

MINUTES OF MEETING

Meeting on: 11th March 2025
Meeting at: Longframlington Memorial Hall
Meeting Time: 7.30 p.m.
Present: Cllrs: James Allen (JA), Steven Bray (SB), Mark Fenwick (MF), Lesley Hall (LH); David Owen - Chair (DO), Jamie Whicker (JW)
In attendance: Clerk: Garth Rhodes.

Meeting opened at 7.30 p.m.

1. **Apologies for Absence.** Jackie Scarpa (JS),
2. **Table Urgent Business to be discussed in 19 below.**
3. **Declaration of Interests.** None.
4. **Gifts and Hospitality.** None
5. **Minutes of Previous Meeting.** The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday, 14th January 2025 were reviewed, unanimously approved as a true record and signed as such.
6. **Matters arising out of Minutes.**
 - a. Sale of the Rothbury Estate. Duncan Hutt, the Director of Conservation for the Northumberland Wildlife Trust, was to attend an open meeting of the Coquetdale Wildlife Trust on 24th April, where he would set out his vision for the future of the Rothbury Estate. DO/JW agreed to attend. Meeting between David Smith MP and the Wildlife Trusts had been postponed. **Action: DO/JW**
 - b. Quotation for repairs to the old bus stop at the B6344 New Houses junction. Following the request from the PC, JW submitted a quote of £80 for the repairs/clearing of ivy on the bus shelter. This was approved by the Council. The Council's decision to award the work to JW was on the basis that the price for the work was very much lower than the threshold required to go out to tender, that it would be most unlikely to attract interest from other contractors, who would more than likely charge significantly more for the work, and that find alternative contractors would involve lengthy and administrative costs. **Action: JW**
 - c. Outcomes of meeting with David Smith MP. Following the meeting with DS, Clerk had written to his PA to extend our thanks to him for attending and also to confirm what was agreed:
 - Move into the Longhorsley Division. David and Joe Morris MP to follow up with the Boundary Commission on the move into the Longhorsley Division.
 - The Sale of the Rothbury Estate and letter to the Wildlife Trusts. That the Cluster to write to the Trusts. Clerk to ask JS on progress with this matter. **Action: JS**
 - Shared Parental maternity leave and the impact on small rural schools. David Owen in his capacity as Chair of Governors, Rothbury First School to follow up on this. DO said that the school were currently awaiting the financial impact information, after which they would write to DS. This issue had also been included in the agenda for the next Education Cluster meeting.
Members were impressed by DS, his engagement with local issues and his willingness to listen.
 - d. Embleton Terrace entrance. DO had informed Mark Ahearne that the PC were not in a position to purchase the roadway entrance. Two options were recommended to MH:
 - i. He retain ownership and receives advisory support to implement a change in the deeds regarding access across the entrance;
 - ii. The residents association take ownership of the land.
7. **Police Update.** Police had apologised in advance as they were unable to attend the meeting. There was nothing of note to report that impacted on the local community. Regular bulletins were being received through Northumbria Connected, although some of these reports included information that lay outside our area.

8. Finance

- a. Notification of receipts since the last meeting. Approved.

00/01/1900	TSB	Compensation re Mandate Complaint	50.00
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- b. Approval of Clerk's salary, expenses, PAYE & NI and approval of Other Payments since the last meeting.

20/01/2025	Thropton PC	Cluster Fees	13.70
25/01/2025	Jamie Whicker (reimbursement)	Nixon's Toilet hire WWCF116	126.00
29/01/2025	Jamie Whicker (reimbursement)	x1 Folding metal Loupe, x1 waterproof clipboard, box pencils, x2 pencil sharpeners, x2 first aid kits, x2 rucksacks, x50 nitrile gloves, 3pack A4 jottas, WWCF116	125.59
09/02/2025	Garth Rhodes (reimbursement)	Amazon: bucket/rope/water/sampler WWFC116	76.48

