

**Minutes of the West Bedlington Town Council Meeting held at Bedlington Community Centre, Front Street West, Bedlington.**

**On Thursday 21st March 2024 at 6.30pm.**

**PRESENTATIONS.**

* There were no presentations for this meeting.

**QUESTIONS TO THE COUNCIL**

* 2 members from East Bedlington Parish Council were present. They thanked Cllr Hogg for his assistance with the Friends of the Northumberland Line. Cllr Hogg acknowledged their thanks and added that this was a collective effort of West Bedlington Town Council as a whole. A question was also raised about the progress of having a lift installed in the Community Centre, Cllr R Wallace responded saying that quotes have been received together with pledges from our County Councillors. However, money is tight at the moment, and fund-raising efforts are continuing. All acknowledged that the stair lift in situ isn’t a satisfactory solution to the problem.

**PART A - ATTENDANCE / APOLOGIES AND DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS.**

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| Min  Ref |  | **Attendance / Apologies and Declarations of Interests.** | **Determination** |
| 23/270 |  | **In Attendance** | Councillors, Crosby, Hedley, Henderson, Hogg (Chair), Taylor, Thompson, D Wallace and R Wallace.  Acting Town Clerk Gillian Turner, three (3) members of the public. |
| 23/271 | a. | **Apologies for Absence.**   1. To receive and note any apologies for absence from Councillors. 2. To consider and determine any dispensations for absent Councillors. | 1. Apology for absence from Councillor Todd, was **NOTED.**   ii. There were no dispensations for absence for this meeting. |
| 23/272 | b. | **Declaration of Interests.**   1. Unless already entered in the Council's Register of Members' interests, members are required to disclose any personal interest, (which includes any disclosable pecuniary interest), they may have in any of the items included on the agenda for the meeting in accordance with the Code of Conduct adopted by the Council on 12th July 2012.      1. To consider any requests for dispensations. | 1. Cllrs R Wallce and Thompson declared an interest in item 2g Pupil Fund application – Governors of School.           No dispensations for this meeting. |

# PART B – MATTERS FOR DECISION

1. **MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETINGS / SUMMARY OF DELEGATED DECISIONS**

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|  |  | **Details of Meeting or Delegated Decisions** | **Determination** |
| 23/273 | a. | To agree and sign as a correct record the minutes of West Bedlington Town Council Meeting held on 8th February 2024. | **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the West Bedlington Town Council Meeting held on 8th February 2024 are **APPROVED** as a true record**.** |
| 23/274 | b. | To discuss any matters arising from the minutes of the last meeting that are not included as agenda items. | There were no matters arising from the minutes of the meeting held on 8th February 2024. |

1. **MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION / DECISION**

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|  |  | **Matters for Discussion / Decision** | **Determination** |
| 23/275 | a. | **Internal Controls – Annual Review Carried Forward from December**  The Council are requested to discuss and decide upon the DRAFT documents for Final Accounts:   1. Statement of Internal Controls 2. Financial Governance 3. Asset Register. | **RESOLVED** Members approved documents en-bloc. |
| 23/276 | b. | **Town Twinning**  A request for financial support has been received re: visit from Schalksmuhle in September 2024. | **RESOLVED** Members approved £1,500 funding which is held in Earmarked Reserves |
| 23/277 | c. | **Chairs Update and any Reports from External Meetings.**   1. The Chair will make any relevant announcements and provide updates to members.   ii. To receive feedback from Councillors from any external meetings since the date of the last Council meeting. | 1. The Council Chair (Councillor Hogg) provided a verbal update on recent events:  * Town & Parish Conference at NCC * South East Northumberland Forum * Local Area Council Meeting   Full Report can be found at the end of these minutes.   1. None |
| 23/278 | d. | **To Consider any issues which would normally have been taken to the Services Committee**   1. A bin with a broken door was reported on the Black Path at the bottom of Westmoreland and Cumberland Avenue. 2. The Acting Clerk reported that the faulty speed sign in Nedderton Village (Oakdale) is now operational | **RESOLVED**: The Acting Clerk was asked to arrange repairs.  **Noted** |
| 23/279 | e. | **Other Working Groups / Committees (items for decision or discussion).**   1. Any Recommendations from Other Working Groups for decision by full Council. 2. Any Other Items from Other Working Groups – Any feedback to the Council, any other items discussed, any ongoing and future matters been worked upon by any working group.  * **Events Group** – **On-line Booking Tool**. Cllr Taylor informed the meeting that the tool is not recording all bookings even though confirmations have been issued. * **Events Group** – upcoming events including lovely afternoon tea on 27th March, Baby / Easter Disco and Magic Show. | 1. None 2. **It was agreed** that Cllr Taylor investigate new systems and to report back to Council any costings/proposals.     **Noted** |
| 23/280 | f. | **Bank Reconciliation**  The Council are asked to APPROVE a checked bank reconciliation of £265,856.08 at 29th February 2024 and a Deposit Account Balance of £101,603.48 as of 29th February 2024. | **RESOLVED t**o **APPROVE** the bank reconciliations as at 29th February 2024 |
| 23/281 | g. | **Pupil Fund Application – Whitley Memorial CofE Primary School**  Members considered the application.  *Cllrs Thompson and R Wallace declared an interest in this application as Governors of the School and took no part in the discussion or voting process.* | **RESOLVED to APPROVE** £1,500 from the Pupil Fund. |

