

# NEWTON ON THE MOOR & SWARLAND PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held in Swarland Village Hall  
**Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2023**

<b>1.</b>	<p><b>Public Question Time (Max 15 minutes in total):</b> Several residents were present who said that they would be interested in joining the PC's Neighbourhood Plan (NP) Steering group. The question was asked whether there was still a need for an NP? Cllr Francis said that Rob Murfin, NCC's Director of Planning had said that those NP's in place before the NCC LP was approved would probably need to be revisited, but there was still an opportunity to have NP's that addressed issues perhaps just touched upon in the LP like design standards, and opportunities to look outside settlement boundaries for possible exception sites for affordable housing. Cllr Francis suggested that the volunteers needed to familiarise themselves with the NCC Local Plan. One of the volunteers suggested asking residents to identify 'burning issues' which then could be examined to see if they could be dealt with under the LP or a is an NP was needed. Examples of issues are around the caravan site, and the lack of public transport and footpaths in Swarland. The PC needs to see that there is commitment to the process, and valid issues to be addressed before embarking on the NP process. Cllr Rixon said that NCC would give advice on what's possible and he recommended looking at the Lesbury NP as a good example. One of the residents said that an NP is an opportunity to have more confidence that the statutory nature of the document will protect the area for years to come. It was agreed that a meeting of the community volunteers with Cllr Francis would be arranged as soon as possible to map out the next steps, and Cllr Francis said he would try to pull out the key LP policies worth focussing on.</p>	Clerk
<b>2.</b>	<p><b>Present:</b> Cllr D. Francis (Chairman), Cllr G. Anderson, Cllr K. Howard-Row, Cllr M. Whiteley, Cllr N. Mansfield, Cllr D. Rixon, Cllr R. Simpson, and Cllr C. Letts. The Clerk was in attendance.</p>	
<b>3.</b>	<p><b>Apologies for absence:</b> Cllrs Clark and Woolfrey.</p>	
<b>4.</b>	<p><b>Declarations of Interest in items on the agenda:</b> None.</p>	
<b>5.</b>	<p><b>Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> January 2023:</b> Agreed subject to the correction of typos.</p>	
<b>6.</b>	<p><b>To consider matters arising from the Parish Council meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> January 2023:</b></p> <p>a. <u>Road Issues</u> – Including traffic monitoring in Swarland and NotM, Road markings in NotM, school crossroads visibility impaired by new railings, completion of traffic calming around school including donation from Cllr Thorne – Cllr Whiteley had met with Michael McGonnagal from NCC and Cllr Thorne. The railings have been replaced and visibility is better. Electricity for signage is being installed 27<sup>th</sup> February with the signs going in afterwards. There may be a short delay before the power is connected. Road survey equipment will be installed within a month. Cllr Whiteley will go back to Michael McGonnagal about speed monitoring in Newton on the Moor will check with Cllr Thorne to confirm what he is paying for out of the Small Grants scheme.</p> <p>b. <u>Condition of Swarland Roads</u> - A reminder had been sent to Rob Murfin and had been sent to the relevant person in Highways as Mr Murfin is no longer managing Highways. The PC is still waiting for a reply.</p> <p>c. <u>Request for Installation of Defibrillator Studley Drive/Low Wood area Swarland</u> – The Clerk reported she still had been unable to get a response. She will continue to chase this up by ringing NCC.</p> <p>d. <u>Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group</u> – Cllr Francis asked if any Cllrs would like to be involved with the NP Steering Group. Cllrs Simpson, Howard-Row,</p>	

