

**Minutes: Allendale Parish Council meeting on
on Thursday 3rd October 2024 at 7pm
at Allendale Village Hall**

Present: Cllrs Beck, Kirk, Coulson, Swaile (Chair), Philipson, Johnson, Gray, Co Cllr Horncastle, K Naylor (Clerk)

1 Introductions - Councillors and Candidate(s) followed by Q&A session

Cllr Swaile welcomed the new Clerk. The councillors and candidate introduced themselves. The council responded to the candidate's questions, outlining some of the current issues and available training. Cllr Swaile noted that the council would follow its co-option policy in making appointments at the end of the meeting under the confidential item. The candidate then accepted his invitation to stay for the remainder of the public meeting.

2 Apologies for absence

Apologies: Cllrs Simmonds, Bron, White.

3 Declarations of interest

No new declarations of interest.

4 Planning Committee – planning applications

None.

5 Public participation

There was one member of the public in attendance. Mr Foster noted that there was an ash tree overhanging the primary school. Cllr Coulson indicated that it was on the school side of boundary with Higher Ground. Cllr Coulson to progress this with the school.

6 Minutes of the previous meeting held on 5th September 2024

The minutes were approved.

Proposed: Cllr Beck Seconded: Cllr Philipson

7 Matters arising

The future of the Recreation Ground

The ongoing costs of the Recreation Ground were discussed. It was noted that the lifespan of some of the equipment will be clearer after the ROSPA inspection in mid-November and that one large swing had been dismantled for safety reasons. Cllr Johnson queried whether the bark chippings were an expense or a capital cost. Cllrs Kirk and Swaile suggested an increase in the Parish Council's current contribution to the running costs (as separate from the grass cutting commitment) and to await the ROSPA inspection before taking a view on possible contributions to capital costs. Cllr Gray suggested raising public awareness that the Parish Council is financially supporting the Recreation Ground.

Co Cllr Horncastle noted that an approach could be made to the County Council in May in respect of new equipment. The possibility of investigating the terms of Denefields ring-fenced money was raised.

It was proposed to raise the Parish Council contribution to running costs to £3000 for three years (in the expectation of other sources being available for the capital costs).

Proposed: Cllr Philipson Seconded: Cllr Gray Agreed

8 County Councillor and Northumberland County Council update

Co Cllr Horncastle provided the following update.

Bus-shelter funding – the money promised for the bus shelter may not now be available because of the timeframe of the bus shelter application and DEFRA approval; the money needs to be spent by very early in the new year. Cllr Beck asked whether, in the alternative, the money could be used for the replacement swing at the Recreation Ground. Co Cllr Horncastle indicated that this was possible, provided costings etc were provided asap. Cllr Coulson to speak to Chris Garner and to email costings for the swing (two quotes) to Co Cllr Horncastle.

Common Bank landslip – this and a further small landslip above Common Bank were both being dealt with together and it was hoped to reopen the road in January.

Station Road Catton - traffic calming measures had been suggested but are possibly too expensive. This was now back with the design team. Update next month.

County - the facts and figures for the numbers of roads, footways, bridges, lighting, gullies etc across the County were provided. NCC is 1% better than the national average for the state of its roads. The Education Department had been rated outstanding by OFSTED. The Council had won a national award for recycling. There were budget uncertainties awaiting the 30 October budget, and NCC would be budgeting for an as yet unknown wage increase. The rise in Council Tax would be 2.9% at a maximum.

9 Data Protection

Cllr Kirk said that there will be an update at the next meeting.

10 Allotments Committee

Cllr Coulson reported that Mark Armstrong had completed the instructed work. Forward costs to be looked at in the next meeting.

11 Cemetery Committee

11.1 Concrete strips for Allendale Cemetery update

Cllr Philipson had visited two cemeteries to look at concrete strips and had circulated pictures to councillors. There was a discussion about the appearance of the strips. Cllr Kirk noted that expenditure for this was not in the current budget. Decision to be deferred. Cllr Johnson offered photos from a Warwickshire graveyard in due course.

11.2 Request to install a memorial bench in the Cemetery

There had been a request to install a memorial bench at the crossing point of the paths, where the cut-down tree had been. Cllr Philipson to contact the requestor to provide dimensions and to let her know that the design will need to be approved before going ahead.