# PART C – MATTERS FOR INFORMATION OR TO BE NOTED

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|  |  | **Matters for Information or To Be Noted** |
| 23/282 | a. | The Council are requested to accept all correspondences and the actions noted in respect of each.   |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | | Ref | From | Brief Description | Action Taken | | 05/02 | Northumberland County Council | 24/00364/PRUTO at 8 Hallwood Close | Noted + Circulated | | 05/02 | Northumberland County Council | Planning Officer re: 21Front Street | Noted + Circulated | | 05/02 | Northumberland County Council | Latest Northumberland News and Jobs | February 02, 2024 | Noted + Circulated | | 12/02 | Community Action Northumberland | CAN Enews February 2024 | Noted + Circulated | | 12/02 | Groundwork | February Newsletter | Notes + Circulated | | 12/02 | Northumberland County Council | Latest Northumberland News and Jobs | February 09, 2024 | Noted + Circulated | | 12/02 | Foodbank | Notice of AGM | Noted + Circulated | | 13/02 | Resident | Support for Double Yellow Lines behind Wetherspoons | Noted + Circulated | | 13/02 | To Resident | Faulty Speed Camera Nedderton | SWARCO informed and engineer requested | | 13/02 | Northumberland County Council | 24/00432/LCB re: The Beeches, Church Lane | Noted + Circulated | | 16/02 | Cubiquity Media | Official Portrait of King Charles III for all public buildings/organisations | Ordered (FOC) | | 16/02 | Northumberland County Council | 23/04389/FUL Hartford Bridge House | Noted + Circulated | | 16/02 | NALC | Latest NALC Enews | Noted + Circulated | | 16/02 | SENRUG | Notice of Public Meeting 11.04.24 | Noted + Circulated | | 20/02 | Northumberland County Council | 24/00398/VARICO St Benet Biscops | Noted + Circulated | | 20/02 | Northumberland County Council | TTRO 136873070 Station Road LC | Noted + Circulated | | 04/03 | Northumberland County Council | Latest Northumberland News and Jobs 01/03 | Noted + Circulated | | 07/03 | Borderlands | Place Programme Update | Noted + Circulated | | 07/03 | Network Rail | Biodiversity Programme | Noted + Circulated | | 07/03 | Northumberland CC | Planning 24/00678/VARCO 86-88 Front Street | Noted + Circulated | | 07/03 | Ashington & District Male Voice Choir | Potential Meeting | Noted + Circulated | | 07/03 | Northumberland CC | Planning 24/00578/COU 1A Front Street | Noted + Circulated | | 07/03 | Northumberland CC | Planning 24/00364/PRUTPO 8 Hallwood Close, Nedderton | Noted + Circulated | | 07/03 | Groundwork | Newsletter March | Noted + Circulated | | 08/03 | Northumberland Line | Newsletter February | Noted + Circulated | | 08/03 | Potential Music Festival | 20 Acres Field | Noted + Circulated | | 08/03 | Northumberland CC | Latest Northumberland News and Jobs 08/03 | Noted + Circulated | | 11/03 | Police | Invite to discuss operation | Noted + Circulated | | 11/03 | CAN | Latest ENews | Noted + Circulated | |  |  |  |  | |