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09/02/2025	Garth Rhodes (reimbursement)	Simplex Ammonia Tests /Nitrate Tests. WWCF116	32.98
09/02/2025	Garth Rhodes (reimbursement)	UK Aquatics Phosphate Checker & Reagent WWCF116	106.18
09/02/2025	Garth Rhodes (reimbursement)	Water Filterman PH Meter /TDS Meter WWCF116	55.98
11/02/2025	Glenville Investments Ltd	Simplex Health x5 E.coli Tests WWCF116	499.98
17/02/2025	Jackie Scarpa (reimbursement)	Cutlery/plates/crafts/beverages Information Event WWCF116	119.13
26/02/2025	Roger Powell	Construction x 60 Bird boxes	973.25
03/03/2025	Longfram. Memorial Hall	Room Hire David Smith MP	12.00
		Total	2141.27

c. Bank Reconciliation. Approved.

Bank Reconciliation at 10th March 2025	£
Balance per E- bank statements at 10th March 2023	2748.13
Less unrepresented cheques	0.00
Uncredited Deposits -	0.00
Balance	2748.13
Balance per cash book	2748.13

d. Requests for donations. No donations had been made in this financial year. Donations were normally agreed at the March meeting. Requests this financial year to date:

- i. Citizens Advice Northumberland. Not approved. Agreed to raise funds at BHPC events.
- ii. North Northumberland Hospice Care. Not approved . Agreed to raise funds at BHPC events.
- iii. Rothbury Wrestling Academy
- iv. Wag & Co North East Friendship Dogs
- v. Carers Northumberland

As the current balance in the account was just over £2k and considerable costs associated with the Climate Change & Biodiversity activity and clerk's pay were anticipated, the PC agreed to defer any decision on donations until the next financial year.

e. Complaint to TSB. Following our complaint regarding the processing of the Signatory Mandate, a letter of apology had been received, and £50 compensation paid into the PC account.

9. Planning.

a. To note and discuss any planning issues since previous meeting including:

Reference	Address	Status	Parish Council Comments
24/02747/FUL	The Old School House Longframlington NE65 8HY. Demolition of rear/side extension and construction of rear extension to dwelling	Application Permitted	No Objection
24/02805/LBC	The Barn, 6 Brinkburn Lodge Cottages Longframlington	Application Withdrawn	No objection
24/03361/FUL	Land To South West Of Wardshill Farm House Longframlington	Application Registered	Object to this application because there is no justification for the installation of the deer grid.
24/03362/FUL	Between Wingates And Raven's Cleugh Hesleyhurst (previously known as Cattle Grid North West Of The Chirm Longhorsley)	Application Permitted	Object to this application because there is no justification for the installation of the deer grid.
25/00677/FUL	4 Embleton Terrace: Proposed installation of air source heat pump	Application	No objection

b. Outcome of Deer Grid applications

- i. 24/03362/FUL Between Wingates And Raven's Cleugh Hesleyhurst (previously known as Cattle Grid North West Of The Chirm Longhorsley). BHPC had objected to this application only the grounds that

- there was insufficient justification for this. The PC had not been informed of the change in name of location of the application nor received any notification that the applicant had submitted further details. The additional detail on the construction and justification for the grids stated that they were to prevent deer crossing into a newly planted Woodland Creation and were needed to protect their growth. No mention had been made re egress for small animals, but as the PC had not included this in its objection and no other consultee had mentioned it, there seemed to be no requirement for the applicant to address this. The Planning Officer contacted the Clerk on 6th February to ask if the PC wished to maintain its objection, given that further information was now available. Clerk asked for an extension until the PC meeting so that members could discuss the application further. The planning officer wrote back some days later to say that this application was being referred to the planning committee chairman to determine whether the decision could be delegated to the planning officer. If it was decided that it could be, he would make the decision, before our next parish council in March. On 12th February the decision was made to approve (with conditions). Whilst the conditions required some consideration of biodiversity gain, without going into various planning documentation including the National Planning Policy Framework, the PC were unable to ascertain whether there was a long-term requirement to provide egress for small animals, (although this is a requirement during the construction phase).
- ii. 24/03361/FUL Land To South West Of Wardshill Farm House Longframlington. The planning officer was asked if the same issues applied to 24/03361/FUL. He was unable to comment as he was not the appointed officer for this application. The decision on this application was yet to be made.

