

**Minutes of Allendale Parish Council Meeting**  
**9 January 2025 at 7pm**  
**at Allendale Village Hall**

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

**1      Welcome and councillor news**

The Chair welcomed the candidate to the meeting, and the candidate introduced herself. Cllr Swaile explained that there would be a discussion about co-option in the closed part of the meeting and invited the candidate to stay for the rest of the meeting.

**2      Apologies for absence**

Apologies received from Cllrs Armstrong, White, Simmonds, and Beck.

**3      Declarations of interest**

No new interests were declared. A full list of interests is at

[https://northumberlandparishes.uk/allendale/documents?search=interest&type>All&year\[value\]\[year\]=](https://northumberlandparishes.uk/allendale/documents?search=interest&type>All&year[value][year]=)

**4      Planning – planning applications**

**24/04214/FUL Replace Conservatory at 2 Lea Hall Cottages Allenheads NE47 9JB**

This was the replacement of a conservatory at the rear of the property. Cllr Kirk proposed the motion no objection, Cllr Johnson seconded this and the motion was unanimously carried by the Council.

**24/04233/FUL Erection of three 3 bed and two 4 bed detached dwellings including access, parking arrangements and landscaping at Land South East Of Dale Park Dale Park Allendale**

Cllr Kirk noted that the development proposal had been changed from properties having 2 to 3 bedrooms to those having 4 bedrooms and therefore now does not meet the housing needs assessment of the Allendale Neighbourhood Development [ANDP] plan which identified the need for affordable housing. Despite there being a Northumberland Water Sewer in Dale Park, the proposal indicates that waste will be processed on site. Rendered walls are not in keeping with the local environment. There were questions of how the biodiversity area would be maintained. The proposed access through Dale Park and will cut through a small area of unknown ownership and there is limited capacity for access for an increased number of vehicles.

Cllr Kirk proposed the motion to object on the following grounds: failure to meet housing needs assessment [ANDP2 and objectives 5 and 6] - we require smaller houses 2-3 beds max and more units of affordable housing. ; and adversely impacting the amenities of existing neighbours and businesses [ANDP2] in respect of inadequate access, access being opposite a primary health care facility, uncertain ownership of the proposed access, unclear waste management plan, unclear management plan for biodiversity area, loss of turning circle currently used by bin lorry. Cllr Swaile seconded this motion and the motion was unanimously carried by the Council.

**5      Public participation**

There were three members of the public in attendance.

**6      Minutes of the meeting held on 5 December 2024**

The minutes were approved.

**7      Matters arising**

**Planters pricing and information** – Cllr Gray said this would be discussed at the Villages sub-committee meeting in February and would brought to next full meeting.

**Cemetery shed repointing quotes** - Cllr Bron noted that one quote had been received and another hoped for in the next few days

**Scotch Hall waste bin pricing and information** - Cllr Gray noted this was in process and will be discussed at the February meeting. A location for the bin had been identified.

**Dropped kerbs and parking** - Cllr Philipson noted that people in electric wheelchairs are having problems because of cars parking on the dropped kerbs in the village centre e.g. outside the Post Office. Cllr Horncastle indicated that he would incorporate this into the next site visit.

8 **County Councillor and Northumberland County Council update**

Co Cllr Horncastle provided the following update.

**Allenheads waste bin** - Cllr Horncastle had tried to get the waste bin liner replaced at Allenheads, but had found out that this was now responsibility of the Parish Council [Item 14].

**Leadgate** - There will be a site visit with Highways to look at solutions to the problem of cars mounting the pavement during school hours, probably in February.

**Station Road** - It had transpired during a site visit in December that the previously agreed physical traffic calming measures (rubber cushions) would only be permitted with different streetlights (cost: £3000 per light for 3 to 6 lights) and Cllr Horncastle stated that there was no budget available for this. Instead, a scheme of improved road marking and signage would be undertaken in the Spring. A speed survey would proceed thereafter. Cllr Horncastle said that a speed gun could be provided but would need to be operated by a member of the public. It was noted that the Station Road issues are already in the traffic plan [NB. Station Road items were part of a separate request to Cllr Horncastle].

**County** - NCC was facing financial challenges due to a combination of: changes in the government settlement, including the loss of the rural services grant; a council tax rise maximum of 2.9%; and increased NI contributions for employees.

9 **Council General**

**Councillor vacancies** would remain advertised until filled.

**Pre 2017/18 accounts** - Cllr Kirk noted that, other than the year end accounts and minutes, the invoices and receipts elements of the pre-2017/18 accounts could be shredded. Cllr Kirk to remove documents to be retained and pass to the Clerk and arrange shredding. The payment of £7.50 (per 20kg documents) or similar sum was agreed.

**Gov.uk conversion update** - Cllr Johnson had attended the NALC webinar and believes it to be important to obtain our own gov.uk domain, particularly for the email side. The greatest cost would relate to the email services, which could be up to £6 pcm per councillor. Councillor Kirk proposed to add £500 to the budget. Seconded Cllr Gray.

**Haydon Bridge and Allendale Health Centre Patient Participation Group** - the group meets on 15th January 2025. Cllr Johnson reported that he will attend the next meeting in January. Meetings will be every three months going forward.

10 **Allotments**

Nothing to report.

11 **Cemetery**

**Tree survey** – three quotes had been received for the work and circulated to councillors; it was proposed to accept North Pennine’s quote for the cemetery tree work. Proposed Cllr Gray. Seconded Cllr Kirk. It was agreed to ask for the additional tree issues (broken branch, tree leaning against the perimeter wall and tree with two fungi) to be assessed at the same time.

