

**Minutes from the Meeting of West Allen Parish Council
Thursday 20 March 2025 at 19:00 – Carrshield Village Hall**

Present: Steve Agar (Chair) David Adams, Rowland Hull, Helen Adams, Lee Sutterby & Fiona McIlroy (Clerk)

Apologies: None

In Attendance: Cllr Colin Horncastle, Helen Manson & Lis Dales

1. Minutes of last meeting on 5 December 2024

The minutes were reviewed and approved.

2. Matters arising

- a) The clerk confirmed that the Precept Application had been submitted
- b) Rowland Hull asked about the readiness of the Information Leaflet for printing but there has been no contact since the last meeting.

3. WAPC Resilience Group

Rowland Hull explained that following receipt of an email, he had updated the Northern Power Group on 25 February about the position of the 3 resilience hubs. As he was dealing with a new person he had to give more information and had heard nothing further.

4. Elections on 1 May 2025

a) The clerk confirmed that she had put up the Notice of Election and it was agreed to send one to Susie Stafford to distribute to Carrshield where there is currently no representative on the parish council. She will also upload one to the website.

b) The clerk confirmed that nominations needed to be in by 2 April and likewise for withdrawals. She has arranged for an informal check of nomination papers on 26 March for those councillors wishing to put themselves forward again.

c) Persons nominated would be published on 3 April at which time we would know if there was to be an election.

d) Costs of an election would be roughly £300 plus cost of polling station hire and postal vote and count venue hire for which no indicative cost has been given by NCC.

e) Steve Agar informed the council that there had not been an election in 30 years.

5. Correspondence

- • Healthwatch Northumberland Annual Survey 2025 has been uploaded to the website.
- • There was a request for a contribution to the NE Field of Remembrance and this was rejected as we have too small a precept. The only donation will be to the Great North Air Ambulance,
- • Information on how the second home premium on council tax would affect the precept was issued by NCC but the Precept for 2025/26 had already been agreed by the Parish Council. The clerk asked Cllr Horncastle who received this additional amount, and he confirmed that NCC took it all.
- • There had been an invitation to join Northumberland Cycling

Campaign and this was rejected.

- - The clerk explained that a resident had written a letter to Cllr Horncastle about the state of the roads during the snow and that Cllr Horncastle had written a very expansive reply. Both had been already circulated to the Parish Council.

6. Planning

Local planning applications were discussed and there were no pending applications.

7. Any other business

- - Cllr Horncastle gave a detailed update on the position at NCC. They had received a bad settlement from the Government of just a 6.9% increase but there were no plans to cut services this year.. The Rural Support Grant had been taken away replaced with a Recovery Fund from which they received nothing. They have taken on 50% of the NIC payable by care homes to keep them going. Recycling will be changing to bring all councils in line with each other which means glass will be collected from the kerbside. Repair work to Common Bank had been delayed as another job overran and is due to start on 24 March and will take 8-10 weeks.
 - David Adams said he was holding another presentation about his local Red Squirrel project again on the following night at 6pm at Ninebanks Hall.

8. Date and time of next meeting

Thursday 29th May 2025 at 19:00 at Carrshield Village Hall