Members were concerned that their views were not being considered on these matters and asked the Clerk to write to the Planning Department to this effect,

Action: Clerk

10. Highways

- a. Highways and Footpaths Report. JS absent – no report.
- b. Report on any issues raised/ to raise with Highways Department. It was agreed to report the extremely poor condition of the following stretches of road:
- Pauperhaugh – junction to the Lee
 - Sauer's Hill
 - Embelton Tce – The Gusset

Action: Clerk

11. Wingates Wind Farm Community Fund

- a. Three grants approved at the last meeting of the WWCF:
- Wingates Institute £1100
 - St Giles Church £950
 - Embleton Terrace Road Fund £5000. DO was seeking other funding for this project, which in all likelihood would need to demonstrate the support of the Parish Council. All in Favour
- b. Proposal for a funding application for a notice board at Todsteads. Members agreed to a proposal to request funding for two noticeboards; one at Todsteads and one at Weldon Bridge which would provide space for both PC and community information. LH/JW were asked to pursue this matter, gain quotations and produce the application to WWCF.

Action: LH/JW

12. Climate Change & Biodiversity Committee. To receive a report from the Committee.

- The 2024/25 activity was winding down.
- The recent one-day hedgelaying course had been very successful.
- WWCF had agreed for unspent monies to be used to support other biodiversity activity within the project, including the construction of a further 120 bird boxes and for activities to be undertaken in 2025/26 including the next Information Day in June/July. WWCF had been informed that any requests for funding for this financial year were likely to be much reduced, though a more substantial request was probable once the sale of the Rothbury Estate had been agreed and further biodiversity activity with the new landowners established.
- CRAG was now testing at 40 sites along the Coquet. BHPC had now purchased its own testing kit (including E.coli tests to be used over the summer). This meant the loaned kit was now able to be used elsewhere on the river. Recent analysis of the testing data had shown a very close comparison to testing by the Environment Agency. Results had shown that our stretch of the river was quite healthy, but the water quality from Felton downriver deteriorated significantly due to sewage outflow, mineral deposits from old mine workings and phosphorus from agricultural land. Future CRAG developments to concentrate on the tributaries into the Coquet as these were more likely sources of pollution.

13. Honorary Freedom of the Parish Presentation Ceremony.

- The draft scrolls were approved.
- Invitations for the event to be sent out within the next few weeks.

Action: Clerk

14. Emergency Planning:

- a. Community Flood Plan. The approval of the flood plan was deferred until the flood warning signs and radios had been acquired and the relevant instructions concerning these had been added to the plan.

