

Northern Power Grid attended before the start of the meeting to update the community on plans to ensure a consistent power supply in the parish. Their plan is to underground a length of line through woodland in one area to avoid falling trees causing issues. Their aim to minimise number of outages and the duration of any outages. Currently awaiting signatures from landowner and will update the Parish Council with a time scale once known. It is hoped to have the work completed by Easter 2024. They advised of work already undertaken to avoid outages including installing aerial switches which could be triggered remotely to feed power back down the line from unaffected areas, getting the power to the parish restored as quickly as possible. Leaflets about their priority service for vulnerable customers are available in the Memorial Hall. They also suggested a fund was available to help with resilience in case of outages and will send details of this.

Action: add leaflet to website & Facebook page.

Cllr Robson signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office in the presence of the proper officer of the council.

Meeting commenced 7:45pm. 3 members of the public were present.

Present: Cllr Palmer (Acting Chair), Cllr Rogerson, Cllr Fortune, Cllr Brown, Cllr Robson.

**01/11/2023. To receive, and approve if appropriate, apologies for absence and reasons given**

Phil Lawless sent apologies

**02/11/2023. To receive declarations of interests**

*Members are reminded to declare any interest in any item on the agenda, now or at any time during the meeting.*

Cllr Fortune – vice chair village hall (item 09/11/2023 b)

**03/11/2023. To approve the minutes of previous meeting held 5 September 2023**

Approved & signed by Chair.

**04/11/2023. Parish Clerk's report**

*An update of work carried out since the last meeting & relevant information.*

2023/52

- Meadowlands steps repointing – work has been carried out to the wall, but Karbon Homes are to return to complete the work to the steps.
- Overgrown path The Crofts to Eastlands. Karbon Homes have cut back the hedge, but Clerk is still working to understand whose liable for repairing the uneven path.
- Gilbert Grange development – no contact received, despite multiple emails. The Planning Office have confirmed there are no requirements for the site to be completed within the planning permission.
- Albion Terrace – despite multiple emails Karbon Homes have not responded about this area. Suggest the householders who are directly affected contact Karbon themselves.

2023/53/01

Bank account changes – Cllr Palmer has (today) been set up as a signatory on the account. This has been a long process, and to avoid future delays in making payments, the Clerk will contact other Cllrs to fill in paperwork to be set up as signatories.

Ray Wind Farm CIC update from Cllr Lawless (by email)

- Very few applications come from the Kirkwhelpington Parish – could canvas the community on what benefits they'd like to see which could attract funding from the CIC.
- B4RN (full fibre broadband) has received funding for work in Barrasford & Birtley. The network could be extended to include Kirkwhelpington.

Footpath maintenance update (by email)

- Footpath officer has been redeployed by the Northumberland County Council, so waiting to make contact whomever is now responsible for advising.
- Some materials required for ongoing work
- Request for help with liaising with landowner, and clarity on liability insurance.

### **05/11/2023. Exclusion of the public**

*To determine which items, if any, of the agenda should be taken with the public excluded.*  
None

### **Members of public questions**

Street lighting – request for new lighting along The Crofts to the village green and elsewhere. Clerk to explore how to request new lighting.

Request for strimming to footpath from A696 to the village – to be passed to footpath group and considered from next spring.

Request for Parish Council updates emailed out to parishioners. This is complicated by GDPR (data protection) rules, but the Clerk will explore if the website can send auto emails out to parishioners when an update is added.

It was noted a Police Community Support Officer had previously attended meetings. Clerk to explore if this (or some form of update) is available regarding any issues in the local area. (In light of the police presence at the Knowesgate Hotel, after the Council had made a report to them about suspicious activity).

