

HAZLERIGG PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 30th January 2025 at HAZLERIGG VILLAGE MEMORIAL HALL

Present: Councillors Locke (Chair), Barbour, Down, Fairley & Garbett.

In attendance: Sarah Capes (Urban Green), 2 residents & Ali Lamb (Clerk)

AGENDA

Item	Action
<p>1. Welcome & apologies Cllr Locke welcomed everyone to the meeting.</p> <p>Apologies were received from ward councillor Cllr Avaei, Cllr Campion, and Lisa Marshall.</p>	
<p>2. Guest Speaker – Sarah Capes</p> <p>SC reported that the staff and responsibilities of Urban Green would be transferring back to the City Council on 28th February after 6 years. She noted that this had been a political decision and was disappointing given the work and achievements of UG in difficult circumstances.</p> <p>A Parish Councillor asked what the funding situation would be following the transfer ... SC replied that staff were still working through the implications for funding that UG had secured given that they were set up to access funding that NCC could not. It seems likely that some funding will have to be returned.</p> <p>UG haven't been able to apply for any new funding for the last year because of the impending review.</p> <p>A resident asked what the rationale was for bringing UG back into NCC ... SC it was a political decision, and she couldn't comment. It was noted that there were rumours that an extension of St James Park might have something to do with it.</p> <p>A Parish Councillor expressed disappointment about an UG event organised in the village which the staff didn't attend and then denied they weren't there. SC said she could only apologise.</p> <p>A parish councillor asked what progress had been made with the conservation management plan since last year. SC went on to talk about the work that UG had undertaken in Havannah Nature Reserve, including gap planting trees with the help of volunteers. SC said that flooding in Havannah meant that trees couldn't be planted in some areas and access for the public was also being limited. UG have been challenging the developers because they suspect that the earth bund is responsible.</p> <p>A resident said that more interpretation in Havannah would be helpful, for example, about tree species.</p> <p>A Parish Councillor said that HPC have reached out to Gosforth Wild Web to enquire about engagement sessions around the nature reserve. Concern was raised about the lack of interpretation in general and specifically about the ponds (which was mentioned in the Conservation Management Plan).</p> <p>A resident asked why non-native plants were planted in new developments. SC said that hedgerow planting in Havannah was being done with all native species but in other sites, non-native species could be chosen because they are more resilient to climate change.</p>	

SC said that until the transfer date, all communications should be addressed to UG but following that date, everything would be forwarded appropriately.

A resident asked why green spaces in new estates weren't being adopted by NCC given that this might provide an income source.

A Parish Councillor explained that following adoption, NCC couldn't charge residents for grounds maintenance because the service was provided as part of their council tax.

A Parish Councillor asked about the S106 funding that had been secured to benefit Havannah and what would happen to it.

SC said that £7.5k per year had been allocated to fund a ranger working 1 day per week in Havannah – their role was to visit the site and work with volunteers. The ranger is called Mike.

A Parish Councillor again asked what had been achieved in the last year, as it wasn't clear what works had been carried out.

SC said that UG were planning to fence off the heathland and remove some of the Alder trees – this work would be done in Autumn 2025 and would be funded by the Species Survival Fund. They are also working on improving the age stock of the heather and fencing off some of the edges of the ponds. 600m of hedgerow have been maintained along with maintenance of the boardwalks.

Volunteer sessions had continued throughout the previous year, fly tipping had been removed and continued management of storm damaged woodland.

Unfortunately, the plans to introduce grazing livestock haven't materialised.

A parish councillor asked about all the desire lines/paths through the reserve and if anything could be done to reduce these. A question was also asked about the grassed area by Three Hills Car Park, which SC had previously advised was being managed as a wildflower area. SC said it was not cut last year. A request was made for the area not to be cut so that it scrubbed over and could offer different habitats for wildlife.

She noted that the species survival funds were still available.

A parish councillor asked when volunteer sessions took place in the reserve. SC advised they take place every 6 weeks. It was noted that volunteer sessions were available to book on UG's website and that it might be possible to change the day.

A Parish Councillor said they were concerned by the increased number and width of paths through Havannah and that Mark Furnell had said they were looking into waymarked paths to guide site users could way finding posts be used to help reduce the number of paths? There was also concern expressed about the number of dog walkers, particularly professional ones using Havannah with up to 10 dogs each, many of them not on leads. The point was made that Havannah is a nature reserve, not a park.

SC said that UG's Canine Code had been developed to address issues with dog walkers but it's future was unknown in the new regime. To clarify the meaning of the Dog Bylaw, it was explained that dogs must be under control, not necessarily on a lead.

A Parish Councillor asked if professional Dog Walkers needed a licence – currently they don't and the implications of this for insurance purposes was highlighted.

It was also noted that people had been seen fishing in the ponds – SC appealed for information to identify perpetrators of both illegal fishing and riding quad bikes but stressed that the public should not attempt to photograph them.