12 Rights of Way & Access Committee

The deadline for the Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP) consultation response is 18 October 2024. Local ramblers had done some work on this. Cllr Coulson to email Councillors before the deadline.

13 Towns & Villages Committee

13.1 Bus shelter update

Cllr Kirk noted that the bus shelter application is now with DEFRA, the Notice had been published in the Courant and relevant statutory bodies notified, a paper copy had been lodged at Fawside. The DEFRA consultation ends 20 October and notification of the outcome would be some time after this, possibly two months. Proposals for the concrete base have been put out to five contractors. Peter Dodd had provided some initial comments: not to hide the concrete plinth with stonework because foundations would then be needed, instead take the outgoing soil and bank it up.

13.2 Catton road safety mirror update

Cllr Gray had circulated a photograph of the mirror installed with Patrick Thompson's help. No feedback so far. Spare mirror being stored by Cllr Gray.

13.3 Funding application to help meet the costs of the new bus shelter update

Cllr Gray reported that an application for funding had been sent Neil Easton at NCC on 19 September 2024 prior to the deadline on 20 September. There seemed to be no set timetable for response. The request had been for 50% of the £9000 costs.

13.4 White line for newly surfaced parking area update

Cllr Gray noted that he had heard nothing further. The Clerk noted that she has been trying to contact Andrew Archer at NCC about the date for the work and would notify Councillors and put on Facebook (with respect to parking) once the date was known.

14 Correspondence

Correspondence received was noted.

Jane Darbyshire-Walker 05-Sep-2024	See 10.2 above
Cheryl Litster 06-Sep-2024	It was believed that there had been mixed feelings among Arnison Terrace residents about the trees in the past. Cllr Coulson suggested a staged programme and noted that cutting would usually be done straight after flowering. As the Terrace is in a Conservation Area those classed as trees would need NCC consent. It was agreed wait for Matty Robson's tree survey (after the leaves have dropped). Clerk (with Chair) to reply to the effect that the trees will be inspected shortly and that we would like to meet with residents to discuss options.
Shirley Brown 18-Sep-2024	Some Cllrs expressed concern about Parish Council liability in the event responsibility was not transferred to NCC. Colin Horncastle suggested that the Clerk contact his office to obtain a view on transfer. Deferred to next meeting. Clerk to reply.
Chris Garner and Chris Bonsall 22-Sep-2024	See 12.3 above
Roger Morris 27-Sep-2024	Roger's huge contribution to the area was noted. Clerk to write to Roger Morris to thank him for all he does for Isaac's Tea Trail.
Joe Morris MP 27-Sep-2024	Cllrs agreed it would be good to set up a meeting, outside of a main council meeting, preferably 5pm or later. Clerk to reply.

15 Finance Committee

Accounts for payment/bank reconciliation

The payments were approved. Proposed: Cllr Gray Seconded: Cllr Swaile. Agreed.

Cllr Kirk proposed a transfer of £5000 from deposit account to current account. Seconded by Gray. Agreed.

Cllr Kirk proposed a transfer of £15000 from the CCL account to current account. Seconded Gray. Agreed.

Cllr Kirk noted that the signatories on the CCL account may also need to be changed.

New Councillor Training at £30 per person for three Councillors (£90). Cllr Gray to pay from APC account if possible (if not, to pay and reclaim)

Proposed Cllr Swaile Seconded Cllr Coulson Agreed

Treasurer's Account balance as of 30 September 2024	£6551.84
Business 30-Day Notice Account balance as of 30 September 2024	£10940.39
Public sector Deposit Fund of CCL balance as of 30 September 2024	£60,000.00

Banking set up arrangements for new Clerk

Cllr Gray noted that the paperwork was in order, needs signing and taking into Hexham.

16 Matters for 7th November 2024 agenda.

Data protection.

Bus shelter update.

St Peter's Churchyard.

Climate and environment Committee.

Allotment costs.

17 Confidential agenda item *(for Council only)*

There were two items.

18 Date of next Parish Council meeting – 7th November 2024 at Allendale Village Hall

The meeting ended at 9.50pm