

Lesley Silvera from Groundworks North East & Cumbria provided an update on the Wansbeck Restoration Project:

- Project will end at the end of March 2025, with some monitoring ongoing
- Successful so far due to the cooperation of landowners

Meeting started: 19:40

2 members of public present

01/11/2024 **To receive, and approve if appropriate, apologies for absence and reasons given**

Cllr Rogerson

Cllr Lawless – attending strategic planning committee

02/11/2024 **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 declared an interest on items relating to the Memorial Hall

03/11/2024 **To approve the minutes of previous meeting held 3 September 2024.**

Approved & signed by chair

04/11/2024 **To receive comments/ queries from members of the public with regard to items on the agenda**

Comment it was difficult to understand Northumberland County Council contemplating quarry project in light of other habitat restoration projects, such as the work mentioned in the talk about the Wansbeck Restoration Project.

05/11/2024 **Parish Clerk's report**

Play area new equipment update

Only £1182 available from S106 funds. Clerk attended meeting with Community Foundation to understand funding they may be able to offer. Council will need to adopt a safeguarding policy to be able to apply. Current timescale is to have funding in place by end of January and works completed by the end of March 2025.

Police update (received 19 October 2024):

I have checked from the last update (19/08/24) there has only been one incident of note, in the early hours of 29/09/24 we received a report of suspected poachers at a farm between Colt Crag and Kirkwhelpington. A number of vehicles and persons were on the land with torches. Nothing believed to have been stolen however a gate was left open. The vehicles were believed to have made off towards another farm to the West. The report was received via an online form so there was no attendance from police. There were no other reports from the area.

There were two RTC's in the period:

19/09/24 at the Little Harle crossroads happened about 1705 hours, two vehicles involved. One of the drivers had serious injuries and was taken to hospital the other driver had minor injuries.

11/10/24 just South of Little Harle, one vehicle involved, two occupants taken to hospital, they were discharged the same day.

Cllrs aware of post box theft Knowesgate, unsure if this has been reported to police.

Information about family hubs and free tree scheme shared on website and Facebook page.

Application for public conveniences grant from Northumberland County Council successful.

Clerk now has access to online banking and up to date balance figures.

Cllr Fortune has been in contact with Penny Petroleum who advised their project at the Knowesgate Filling Station is still in progress. They had submitted plans, but had to alter them at the request of Northumberland County Council. They are ready to submit the new plans and hope to begin early works to secure the roof and fence off the area. They are happy to return to speak to the community as the project progresses.

Coast & Castles are still working with tenants to get gardens into a better state.

06/11/2024 Exclusion of the public

Item 08/11/2024 c) Understanding social housing allocation

07/11/2024 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]

Reference	Detail	Status
22/01909/ CCMEIA	Proposed extraction of 2.8 million tonnes of dolerite, importation of inert infill material and associated highway and landscape works	Going to Strategic Planning Committee – 5 November

A site visit was held on Monday 4 November which was attended by Cllrs Palmer & Brown along with representatives from Northumberland County Councils various departments including planning, highways, ecology & delegates from North East Concrete (the applicant). The visit was informative and lots of questions were asked including how closely the site would be monitored to ensure adherence to the work programme and that the site couldn't be left in a poor state (as the housing site at Gilbert Grange has been). Cllrs were informed there is a regime of regular checks with quarries which will include the establishment of a liaison committee with North East Concrete which will include representatives from the planning department and parish council.

Report received from strategic planning meeting (running at the same time as the Parish Council meeting) was that the application has been approved.