<p>A Parish Councillor asked if HPC could apply for funding to benefit Havannah ... SC said she would appreciate a conversation about that before any applications were made.</p> <p>A parish Councillor asked if Havannah could be prioritised for management actions given that it is the only site with a conservation management plan and has been subject to lots of financial contributions from developers.</p> <p>Cllr Locke thanked Sarah for attending the meeting and wished UGN luck with the pending transfer.</p>	
<p>3. Minutes of the meeting held on 28th November 2024 were agreed and signed by Cllr Locke.</p>	
<p>4. Matters Arising not otherwise on the agenda</p> <p>Garages – Cllr Down reported that he continued to try to contact the Housing Officer on the matter. The status / use of a certain garage had been confirmed by neighbours. Some garages have been emptied and there was a huge bonfire made with the contents. There has been some progress with one garage now being back in use and another, potentially usable if the door runner can be repaired.</p> <p>Cllr Down will write to the Director of Housing to escalate the issues.</p> <p>Verge parking on Ryall Avenue – concerns were raised about fly parking and damage to the verge. Discussions followed about potential actions including fencing, signs and direct appeals to the drivers or indirectly via a ‘Love where you live’ Facebook campaign / newsletter appeal.</p> <p>It was suggested that HPC could look out for funding opportunities to purchase fencing with the rationale being habitat protection given the recent bulb planting that the Parish Council has undertaken.</p> <p>It was agreed to approach Leisure Services (M. Todd) and the Director of Housing / or Operations to discuss options including enforcement / physical prevention.</p>	<p>Cllr Down</p> <p>Cllr Locke</p>
<p>5. Issues raised by residents</p> <p>Graffiti in the A1 underpass – several phone calls to Enviro Call and asking ward councillors to intervene have not resulted in any action being taken to remove the graffiti which consists of racist and intimidating language.</p> <p>Cllr Locke suggested contacting the MP Emma Foody and agreed to write to her.</p> <p>It was also suggested that a street art project may deter the undesirable graffiti and Cllr Locke said she would make enquiries in the Ouseburn Valley.</p>	<p>Cllr Locke</p> <p>Cllr Locke</p>
<p>6. Actions / updates from Ward Councillors</p> <p>None</p>	
<p>7. Air Quality Monitoring by Newcastle Airport – Cllr Down said that reports given at the Airport Consultative Meeting indicated that air quality was consistently below the legal threshold, however, no detailed data had been shared.</p> <p>He also reported that Newcastle Airport had been voted the best airport in the world amongst airports serving less than 5 million passengers a year in 2024. It has been forecasted that passenger numbers will rise in 2025 to 5.2 million.</p>	

<p>It was also noted that the red route in Woosington had pushed airport traffic into Ponteland and Prestwick Road – the Airport are now encouraging taxis to use the car parking space in Callerton and are also planning to increase the capacity of long-term parking on site.</p>	
<p>8. Boundary Commission Update –</p> <p>The final report outlining the new 26 ward boundaries and names was published on 7/1/25. Those recommendations are now waiting to be approved by Parliament for implementation at elections in May 2026. It was noted that the submission from HPC was quoted in the report.</p> <p>A resident asked about the next steps in terms of reviewing Parish Boundaries and it was reported that A community Governance Review could be requested from NCC once the 2026 elections were concluded.</p>	
<p>9. Police Matters –</p> <p>5 reported crimes in October 2024: On or near Lieven Street – 1 x violence or sexual offense. On or near Arkle Street – 1 x violence or sexual offense. On or near Ferguson Crescent – 1 x violence or sexual offense. On or near Castle Street – 1 x bicycle theft. On or near High Ridge / Cheltenham Close – 1 x Criminal Damage.</p> <p>10 reported crimes in November 2024: On or near Lieven Street – 5 x violence or sexual offense, public order offense, and criminal damage. On or near Coach Lane – 1 x violence or sexual offense. On or near Arkle Street – 1 x violence or sexual offense. On or near North View – 3 x shoplifting and violence or sexual offense.</p>	
<p>10. Correspondence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - UGN & Parks Forum updates - Lithium-ion Battery Safety Campaign updates - West Brunton Grant fund – the fund is open, and it was suggested that a bid for the graffiti art project could be made - Clerk to contact NCC Arts Development for guidance. - Northern Gas Networks updates - Gosforth Sea Cadets – request to circulate poster on Facebook. - Northern Powergrid updates. - Various advertisements and promotions. - Ward funding – notice of success. - NALC updates and newsletter. - Community Action Northumberland updates and newsletter. - Communities Team newsletter. <p>It was agreed that the Clerk would write to PCSO Mood to ask for more frequent attendance at Parish Council meetings.</p>	<p>Clerk Cllr Locke</p> <p>Clerk</p>
<p>11. Financial matters</p> <p>The balance before tonight’s cheques is £5993. Payments authorised for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Clerk (December & January salary) - £ 358.40 	

<p>A resident suggested the inclusion of kite flying as a potential risk for contact with the overhead cables.</p>	
<p>13. Other issues raised by Councillors Cllr Down noted that he would be taking a more active role with the local Liberal Democrats going forward.</p> <p>Cllr Locke said she would buy yellow rattle plug plants for an upcoming High Ridge engagement event with Northumberland Wildlife Trust with the grant money.</p>	<p>Cllr Locke</p>

Next meeting of Hazlerigg Parish Council will be held on Thursday 27th February 2025 at Hazlerigg District Memorial Hall at 6pm.