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	<p>Roxon, Mansfield and Simpson expressed an interest.</p> <p>e. <u>Freedom of information request</u> – The organisation structure of the PC and VPC had been discussed with the Information Commissioners Office. The PC is subject to FOI requests, but the VPC is not. The investigating officer was happy with the PC’s investigation and declaration that it does not hold any of the information requested for PC work. The complainant has been advised but confirmation has not yet been received by the PC from the ICO.</p>	
<p>7.</p>	<p><b>Requested Agenda items:</b></p> <p>a. <u>Vyner Park update</u> (Cllr Woolfrey) There was no further update since the last meeting. The VPC Committee is due to meet in March.</p> <p>b. <u>Swarland and Newton on the Moor Action on Climate (SNAC) update.</u> – The latest meeting had been held on 21<sup>st</sup> February. The funding for the new bus service had still not been received by NCC from central Government. Tree planting will take place in Vyner Park on 5<sup>th</sup> March 10.30am. A survey had been circulated to SNAC members to explore what they want to prioritise in 2023/24. There is likely to be a change of SNAC structure to having a small steering group with leaders being sought for specific projects. There was enthusiasm for having invited speakers on topics such as heat pumps which would be open to the public.</p> <p>Forestry England are embarking on a Storm Arwen recovery plan which will involve extensive felling in Swarland Woods, however, they are open to talking about issues concerning residents including Red Squirrels and replanting the woods. It is hoped that there would shortly be a public meeting for discussions. Cllr Simpson said he’d noticed a better diversity in the woods since areas have opened up. The Lower Coquetdale Red Squirrel group (LCRSG) has requested the support of the PC in protecting the Red Squirrels. Cllrs agreed they were aware of and sensitive to public views on this and shared the LCRSG’s concern about the need to conserve Red Squirrels.</p> <p>There was a reminder about the SNAC photo competition, and that SNAC now had a Facebook page. Work will be continuing on public rights of way in the Parish, and it is hoped to shortly make available a map of annotated routes.</p> <p>c. <u>Litter and unsightliness of land around the Bari Bar and nearby footpath</u> (Cllr Whiteley) – Cllr Whiteley said there were piles of rubble seemingly abandoned. Woodland has construction related material being dumped in it. It was noted that this is a private right of way Cllr Letts to contact the site manager informally about this.</p> <p>d. <u>Query from local resident about Longframlington School proposals</u> (Cllr Anderson) – For discussion and response. Cllr Rixon objected to Cllr Thornes description of Swarland School as a ‘wooden shed with a felt roof’ inferring it is a dump. Cllr Thorne had said the school could not take any more children and this isn’t true. It is a pleasant, warm environment. Cllr Letts to check with the School Head to see if there has been any contact from Cllr Thorne or others on this, and to sound out their views. Clerk to contact Sue Aviston (Head of School Organisation and Resources at NCC) for a copy of the modified report that had been produced according to Cllr Thorne.</p> <p>Letter to go to the resident raising this issue that the PC has raised issue, has confronted Cllr Thorne, and spoken to Longframlington PC and will continue to do so.</p> <p>e. <u>Coronation of King Charles III</u> – Discussion and decision on action to be taken (if any) to commemorate the event on 6<sup>th</sup> May 2023. NCC grant scheme details have been received, and this scheme won’t pay for memorabilia or tree</p>	<p>Cllr Letts</p> <p>Cllr Letts</p> <p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p>

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	planting. Clerk to put information on Swarland Residents facebook page. Cllr Simpson suggested sensory planting/showcase on wildlife at Vyner Park. Permission would be needed from VP first and then a scheme could be worked up.	Clerk  Clerk
<b>8.</b>	<b>Report by County Councillor and meetings attended by Councillors:</b> None.	
<b>9.</b>	<p><b>Finance:</b></p> <p>a. Clerk's salary for February 2023                      £410.55              Payment to HM Revenues &amp; Customs PAYE                      =        £82.00              Payment to Clerk = £421.55 + £23.34 expenses - £82.00 PAYE              <b>PLUS</b> underpayment from January £104.32                      =        £456.21</p> <p>b. Receipts: None.</p> <p>c. Other payments:              Repayment to Cllr Clark for 'Coffee &amp; Chat' from NCC Covid Grant =        £32.50              Northumberland &amp; Newcastle Society Subscription 2023                      =        £35.00</p> <p>d. Account balance as at 16<sup>th</sup> February 2023                      =        £31,387.28          All the above were agreed and noted with the addition of a repayment to Cllr Greg Anderson for purchase of a new flag (£92.60 inc VAT) and the Christmas Tree for Jubilee hall (£46.66).</p>	
<b>10.</b>	<p><b>Planning:</b></p> <p>a. <b>Decisions made by NCC</b>  <b>19/01687/FUL PLANNING APPEAL Planning Inspectorate ref: PP/P2935/W/22/3299391</b> Change of use of land for the siting of up to 60 static caravans, along with associated infrastructure and hard and soft landscaping. Archaeological report received 09.2.2021 and amended site location plan received 26.02.21. Land North West Of Springwood, Coast View, Swarland, Northumberland. The PC submitted further objections. Appeal and Costs application both DISMISSED 6.2.23.</p> <p><b>22/04013/REM</b> Reserved Matters application for appearance, landscaping, layout and scale for consideration of 16no detached bungalow style prefabricated dwelling houses on approved application 19/04108/OUT. Percy Wood Golf Club and Country Retreat, Coast View, Swarland. The Parish Council objected to this application on several grounds. This application was WITHDRAWN by the applicant on 7.2.23.</p> <p><b>22/04035/FUL</b> Proposed replacement rear extensions and front porch, external window and door alterations.34 Park Road Swarland Northumberland NE65 9JD. The PC had no objections to this application. Application PERMITTED 10.2.23.</p> <p>b. <b>Applications pending decision by NCC</b>  <b>20/02884/CCMEIA</b> - Land North Of Shiel Dykes, U3050 Swarland Junction To Stouphill Junction, Swarland, Northumberland. Phased extraction of approximately 5 million tonnes of hard rock and importation of inert material for use in restoration using overburden from site and imported inert materials over 30 year period . This application is not within the Parish but may impact on the area. The Parish Council did not object to the application subject to a range of</p>	

comments. Cllrs Cutforth and Howard-Row objected to the development. As at 16.2.23 decision still awaited.

