

**Minutes of the Zoom Meeting of Allendale Parish Council
(including minutes of the Planning Sub-Committee)
held on Thursday 7th January 2021 at 7pm**

Present: Cllr Crellin (Chair), Councillors Dunn, Galley, Graham, Henderson, Hill, Howard, Lee, Philipson, Quinn, Sandison, Simmonds; Co Cllr Horncastle
H Newsome (Clerk)

1) Apologies for absence

Cllr White

2) Planning Sub-Committee

Planning applications

20/03853/LBC – 2 Brides Hill Cottages Allendale

The Council discussed the application and in particular how best to comment generally on a Listed Building Consent (LBC) when Allendale's Neighbourhood Development Plan (ANDP) makes no reference to LBC planning applications. Co Cllr Horncastle confirmed that whilst it was the specialist planning officers (conservationists) job to assess LBC applications, the parish council, as a statutory consultee, was still entitled to make comments on LBC applications. Cllr Dunn proposed **to object** to the application as she said the proposed new velux windows would significantly alter the character of the building. This motion was not seconded. Cllr Howard proposed an amended motion to support the application with Cllr Quinn seconding it, explaining that the nature of conservation grade Velux windows made them blend in to roof lines. After debate this resolution was carried by a majority of the Council.

20/03305/LBC – Meeting House Cottage, Bridge End, Allendale

The Council had no additional comments to make following on from its decision to support the earlier application.

20/04077/FUL – 4 Low Shield Close Spartylea

Cllr Philipson proposed **no objections** to the application with Cllr Howard seconding this. Cllr Dunn proposed an amended motion **to object** to the application with Cllr Quinn seconding this, as it was not in keeping with Allendale Neighbourhood Development Plan (ANDP) Policy 9: Extension to Dwellings, bullet point two. A vote on the amended motion was unsuccessful with a majority against. Cllr Phillipson's original proposal for no objections was debated and this resolution was carried by a majority of the Council.

20/04025/FUL & LBC – High Swinhope Shield Allendale

Cllr Howard proposed **to support** the application with Cllr Hill seconding this. Cllr Dunn proposed an amended motion **to object** to the application, as it was not in keeping with Allendale Neighbourhood Development Plan (ANDP) Policy 9: Extension to Dwellings, bullet point two. This was not seconded. Cllr Howard's original proposal to support the application as it conformed to ANDP Policy 9 Extension to Dwellings was debated and this resolution was carried by a majority of the Council.

3) Declarations of Interest

There were no changes; see APC's website for full list:

<https://northumberlandparishes.uk/allendale/documents>

4) Public participation

There were no members of the general public in attendance.

5) Minutes of the previous meetings held on 3rd December 2020

Cllr Quinn proposed, and Cllr Philipson seconded that the minutes of the meeting held on 3rd December 2020 be agreed and signed as a correct record.

6) Matters Arising

Benches

The Council would discuss the next steps towards putting the policy on memorial benches in place once the Clerk had drawn up a 'job description' to be used to appoint a contractor to carry out the restoration work.

Cemetery bench

Cllr Philipson said that on inspection the bench that the Council agreed to be moved in the Cemetery was in fact connected with a woodland burial site and should stay put.

Honey fungus diseased tree on Bullring

The arborist had now carried out his survey of the trees in the Village and confirmed that the mature tree on the Bullring did not have honey fungus after all.

7) County Councillor update

Catton driving accident

Co Cllr Horncastle described an incident that took place on Sunday, 3rd January 2021 in which a car driver moved to overtake a parked van on the corner in Catton (from Hexham direction) and had to brake quickly for oncoming traffic in snowy conditions. The sudden braking had caused the driver to mount the pavement on the right-hand side of the road and hit the houses on Batey Terrace. Co Cllr Horncastle said that it was the exact scenario that he had been so worried about and that he had described to County Council Highways staff when discussing road safety improvements in that area. Following on from discussions with local people who had also described other similar incidents, Co Cllr Horncastle said that the Highways Department had agreed to review parking arrangements on that stretch of road as a matter of priority, in consultation with local people.

Northumberland County Council savings

Co Cllr Horncastle said that NCC would need to make £8.4 million savings in the next financial year but as yet there were no details of where the savings would be made, although Education would not be touched.