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| 23/283 | b. | **Consultations.** | | | | | | |
|  | None | | | | |  |
| 23/284 | c. |  | **Invitations.** | | | | | |
| From | | Event | Response Details | |  |
| **None For This Meeting** | |  |  | |
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| 23/285 | d. | **Schedule of Payments and Receipts.**  Details of payments and (receipts) to be noted since last Council update. All payments gross of VAT.     |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | | Payee | Amount  £. p | Description | Notes | | Bedlington Community Centre | 18.00 | Hall Hire Pantomime retro charge |  | | Widescope Net | 432.00 | Website Hosting Annual Charge |  | | Reay Security Ltd | 83.04 | CCTV Charges |  | | Smart Office Systems Ltd | 13.30 | Photocopier Charges |  | | Talk Talk Business | 55.26 | Telephone + Internet |  | | Reay Security Ltd | 83.04 | CCTV Charges |  | | Reay Security Ltd | 446.40 | Lock-ups at Meadowdale |  | | Reay Security Ltd | 809.64 | CCTV Town Centre |  | | Northumberland County Council | 5,715.01 | Payroll Costs February |  | | Morrisons | 862.50 | Easter Eggs for Schools |  | | Wireless Logic Ltd | 539.14 | CCTV SIM Charges |  | | Widescope Net | 153.96 | Microsoft 365 License |  | | Reay Security Ltd | 83.04 | CCTV Charges |  | | Northumberland County Council | 13,534.80 | Festive Lighting 2023 |  | | Viking Office UK Ltd | 51.41 | Stationery |  | |  |  |  |  | |  |  |  |  | | Lloyds Bank Business Account | (112.06) | Interest Received |  | |  |  |  |  | | | | | | | |
| 23/286 | e. | **Other Planning Applications as per NCC Planning Portal**   |  |  | | --- | --- | | **Ref.** | **Description** | | 24/00432/LBC | Listed Building Consent: Demolition of existing half glazed entrance porch and construction of a crenelated stone porch with timber casement windows and front door at The Beeches, Church Lane – No Objection | | 24/00398/VARYCO | Variation condition 2 (approved plans) on approved application 23/01831/FUL in order to reduce size, volume and shape of scheme at St Benet Biscop Catholic Academy, Ridge Terrace – It was agreed to resubmit original objections. | | 24/00392/ADE | Advertisement consent for one landscape sign at Land South of 2 Ewart Drive, Fenwick Park – No Objection | | 24/00364/PRUTPO | TPO prune overhanging branch, remove oversail of house roof and reduce shading of roof lights/windows at 8 Hallwood Close, Nedderton Village – No Objection | | 24/00678/VARYCO | Variation condition 2 to allow installation of Air Source Heat Pumps at 86-88 Front Street – It was agreed to resubmit previous comments. | | 24/00578/COU | Change of use of dwelling to business at Tregaron 1A Front Street – No Objection. | |  |  | | | | | | | |
| 23/287 | f.      (i)                            F(ii) | **Planning decisions notified to West Bedlington Town Council by Northumberland County Council.** | | | | | | |
| **Ref.** | | **Description** | | | **Decision** |  |
| 24/00223/MISC | | Erection of Telecommunications pole in grass verge adjacent to 19 The Grange Nedderton Village. | | | PERMITTED |
| 23/04576/DISCON | | Discharge of conditions 3, 4,5, 6 and 12 re Land to North West of Blue House Farm Cottages, Netherton Colliery. | | | PERMITTED |
| 23/04389/FUL | | Replacement of existing conservatory with new, to include removal of internal wall and porch at Hartford Bridge House, Hartford Road. | | | PERMITTED |
| 23/04212/FUL | | Proposed single storey rear and side wrap round extension at 7 Oakapple Close. | | | PERMITTED |
| 22/04292/DISCON | | Discharge of conditions 3,5,9,11,16 and 21 re Land South West of Glebe Farm, Choppington Road. | | | PERMITTED |
| 24/00364/PRUTPO | | TPO prune overhanging branch, remove oversail of house roof and reduce shading of roof lights/windows at 8 Hallwood Close, Nedderton Village. | | | PERMITTED |
| 19/04074/VARYCO | | Variation to condition 1 (approved plan) to allow operator requirements re Car Park at Vulcan Place. | | | PERMITTED |
| 16/03062/DISCON | | Discharge of condition 6 (materials) re Land South West of Spring View Cottages, Spring Park. | | | PERMITTED |
| **Revocation of Wansbeck District Council Tree Preservation Order Ridge Terrace** – NCC conducted a review of TPOs within the County during August 2022 and as most of the trees were found to be no longer present and those remaining are no longer worthy of protective status, made a decision to REVOKE this Order. Members **noted** their decision. It was also agreed that the Acting Clerk contact NCC to ask for a list of all trees in the area still carrying a TPO. | | | | | |
| 23/288 | g. | **Police Report –** Members received and noted notice of “Operation Capio” taking place on Sunday 24th March 2024. It was agreed that Cllr Hogg attend. | | | | | | |
| 23/289 | h. | **Matters for Information Only –** Any matters pertaining to the Council, that members would like to bring to the attention of other members and residents. For Information only no proposals or voting on these matters.   1. Cllr Henderson reported that she has replaced the broken park keys and confirmed that Reay Security has a set of the new ones to use. | | | | | | |
| 23/290 | i. | **Date of Next Meeting.**  **RESOLVED** the date of the next meeting will be Thursday 11th April at 6.30pm in Bedlington Community Centre, Front Street West, Bedlington.  The agenda for this meeting to be issued on Wednesday 4th April. | | | | | | |
| 23/291 | j. | **Close of Meeting**  The Chair closed the meeting at 7.11pm with thanks to all in attendance. | | | | | | |