**21/04446/FUL** - Construction of 7no. detached bungalows and associated road and ground works on former grazing land. Land North Of 3 Nelson Drive, Nelson Drive, Swarland, Northumberland. The PC made a detailed objection to this application on several grounds including overdevelopment of the site. As at 14.1.23 decision still awaited.

**22/02326/FUL** – Construction of 5No One and a half storey dwellings. Land South Of Woodside, Coast View, Swarland Northumberland NE65 9JE. The PC objected to this application. As at 16.2.23 decision still awaited.

**22/03128/FUL** - Proposed construction of 3 bedroom dormer bungalow, Land South East Of 4 Studley Drive, Studley Drive, Swarland, Northumberland, NE65 9JT. The PC did not object to this application but made suggestions regarding more sympathetic planting. As at 16.2.23 decision still awaited.

**21/02696/S106A – Planning Inspectorate Ref: APP/P29835/Q/22/3309863**  
 Planning Appeal Notification – Hawkshaw, Old Swarland, Swarland, Morpeth, Northumberland, NE65 9HU. Variation of S106 Agreement relating to planning permission A/2004/0323 dated 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2005. The PC had objected to this in 2021. No further comments have been submitted.

**21/04972/FUL** – Tourism development comprising of 9no. timber lodges within woodland setting with associated access, hardstanding and landscaping. Garden And Rush Plantations, Newton-On-The-Moor, Northumberland. The PC did not object to the application originally made in 2021, but made several comments. This was a RECONSULTATION. The PC objected to the change in layout of the site, but after receiving additional formation/explanation from the applicant, this objection was withdrawn. As at 16.2.23 decision still awaited.

**22/04768/FELTPO** – Tree Preservation Order application: Remove and replace T1 – Purple Plum, T2 – Norway Spruce, T3 – Beech, T4 – Ash and T5 – Ash. T6 – English Oak – Crown lift to 6m over road. Selective prune to reduce lateral spread to North (over road) by 3m leaving branching no less than 6m to parent stem. Remove snapped out branch from lower crown. Remediate the originating tare out wound above. T7 - Beech - Selective prune to reduce lateral spread to North (over road) by 3m leaving branching no less than 5m to parent stem. T8 – English Oak – Selective prune to reduce lateral spread to North (over road) by 3m leaving branching no less than 4.5m to parent stem. Remove dead stem to Immediate Northeast main stem. Remove deadwood >30mm diameter. T9 – Beech – Fell to near ground level. Low Chesters, Swarland, Northumberland, NE65 9ND. The Parish Council had no objections. As at 16.2.23 decision awaited

**22/04769/FELTPO** – Tree Preservation Order application: Remove and replace T10, T11, T12 and T13 Ash. 2 Low Chesters, Swarland, Northumberland, NE65 9ND. The Parish Council had no objections. As at 16.2.23 decision awaited.