**Headstone stability update** – the Clerk noted that Gary Air of NCC had indicated that the headstones which had been identified as fails and made safe would be inspected annually. This has been done for 2024. One failed repair had been made safe and the family notified. Several markers that had been removed had been replaced. Clerk to obtain costs for future years.

**Memorial tree request** – there had been a request for a memorial tree and there was no objection to this. However, a policy is needed going forward for the planting and adoption of trees. Space is an issue, as is tree management. Cllr Coulson to speak to Mrs Lever about the tree.

12 **Rights of Way & Access**

Nothing to report.

13 **Environment & Climate Change**

Cllr Swaile reported that over 100 trees had been obtained at no cost. These would be discussed in the cemetery visit/meeting and some could also be used for hedging.

14 **Towns and Villages**

**Tree survey** – three quotes had been received for the tree work in the village. It was proposed to accept North Pennine’s quote for the village work. Proposed Cllr Gray. Seconded Cllr Kirk.

**Mower servicing** – although several other companies had been approached, only Rickerby’s had provided a quote. It was agreed to accept this quote, at £600 per tractor mower. Proposed Cllr Coulson, seconded Cllr Gray. Cllr Gray to arrange the servicing.

**Grass cutting tender** – Cllr Gray had circulated the Villages subcommittee proposal for a grass cutting contract, based on the existing contract. Cllr Swaile thanked the Villages subcommittee for their work on the proposal. It was agreed to invite interested parties (with and without their own equipment) to get in touch for an initial discussion and walk round, including larger companies. This would be publicised on: Allendale area notices, Haydon Bridge Matters, Hexham Matters and physical noticeboards, including Co-op board. Cllr Gray would also contact contractors directly. Proposed Cllr Kirk. Seconded Cllr Gray. A link to the Appendix with the mowing areas would be provided.

**Allenheads bin liner** - a quote had been obtained from the manufacturer of the bin, the cost is £74.32 (total £104.18, including delivery and VAT). Cllr Kirk proposed to order the bin liner. Cllr Gray seconded. Clerk to order.

**Bus shelter update** – Cllr Kirk noted that the discussion period with the Planning Inspectorate had passed on 24 December 2024. However, there will be at least another round of responses. Cllr Gray noted that nothing had been heard about the funding applications he had put in and he had sent an enquiry.

15 **Correspondence**

Correspondence received was noted.

Correspondence 1.1 re the Allenheads bin liner is addressed in item 14.

**Rob Aubrook** – Cllr Beck to reply regarding the Tynedale Cycling Strategy, if needed.

**NCC Environment and Climate Change Fund** - Cllrs to check and someone e.g. from Environment and Climate Change to enrol and attend if possible [meeting 22<sup>nd</sup> January]

**Northumberland Cycling Campaign** Cllr Kirk had reviewed this and it did not seem pertinent to Allendale.

**NorthumberlandALC** – councillors who wanted to attend the offered training on 14 and/or 16 January were to enrol and attend (cost £5ph would be met by the Council).

**Sevenside defibs** - Clerk to pass on to the Forge and the Pharmacy

**16 Finance**

The listed payments were approved.

Proposed Cllr Kirk; Seconded Cllr Coulson. Agreed.

**Treasurer's account balance** as of 31 December 2024: £3288.44

**Commercial Instant Access Account** as of 31 December 2024: £19,966.95

**Public Sector Deposit Fund of CCL balance** as of 31 December 2024: £45,000.00

**Budget and precept** - no comments had been received on the published draft budget. One change to the expense lines was proposed: £500 (under admin for costs) for changes necessary to email and other systems to comply with upcoming legislation. It was noted that there were uncertainties in future expenditure, particularly around grass mowing and trees. To be reviewed on an ongoing basis.

Cllr Swaile proposed to accept both the budget as published with the additional line noted above and the precept of £46,000. Cllr Coulson seconded. Clerk to submit precept paperwork.

**S.137 - review of grants and donations budget and process.** Cllr Kirk had circulated a note on this subject.

There had been an increase in the s137 component as a proportion of the precept over time. Cllr Kirk suggested that both the amount and the process be reviewed. Cllr Philipson noted that Allendale has a considerable number of people giving up their time volunteering and wished to support them. Also, that applications will be coming in anyway. Cllr Kirk noted that we should consider the direct benefit to the parish relative to the expenditure for each application.

Cllr Philipson suggested a public meeting about small grants (and grass cutting). The next round of small grant applications would be done under the existing application process. Thereafter, amendment to the form and process would be discussed in more detail.

**New financial regulations finalise wording** – an email had been circulated with proposed amendments to wording in sections 4.3, 9.1, 17.2. This wording was agreed. Cllr Kirk proposed to adopt the regulations as so amended and publish them on the website. Seconded Cllr Philipson.

**17 Matters for 6 Feb 2025 Agenda**

Feedback from patient participation group – Cllr Johnson

**18 Confidential item(s)**

There were two items.

The applicant for councillor co-option was discussed. Cllr Johnson proposed to co-opt Mandy Charlton to the council. Cllr Philipson seconded. Carried by the council. Clerk to contact.

**19 Date of next Parish Council Meeting**

7pm on Thursday 6 February 2025 at St Cuthbert's Church Hall

The meeting ended at 10.25pm

Signed:

On: