

**Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting and Parish Council Meeting
held on Thursday 1st June 2023 at 7pm
at High Forest Community Centre, Sinderhope**

Present: Cllr Philipson (Chair), Beck, Coulson, Graham, Henderson, Howard, Kirk, Simmonds, and Swaile (Vice-Chair), County Cllr Horncastle and H Newsome (Clerk)

Annual Meeting of the Council

1) Apologies for absence

Cllrs Beck, Halliday, Villiers-Stuart, and White sent their apologies prior to the meeting.

2) Declarations of interest

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

[Declarations of Interest \(new council 2022\) 0.pdf \(northumberlandparishes.uk\)](#)

3) Planning Committee – planning applications

23/01588/COU - Allenheads Lodge and Warden's Cottage Allenheads

Cllr Howard proposed **to support** the application with Cllr Graham seconding this and the motion was unanimously carried by the Council.

4) Public participation

There were no members of the public in attendance.

5) Minutes of the previous meetings held on 4th May 2023

Cllr Kirk agreed, and Cllr Coulson seconded that the minutes of the meeting held on 4th May 2023 be signed by the Chair as a correct record with one amendment, to remove David Stevenson's name from para 8) Appointment to Committees.

6) Matters Arising

Allendale Neighbourhood Development Plan (ANDP) Review update

The ANDP Review Committee had met with Sarah Brannigan and reviewed AECOM's Housing Needs Assessment (HNA) report on 17th May. AECOM had incorporated the Review Committee's comments in the report that had now been passed on to Locality for review, and the council should expect to receive a final version of the report in around two weeks. In the meantime, Sarah Brannigan had reviewed the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) that identified sites across the parish that *may* be able to provide land for additional housing development in the future. She would also be meeting with her colleagues from Planning Services and the Housing Delivery Team to review the HNA and discuss next steps. The Council agreed for the ANDP Review Committee to meet as soon as it received the final report and had heard back from Sarah Brannigan.

The future of footpath management in the parish Riverside path repairs

Co Cllr Horncastle confirmed that Countryside and Green Spaces team had now carried out repairs along the riverside path where gabion baskets were a trip hazard. Co Cllr Horncastle said that the county council was looking at a scheme, with the Rivers Trust to further improve the riverside path across Bridge Eal.

7) County Councillor and Northumberland County Council update

Pothole work in the parish

Co Cllr Horncastle said that NCC had received government funding for pothole repairs and that it was trialling a new method along the Tyne Valley that that it hoped would be more effective, although it would need to use (expensive) traffic management to carry these out.

Proposed bollards in front of the Co-op Shop

Co Cllr Horncastle said that he had still not agreed a date for meeting a colleague from Highways to look at safety issues in the parish, including the proposed bollards for in front of the Co-op, a barrier to the road at the end of the footpath down from the school, and parking concerns in Catton.

New food recycling scheme

Co Cllr Horncastle said that NCC were making plans for the new food recycling scheme, imposed by Defra, that would be offered to every household by 2024/2025. He said that there had been only 40% take up for the pilot scheme with an average collection of only 2-3 pounds in weight of food waste per household going to biomass, and that the logistics of rolling out the full programme across 3,500 miles of road was presenting serious challenges for the county council.

8) Annual Governance and Accountability (AGAR) 2022/2023

8.1 to consider and agree any actions arising from the Internal Auditor

The Internal Auditor Alan Blair had completed the audit procedure and he agreed that the objectives of internal control were being achieved by the Council.

8.2 to approve the Annual Governance Statement

Cllr Graham proposed, seconded by Cllr Kirk, and the Council agreed unanimously to approve the annual governance statement.

8.3 to approve the draft annual accounts for 2022/23

Cllr Kirk proposed, seconded by Cllr Howard, and the Council agreed unanimously to approve the draft annual accounts for 2022/23.

The Clerk thanked Cllr Kirk for proposing the use of a web based accounting package that had vastly improved the accounting process making it both more efficient and secure.

8.4 to approve the Accounting Statement and Explanation of Variances

Cllr Kirk proposed, seconded by Cllr Swaile, and the Council agreed unanimously to approve the accounting statement and explanation of variances.

9) Allotments Committee

Public footpath alongside the allotments

The Council discussed concerns raised by Rachel Short about the trees and bushes that are encroaching on the public footpath alongside the allotments that are restricting access for pedestrians. Cllr Kirk proposed, and Cllr Coulson seconded, and the Council unanimously agreed to ask Matty Robson to cut the hedge and overhanging branches.

10) Cemetery Committee

Cemetery wall repairs

The Council agreed for Cllr Howard to get two quotes to carry out repairs to approximately thirty metres of stone wall at the entrance to the Cemetery.

Revised Cemetery fees proposal

Cllr Swaile proposed, and Cllr Simmonds seconded, and the Council unanimously agreed changes to the *standard* (non-resident) fees that were proportionally more than the *parish* fees in keeping with the previous arrangements.

11) Rights of Way & Access Committee

Housty Farm public footpath diversion

Co Cllr Horncastle said that the landowner had no permission to obstruct or divert the walking route of the footpath through Housty Farm. The landowner would need to follow NCC's legal process for proposing a change of route that would involve consulting Allendale Parish Council and user groups.

12) Towns & Villages Committee

Local Transport Plan (LTP) 2024/2025 feedback and priorities for 2023/2024

The Council was pleased to acknowledge that the following two local transport plan priorities that had been proposed for the **2023/2024** had been included in the Local Transport Plan:

- To install road signage (and chevrons) improvements on the road down from Rookhope, and,
- To reduce the speed limit to 30 mph along Station Road

The Council agreed that the first priority for **2024/2025** should be:

To extend the 30 mph speed limit from Catton Junction (past Station Garage, Allendale Sports Club and Allen Mill Cottages) to Thornley Gate (Five Lane Ends) and continue (on the B6295) to the 20 mph speed limit on The Peth, Allendale. The Council also agreed to deciding the other two priorities at its meeting on 6th July.

13) Correspondence

Mary Kinver – The Council had investigated the damaged wall on Lonkley that she believed had been exacerbated by the grass mower and pedestrians walking closer to the wall since the play park was extended. After discussion, the Council understood that the wall had been constructed by the original householder and that it was not the responsibility of the Parish Council. The Council agreed that it was not responsible for any damage to the wall as it used a low impact mower for cutting the grass and that pedestrian traffic was negligible.

Julie and Ian Robson – The Council considered the concerns raised about a) the general upkeep of the village including over grown trees and grass cuttings left everywhere, and b) pedestrian safety because of poor parking arrangements and drivers not adhering to the 20 mph speed limit. The Council acknowledged that grass cuttings were left, however, this had been a conscious decision on the grounds of both preserving nitrogen in the grass and one of cost. The Council also said that it had proved to be overall cheaper to cut the grass often in the growing season, and that it was usually only the first few cuts where there was excess grass cuttings, although these were partly managed by the grass cutter blowing the grass off the paths. The Council acknowledged that the trees on the estate were managed by Northumberland County Council and not the responsibility of the Parish Council. The Council was aware of the parking problems in the village and was trying to address these, for example by moving the bus stop away from the Market Square. Residents should advise the police if they notice drivers not adhering to the speed limit.

Cllr Linda Beck – The Council discussed the suggestion that more horse awareness signs were needed in the parish following on from a near miss. Cllr Philipson said that traffic signage was not one of the powers of parish councils and that responsibility laid with NCC. The Council agreed that motorists, on seeing a horse on the road, were generally aware that they should slow down to a maximum of 10 mph, and then when it was safe to do so, pass wide and slow, allowing at least 2 metres of space, and that additional signage would not change the behaviour of those that are not.

Richard MacKenzie – see 12 above.

Rachel Short – see 9 above.

14) Finance Committee

Accounts for payment/bank reconciliation

Cllr Howard proposed that the accounts for payment, seconded by Cllr Kirk.

Treasurer's Account: bank balance as of **16th May 2023 - £39,895.79**

Business 30-Day Notice Account: bank balances as of **9th May 2023 - £16,489.68**

15) Matters for 1st June 2023 agenda.

Local Transport Plan 2024/2025 feedback and priorities for 2023/2024

Affordable housing

16) Confidential agenda item *(for Council only)*

There was none.

17) Date of next Parish Council

The next monthly Parish Council meeting would take place on **6th July 2023** at 7pm at Allendale Village Hall.

The meeting ended at 21:10