**PART D – EXEMPT BUSINESS.**

That under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public and representatives of the press and broadcast media be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following items of business as publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

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|  |  | **Matters for Discussion / Decision / Information** | |
| 23/292 |  | Latest update re: the Clerk | The Clerk hopes to return to work when his current fitnote ends. The Acting Clerk will liaise with NCC using the new HR SLA to look at a phased return to work and any other support required. |

**WEST BEDLINGTON TOWN COUNCIL - COUNCILLORS**:

Bill Crosby, Paul Hedley, Cath Henderson, Adam Hogg, Christine Taylor, Victoria Thompson, Jayne Todd, Di Wallace, and Russ Wallace.

**Signed by Chair Date**

**Chairmans Update 21st March 2024**

This month has been quite a busy one and I have attended a number of meetings.

First off was the Town and parish council conference where I asked a number of questions about things we had raised and never heard any update.

First was tree planting and it was confirmed all the sites we have highlighted to NCC are included in an application to DEFRA for funding which would see planting undertaken on the sites during the winter of 24/25.

Next I spoke to Planning enforcement about Boardoaks and the lack of woodland, interestingly there were no records of our requests on the system and I asked for this to be looked into and for us to get an update which they said they would speak to the enforcement officer for an update.

I spoke to Estates about our lack of being consulted on redundant land sales by NCC in the area and I was told this had not happened in the past but will be happening going forward, I also asked about the funds from land sales and they confirmed this went into a central pot and was not ringfenced to the area the land was sold in.

Following on we had the Q&A with Glen Sanderson who said if there are any issues with officers not coming back to town and parish councils we should email him with the details and he will make sure we get an answer, there is also a new plan to hold two the Town and parish council conference’s a year one around this time of year and one in October.

Next was an informal meeting with other Parish and Town Councils now called the South East Northumberland Forum we had a good discussion on how different councils offer funding to groups within there areas, some offering groups different types of funding at different levels, we then had a good discussion on Neighbourhood plans and it is interesting to hear others highlight there issues when writing a plan, we were also handed a breakdown of what other councils do and precept charged, number of staff, etc.

It is interesting to note that we out of the five councils in the group are have the second lowest budget and do almost the same services as the other councils bar the likes of grass cutting.

Next, I attended the Local Area council meeting and raised the question of the market place development and the administration of the main contractor and if this would delay the project yet again, A pre prepared statement was read out by the chair and the main points to highlight was that NCC and Advance have moved quickly to secure the site in terms of Health and Safety, Insurance and Security, they will be working with sub-contractors and hopefully there will be no major delays to the project, they also highlighted no money has been lost as a result of the administration it was also stated a update will be issued in a few months hopefully.

I also raised the point of the long promised speed signs on the B1331 outside west end and was told that this was with street lighting and an update will be provided from highways as to what stage the project is at.

Following on into the agenda of the LAC a discussion was held about a crossing on stead lane and while not in our area the discussion highlighted a few interesting points as to the details taken during a survey which include walkers and cars, the timings of surveys and that they should be aimed at summer months rather then winter months and that NCC have a county wide issue of employing and keeping school crossing patrols