### **06/11/2023. Planning**

*To consider planning policies, applications and appeals received and resolve to submit comments where appropriate. [Town and Country Planning Act 1990, Sched. 7, para.8]*

Proposal Proposed extraction of 3 million tonnes of dolerite, importation of inert infill material and associated highway and landscape works (amended description 16th May 2023).	
Location	Land At Northside Harle Kirkwhelpington
Applicant	North East Concrete Ltd
Application No.	22/01909/CCMEIA
Case Officer	Mr David Love

Updates to planning application posted on 5 October 2023, appendix 1.

It is anticipated this application is going to the Strategic Planning meeting of Northumberland County Council on 5 December. The Council felt there had again been a lack of community engagement in the changes made to the application, but felt this was just reiterating comments previously noted, so would not issue a new response.

### **07/11/2023. Items for Consideration and Decision**

a) approval of budget 2024/25 & setting of precept, appendix 2

It was proposed to increase the precept from £6500 to £8000 as the council had taken on new responsibilities (such as maintaining the defibrillator and generator). This was proposed by Cllr Rogerson and seconded by Cllr Brown.

b) installation of dog bin & location

A favourable response had been received from the County Council. Need to understand:

- if the cost is one off
- how/ when collections are made
- how get permission from landowner for installing at the bottom of Eastlands.

Decision was made to go for a new wheeled bin, installed by NCC costing £375.80 (inc VAT)

c) policies for approval, appendix 3

- i. Code of Conduct
- ii. Data Protection Policy
- iii. Email privacy notice
- iv. New councillor privacy notice

Approved & to be loaded on to website.

d) Climate change toolkit – group composting & training available

Cllr Palmer is keen to ensure this remains a topic on the agenda and is attending some training later this week. One idea was a communal composting area, but finding a suitable location is proving difficult. This topic will be revisited on the agenda at the next meeting.

e) Request for camping on village green

Any requests for camping or other use of the village green need to be made to the council in advance of a meeting to ensure a decision can be made. Permission will not be unreasonably withheld.

### **08/11/2023. Items for Information Only**

a. Correspondence

A letter was received from a company offering tree surgery. It was mentioned there are trees on the green which are growing over the road and may cause issues going forward. As the land is rented, the Clerk will confirm which trees the council is responsible for and whether regular safety checks are required. To be put on the agenda for the next meeting.

b. Items for Information

Cllr Palmer is currently the Council's representative on the Education Fund Trustees group. Her term is coming to an end, but she's willing to take on another term.

c. Items to be included in next agenda

- Bus shelter at Knowesgate – need for and funding options.

- Tree safety
- Play area equipment – some remedial repairs required.
- Support for church grass cutting
- Speed limits in the village & signage
- Ongoing maintenance of defibrillator – new cabinet required.
- Street lighting in village
- Parking in village
- Generator – insurance & storage/ maintenance.

**09/11/2023. Finance**

a) Account Balances – *To receive a report detailing account balances*

Balance on all accounts as of 31.10.23

Santander account: £TBC

b) Request for increase in grant to Memorial Hall Committee

Increase requested to help with additional running costs and future plans. Council agreed to increase from £500 to £700. Proposed by Cllr Palmer, seconded by Cllr Rogerson.

c) Accounts for Payment – To review and approve items of expenditure, including those received before the meeting.

Date	Description	Amount	Outcome
10/10/23	Fuel & machinery maintenance– Robson & Cowan	£1117.94 <i>Outstanding balance of payments owed since July.</i>	Approved
31/10/2023	Staffing costs <i>30 hours for Clerk (Sept &amp; Oct) &amp; grass cutting for the year.</i>	£2406.90	Approved
01/11/2023	Room Hire – Kirkwhelpington Memorial Hall	£128	Approved
July, Sept & Nov	W/C maintenance – Kirkwhelpington Memorial Hall	£766.50 (3 x £255.50)	Approved

d) Bank Reconciliation for approval

**10/11/2023. Date & time of next meeting.**

Tuesday 2 Jan, 7:30pm at the Memorial Hall.

Any agenda items to be sent to the Clerk by Monday 18 December.

Meeting closed 21.41