



Birtley Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting, Tuesday 20 May 2025, 8pm at Birtley Village Hall

Present: Sarah Crone, David Burn, Bill White, Marilyn Bell, Paul Andrew, Anne Lowes,
Cllr Azocar-Nevin

Minute taker: Mel Bramley (Parish Clerk)

In attendance: Bob Neilson (member of the public and local resident)

1.Apologies for Absence

None

2. Clerk appointment and welcome

Sarah welcomed Mel as the newly appointed Parish Clerk and thanks were given to Iris in her role as previous Chair.

ACTION: Sarah will arrange for flowers to be sent to Iris by way of thanks.

3. Declaration of interest

There were no declarations of interest to be noted.

4. Minutes of the last meeting

Sarah gave apologies to Bob Neilson as she had inadvertently not displayed the full minutes of the previous meeting on the noticeboard for residents to note.

The minutes of 18 March 2025 were agreed as a true and accurate record by all present.

5. Update from the previous meeting

Website – Paul confirmed that the new website is up and running. Paul is presently learning how to navigate the website and upload data etc. It was agreed that as well as the current administrators who have full access to the website (Paul and Sarah), Mel will also need to be included.

ACTION: Paul will liaise with Mel on this.

Further information regarding the forest and Birtley Village Hall becoming a Hub also need to be included.

ACTION: Paul will add this to the website.

The old website needs to be removed from the search engine and Paul will enquire about this with Terry at TWDA (website design providers)

ACTION: Mel will seek out the outstanding invoice due for payment to TWDA and also check the balance to see what has been paid to date.

6. B4RN

A digital discovery day is being hosted by B4RN on 11 June in Barrasford Village Hall, 1pm – 4pm. There is also free 1-2-1 sessions for members of the public called Bridging the digital divide in Northumberland.

ACTION: Paul will post this on the website and Mel will draw up a poster for the noticeboard.

7. Roads

The road outside the Village Hall on Piper Lane needs attention due to potholes. Cllr AzocarNevin advised this to be reported on Fix My Street.

The grass verge on the narrow road down to Wark needs cutting.

ACTION: Cllr Azocar- Nevin agreed to investigate this matter and report back.

8. Village Hall

Play equipment – Roger (Marilyn's husband) has kindly fitted the new swing. The Parish Councillors thanked him for doing this.

A health and safety inspection is due on the playground equipment in June. The cost will be £80 plus VAT. Parish Councillors will receive a report once the inspection has taken place on any outstanding matters.

The pathway along the Village Hall needs to be resurfaced.

ACTION: The village hall committee is dealing with this.

9. St Giles Church

The grass in the church yard has been cut and the area is looking tidy. It was noted that the Church had already paid the Parish Council £50 towards the lawnmower fuel costs.

10. Finance

Finance matters will be discussed in more detail at the meeting in June. It was noted that there are a number of outstanding invoices due to be paid which will be paid as soon as Mel has access to internet banking.

11. Playground

Mel will investigate costs to arrange for the play equipment to be cleaned.

ACTION: Once the budget/accounts for 2024/25 have been finalised Mel will do this.

The dog poo bin by Gold Island needs to be urgently sorted as it is too small. Clarification on who owns this land and where best to place the bin and what size bin need to be clarified with landowners and Northumberland County Council.

ACTION: Mel will investigate this and report back.

12. Northumberland County Council

Cllr Azocar-Nevin was welcomed to the meeting, and she introduced herself as the newly appointed Councillor for Humshaugh ward. She thanked everyone for the invitation to attend these meetings and stated in future she would provide an updated report (sent in advance to the Parish Clerk)

She reported that the Council had extended the availability of grants relating to the Warmer Homes scheme. The grant will cover 143 homes in Northumberland over the next 3 years.

ACTION; Cllr Azocar- Nevin agreed to forward details of how to apply, qualifying information etc to Mel for circulation. **13. A.O.B**

Bill stated that he is stepping down from the Green Rigg Windfarm (EDF) Advisory Committee. A new volunteer for Birtley is needed. There are 2 meetings per year. The next meeting is 7 October 2025 at 11am in the Village Hall.

The Birtley Church Fete and Dog Show is being held on 7 June 2025 at 2pm. There will be a cake and plant sale as well as cream teas. This is being organised by the PCC.

14. Date for next meeting

The next ordinary Parish Council meeting will be held on 12 August 2025 at 8pm in the Village Hall.

The meeting ended at 8.45pm.

Parish Councillors were asked to stay behind in order to complete the register of interest form and expenses forms which need to be returned to the County Council.

ACTION: Mel will collect the signed forms at the end of the meeting and submit them collectively.