Winter gritting

Co Cllr Horncastle congratulated the Highways Team and said that the winter gritting around the side roads this year had again been excellent. The Council acknowledged that the new salt dome had contributed towards the smooth running of the service with a speeded-up service.

8) Precept 2021/2022

The Finance (Precept) Sub-Committee had met on 21st December and produced a budget for financial year 2021/2022. It recommended that the precept be set at **£44,840** which was less than a 3% increase on the previous year. Cllr Philipson reminded the Council that the 25 years Cemetery loan had now been paid off. Cllr Galley proposed that the precept be accepted, and Cllr Howard seconded this and this was unanimously carried by the Council.

9) Coronavirus matters

The Chair, Cllr Crellin agreed to draft a statement, for the website and for the parish Council's Facebook page, encouraging people to take up any offer from the National Health Service to be vaccinated against COVID-19.

10) Allendale's Neighbourhood Development Plan

The Council agreed to undertake a formal review of ANDP and take up David English's offer to help with this. The Clerk was asked to write to Mr English asking for his advice on how to proceed. In the meantime, the Clerk was asked to forward again to the Council the recent email from David English in which he asked you for your thoughts and experiences and how useful the Plan has been so far, and where changes might be considered.

11) Electrical Vehicle Charging in the Parish

Councillors Crellin and Lee agreed to work together and progress electric vehicle charging throughout the parish with the help of other interested parties including Paul Barber.

12) Elections May 2021

The Clerk said that there was some uncertainty as to whether the scheduled elections would go ahead in May, be postponed until September or even later. The Northumberland Association of Local Councils (NALC) had said that if elections did go ahead in May then a full postal voting system would almost certainly be put in place. The Clerk had attended a NALC briefing on the May elections and advised the Council to consider whether it would have vacancies for which it would need to announce and recruit for.

13) Parish Surveys

Cllr Quinn said that if the Council wanted to undertake a *parish survey* in order to find out people's opinions, and to support a review of Allendale Neighbourhood Development Plan, then it should not underestimate the considerable undertaking that would be required to do this. He strongly advised that if it did want a survey, then it should consider engaging a commercial survey firm rather than trying to carry it out themselves. Cllr Quinn also advised that any fresh *housing needs survey* undertaken should be carried out as a separate exercise. Cllr Quinn described some of the pitfalls of designing a housing needs survey and interpreting the results especially as the response rate can be poor. He said that it was hard to know if the results were representative as often there was a higher return rate from those in need than from those that were not; on the other hand, it was difficult to ensure that the forms were received and returned by "concealed households" and people living in multiple occupancy households. Cllr Quinn recommended that the Council wait for the results of the 2021 Census before carrying out another housing needs survey and agreed to circulate his notes after the meeting that set out his findings from the previous survey and some of the lessons learned.

14) Towns & Villages Sub-Committee

Tree survey

The Council welcomed the thorough and informative tree survey of the trees in Allendale carried out by Gavin Reichert on 22nd December 2020. The Clerk was asked to seek two quotes: the first for the work recommended to be carried out in three months' time and the second for work to be carried out in six months' time.

Isaacs's Well

The Council agreed to put 25% of the costs towards restoring the cobbles and stone flags around Isaac's Well should an application for grant funding made through Roger Morris be successful.

15) Climate Action Allendale

Cllr Hill said that he had written to a number of people in the parish inviting them to bring topics under the climate change agenda to the attention of the Parish Council. He said that he hoped that the Parish Council could become more involved in promoting and encouraging environmental change in the Allen Valleys and help raise awareness including encouraging others to take part. Cllr Hill said that he hoped that local environment activists would use the climate action Allendale space to come and share information and talk about their projects so that the Parish Council could lend its support.

16) Correspondence

There were no actions.

17) Accounts for payment

Cllr Quinn proposed the accounts for payment, seconded by Cllr Philipson.

Treasurer's Account: bank balance as at **24th December 2020 - £ 62,352.77**

Business 30-Day Notice Account: bank balance as at **9th December 2020 - £ 5,235.42**

18) Matters for 4th February 2021 agenda
Grant applications

19) Confidential agenda item *(for Council only)*
There was one.

20) Date of next Parish Council Zoom teleconference
The next Parish Council meeting would take place on **4th February 2021** at 7pm.

The meeting ended at 20:46