale

The Clerk confirmed that she had received notification from the Highways Improvement team that work to install the two new bus stops on the main road in Allendale would go ahead on 26th September. NCC's Transport team would be consulting with the bus company and dealing with the new timetable and directions from the old bus stop. The Council to discuss installing a bus shelter on the north-west side of the road and seating at both at its October 2023 meeting. The Clerk to order a new bin to replace the one outside the public toilets that was in poor condition.

12) Correspondence

George Doody – see Item 7 above.

Kathie Keady – Cllr Swaile to contact local skateboarders and invite them to attend a workshop to help develop more spaces for skateboarding on 29th September.

Ann Potter – The Clerk to ask NCC if it would install a dropped kerb at the corner of the Staward Road junction where the kerb is too high for her husband's mobility scooter.

Peter Aldcroft – The Clerk to ask Peter to find out from the Tar Ba'rl Committee how much sand would be needed to protect the tarmac from damage from the 5 metre square Wolf Bonfire as two dumpy bags of sand was considered insufficient.

13) Finance Committee

Grant applications

Cllrs Coulson and Kirk declared interests. The Council considered applications from **nine** organisations and Cllr Philipson proposed that the following awards were granted, seconded by Cllr Swaile, and agreed unanimously by the Council:

Allen Valleys Bowling Club	£ 100
Allen Valley Local History Group 1	£ 45
Allen Valley Local History Group 2	£ 115.50
Allendale Football Club	£ 275
Allendale Village Hall	£ 500
Hexham Ramblers	£ 534
Higher Ground	£ 450
Allendale Lions	<u>£ 500</u>
Total	£2519.50

External audit report

The Clerk said that the external audit report was waiting to be signed off before being issued by Mazars.

Accounts for payment/bank reconciliation

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

Treasurer's Account bank balance as of 31 st August 2023	£34,128.89
Business 30-Day Notice Account bank balance as of 31 st August 2023	£11,021.71
Fixed Term Deposit bank balance as of 31 st August 2023	£0.00

Public sector Deposit Fund of CCL bank balance as of 31st August 2023 £30,000

Cllr Kirk proposed to transfer a further **£30,000** from the Treasurer's Account to the Public Sector deposit CCLA account as the deposit fund was currently paying 5.1% interest, with immediate access (1-2 days), with Cllr Swaile seconding this, and the motion was unanimously carried by the Council.

14) Matters for 5th October 2023 agenda.

Bus stop seating and shelter

Assets of Community Value (ACV)

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 **5th October 2023** at 7pm at Allendale Village Hall.

The meeting ended at 22:09