08/11/2024 Items for Consideration and Decision

a) Community survey & action planning – Appendix A

Cllrs generally in favour of the proposed approach for community consultation. Initial steps include setting up a working group which will require 'terms of reference', which the clerk will draft. Chair to put some information in the Chimes magazine and advise parishioners how to apply if they would like to

be on the working group. Clerk will include information on website.
Need to include relevant items from the new Climate Change Toolkit (produced by Northumberland County Council) and Emergency Planning.

b) Community Emergency Plan

Cllr Palmer attended Resilience Forum held by Northumberland County Council in Bellingham which identified different types of support hub of which the Memorial Hall closest matches a 'community response hub'. NCC provided a draft community emergency plan which has been shared with the Memorial Hall committee. It was felt the full plan may be too onerous for what the Memorial Hall can offer, but it could help with offering some guidance on what to include. A draft plan will be prepared for the January meeting.

c) Understanding social housing allocation

Moved to the end of the meeting.

d) Home energy advice from Northumberland County Council

Sessions available from a central team to deliver advice and guidance to the community on energy saving. It was felt that a lot of houses in the parish are over 100 years old which can make modern energy savings devices impossible to use. Additionally as part of the parish is under a Conservation Area there are only limited interventions which can be made. It was suggested to invite someone from NCC to attend a Last Saturday Coffee Morning as this would reach more parishioners. Chair will send invite and confirm a date with the Memorial Hall.

e) Safeguarding policy adoption – Appendix B

This policy is needed to enable the Parish Council to apply for funding from the Community Foundation and is best practice to have in place. Policy was agreed & adopted and will be reviewed annually.

f) Gov.uk domain information – Appendix C

Some local councils are moving to have a website and emails ending 'gov.uk' which can give people confidence they are consulting an official council body. However, currently this move isn't compulsory and would create quite a lot of change for the Parish Council website. It was agreed that the Council will not make any changes currently, but would review the situation as new information is provided or in the case of the move becoming compulsory.

09/11/2024 **Items for Information Only**

a. Correspondence

i) Request for funding – Wag & Co. North East Friendship Dogs – Appendix D
No funding given.

ii) Request for grant for Memorial Hall – Appendix E

Cllrs would like to understand from the Memorial Hall their current funding position and what amount of grant may be needed to keep the Hall functioning. In 2024 the Parish Council has increased the grant given to the Memorial Hall for the provision of toilets, which may mean the general grant needs to be lower than last year so Parish Council funds aren't being depleted. The grant amount will be determined at the next meeting, once further information is obtained from the Memorial Hall Treasurer.

iii) Citizens Advice – invite to annual public meeting, 5 December – Appendix F
Chair hopes to attend.

iv) Northumberland Association of Local Councils AGM – 23 November –
Appendix G
Clerk to attend

v) Pay increase update from NALC – Appendix H
In line with guidance from NALC the local council's pay advice has been
received & approved.

b. Items for Information
Ray Wind Fund update
None received

Climate change toolkit
New toolkit issued which is easier to follow has simpler steps to complete. It is
available on NCC website. Chair is still chasing the hot compost bins which
are awaiting delivery.

c. Items to be included in next agenda

- Memorial Hall grant
- Community action plan
- B4RN install and roll out
- Adapt bus
- New street lighting

10/11/2024 Finance

a. Account Balances – *Received*

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

Date	Description	Amount
Sept & Oct	Robson & Cowan Grass cutting expenses	£109.09 of which £27 for underpaid on previous invoice
March-Oct	Grass cutting wages	£2112
Sept & Oct	Clerk wages Back pay from April for pay increase	£357.70 £39.90 inc. HMRC £79.60
November	Memorial Hall toilet grant	£350
November	Memorial Hall hire	£128
November	Memorial Hall grant	Decision deferred

All amounts approved for payment.

c. Forecast budget review & draft budget approval for 2025 -Appendix I
Discussion of current forecast and initial budget for 2025. Council are keen to
ensure there is funding available for any works which come out of the

community plan. Precept will be decided at January meeting.

11/11/2024 **Date & time of next meeting.**

Tues 7 January 2025, 7:30pm

Items for which the public were excluded

08/11/2024 c) Understanding social housing allocation

Chair had attended a Northumberland County Council Town & Parish Councils meeting where the Director of Housing & Planning had spoken about the current demand for Social Housing. Several councils raised concerns about issues with the current allocation of houses. Council agreed to invite representatives from Northumberland County Council and the active housing associations in the village to talk at a future meeting to understand their allocation system, but also their duty of care to residents when making allocations.