Action: Clerk

- b. Flood Warning Signage. The signs were currently under manufacture and would be ready for installation within the next week or two. NCC be asked that MF/JW to negotiate with them on the final siting of the signs.
Action: Clerk
- c. Radios. Following research and testing of possible models, JW recommended the acquisition of a Mitex Site radio 4 -pack (£451.00 inc VAT). This would require a licence (£75.00) and benefit from x 4 car chargers (c£72). These radios were considerably cheaper than those initially suggested. The proposal was approved. Clerk to confirm with Mark Ahearne that his family were happy to continue to fund the purchase of the radios.
Action: Clerk
- 15. Coquetdale Cluster Meeting**
- a. Items to discuss from the latest Cluster Meeting. No recent meeting.
- b. Items for next Cluster Meeting Agenda. None.
- c. Letter to Wildlife Trusts: Clerk to ask JS to provide an update on this.
Action: Clerk
- 16. Cemetery & Joint Burial Committee Reports**
- a. Longframlington Cemetery. The Consecration Ceremony to take place at 3.00 p.m. Tuesday 18th March at 3.00. MF agreed to attend to represent BHPC.
Action: MF
- b. Rothbury JBC. Drainage work ongoing. Construction of outbuildings underway. Investigation of additional burial space also underway.
- 17. Public Rights of Way**
- a. Definitive Map Modifications
- i. Definitive Map and Statement of Public Rights of Way - DMMO No 2 2024. Update of the Statement taking into consideration legal events arising from the loss of Cartington Parish. It did not require confirmation. It related to a stretch of bridleway by Lynch Wood, Woodhead Plantation & Woodhead to the Hope being renumbered from No 20 to No 49 and renumbering of the Cartington Footpath No 19 to No 48 from Cockshott, by Johnson's Style crossing Longframlington Rd to the Hope .
- ii. Definitive Map and Statement of Public Rights of Way - DMMO Nos 5 2024 (Brinkburn Station – East Raw Rd), 7 (B6344 through Cockshot – Longframlington Road) & 8 (Coquet Brae – Healey Farm): Confirmation of orders received.
- iii. Definitive Map and Statement of Public Rights of Way - DMMO No 13 & BOAT No 31 2024 (junction of New Houses- Longfram Road to the Hope). Confirmation of orders received.
- iv. Definitive Map and Statement of Public Rights of Way - DMMO No 16 & BOAT No 28 2024 (Brinkburn High House – River Coquet) . Confirmation of orders received.
- b. Review of DMMO (No 12) 2024 BOAT No 27 (Parish of Brinkburn). The PC objected as there was no longer a bridge/safe crossing across the Coquet. NCC had asked BHPC not to pursue its objection as the amount of work to make a submission to the Secretary of State would be enormous and unlikely to be upheld as these routes existed in the 19th century and had not been stopped by any legal process. NCC did concede that there was no longer a safe viable crossing point across the river, but this would not prove to be a viable argument . It was agreed to withdraw the objection.
Action: Clerk
- 18. Proposed Bridleway creation and Footpath stopping up south-east of Rothbury (Appendix 2)**. NCC proposed to simultaneously make a public path creation order to create a public bridleway along the old railway line, and a public path extinguishment order to close the existing Public Footpath. The landowner (Northumberland Estates) was broadly supportive of the proposal. The members were in full support of the proposal as not only did this make sense to improve the right of access, but it would hopefully (in conjunction with the landowner), offer the Council the opportunity to further its biodiversity work along the new bridleway.
Action: Clerk
- 19. Parish Council Election 1st May 2025**
- a. Nomination papers were distributed and members were asked to submit their completed papers to the Clerk by 9.00 a.m. Monday 24th March 2025.
Action: All
- b. Election Costs. PCs had received the NCC Estimate of Election Costs, which it advised them to use the information to decide if they needed to consider such costs within the Precept, only 2 days before the precept request had to be submitted. A contested election would cost the PC around £1k and over £2k if re-election was necessary. An email on behalf of the Chairs of Longframlington, Brinkburn & Hesleyhurst and Whitton & Tosson PCs setting out our concerns about the late arrival of this information had been sent to the NCC Elections team, but no response had been received.
- 20. Northumberland Open Space Assessment - Draft Document for Consultation**. DO agreed to respond on behalf of the PC.
Action: DO
- 21. The Great British Spring Clean 21st March – 6th April 2025**. JW agreed to submit the pledge of numbers of bags rubbish.
Action: JW
- 22. Any Urgent Business**
- 23. Items for Next Meeting**
- 24. Date of Annual Council Meeting and Next Meeting:** **Tuesday 13th May 2025 at 7.30 p.m.**
Memorial Hall, Longframlington.

Meeting closed at 9.28 p.m.

Garth Rhodes, Clerk, 5 Wardle Terrace, Longframlington, NE65 8AB, Tel: 01665 570347, Email: Clerk@Brinkburn.net