**22/04770/FELTPO** – Tree Preservation Order application: T17: Ash (Fraxinus

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	<p>excelsior) – Remove and replace. 3 Low Chesters Swarland Northumberland NE65 9ND. The Parish Council had no objections. As at 16.2.23 decision awaited.</p> <p><b>22/04771/FELTPO</b> – Tree Preservation Order application: Remove and replace T18 – Larch. 4 Low Chesters, Swarland, Northumberland, NE65 9ND. The Parish Council had no objections. As at 16.2.23 decision awaited.</p> <p><b>23/04101/FUL</b> – Bespoke Shepherd Hut and decking. Land Rear Of 9 Newton-on-the-Moor, Morpeth, Northumberland, NE65 9JY. The Parish Council objected to this application including relating to parking issues and not in keeping with the Conservation area. As at 16.2.23 decision awaited.</p> <p><b>23/00048/FUL</b> – Construction of two storey extension [etc] 28 Park Road, Swarland, NE65 9JD. The Parish Council did not object to this application but asked for the extension (if approved) to be rendered to match the existing dwelling. As at 16.2.23 decision awaited.</p> <p><b>23/00049/LBC</b> – Construction of two storey extension [etc] 28 Park Road, Swarland, NE65 9JD. The Parish Council did not object to this Listed Building application but asked for the extension (if approved) to be rendered to match the existing dwelling. As at 16.2.23 decision awaited.</p> <p><b>23/00236/FUL</b> – Construction of two dwellings. Land South East of The Park, Old Park Road, Swarland, Northumberland, NE65 9HJ. Comments invited until 14<sup>th</sup> February 2023. Cllrs agreed the draft response which had previously been circulated.</p> <p><b>c. Planning matters for Parish Council to consider</b>  <b>23/00106/FUL</b> - Proposed two-storey extension to front and side of existing building and demolition of existing outbuilding. Currys Cottage, Old Swarland, Swarland, Northumberland, NE65 9HU. Comments invited until 28.2.23.</p>	
<p><b>11.</b></p>	<p><b>Complaints:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leamington Lane drain and manhole outside Swarland Primary school – blockage issues referred to NCC 5.2.2020. Being taken up by NCC/OpenReach. Cllr Whitely to raise this issue with Mr McGonigal at NCC.</li> <li>• ‘No footpath’ sign at entrance of The Springwood knocked down Request for ‘No entry’ sign at Cherry Tree Drive due to Percy Wood visitors getting lost. - referred to NCC - 22.9.21.</li> <li>• Request for new Union Jack for the Square.</li> <li>• Damage around manholes in The Avenue, Swarland. Reported to NCC 23.11.22</li> <li>• Surface water overflowing down Old Park Road (from woods) south of Douglas Crescent – Referred to the Forestry Commission. 7.1.22</li> <li>• Request for new bench beside bus stop opposite The Square, Swarland, and removal of debris from recent bus stop repairs 13.1.23. Debris removed, bench to be levelled.</li> <li>• Request for refilling of grit bin in Old Park Road – Reported to NCC 17.1.23</li> <li>• Overgrown public footpath to rear of Park Road (from Coast View to Douglas Cresc,) Reported to NCC 1.2.23. – SNAC to monitor.</li> </ul>	<p align="center">Cllr Whiteley</p>
<p><b>12.</b></p>	<p><b>Correspondence:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NCC invitation to Devolution Deal public event 15.2.23. Alnwick.</li> <li>• NCC Coronation Community Fund. Closing date 3.3.23.</li> </ul>	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Letter from resident re: formation &amp; aims of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering group.</li> <li>• NCC Re-evaluation of rates for Swarland Village Hall – passed to SVH.</li> <li>• Northumberland &amp; Newcastle news update for February 2023.</li> <li>• Google Analytics January 2023 – 134 users on website. Previously circulated. Cllr Clark will interrogate information and see if it is possible to tell if different people are using the site.</li> <li>• NCC (Dog Control) Public Spaces Protection Order – extended until 30th January 2026.</li> <li>• <u>Rural Services Network - Rural Cost of Living Survey – until 31.3.23.</u></li> </ul>	Cllr Clark
<b>13.</b>	<p><b>Requests for next agenda:</b>  a. <u>gov.uk email address/improvements to PC website</u> – Decision on whether the PC &amp; Cllrs should move to this email/website after viewing examples of sites.</p>	
<b>14.</b>	<p><b>Urgent Items:</b> None.</p>	
<b>15.</b>	<p><b>Dates of Next Meetings:</b> 22/3/23 JH, 26/4/23 SVH, 24/5/23 JH.</p>	

**Meeting finished: 21:06**

**Newton on the Moor and Swarland Parish Council -November 2022****Information on Parish Council website providers**

- In November 2022 the PC received a report outlining the pros and cons of moving to the use of secure gov.uk e mail accounts. The report outlined the steps involved and the costs of registration with gov.uk.
- It was noted that in moving to a new domain, there is an opportunity to review and improve the PC's website and so the PC requested some further information about the costs involved.
- There are approximately 8 - 10 companies who are specialist providers of web / online services to town and parish councils (the majority of whom are also accredited Registrars for gov.uk domains). Following a desktop review, 4 of these were approached to provide further information.
- Specifically they were asked the following questions –
  - Are you able to host [.gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk) domains and to act as a Registrar ?
  - Do you have a choice of templates for Parish Council websites ? Can you provide details of the functionality provided ?
  - Can you provide the names of 2 or 3 Parish Council websites that you support ?
  - What content management platform do you use ?
  - Can you give details of your pricing structure, showing one-off and ongoing costs for registration of the domain name, set up of website and e mail accounts, hosting, support and training.
- All companies responded and the information provided is summarised in the table attached.
- The Northumberland Association of Local Councils also hosts a number of local parish council websites, but it does not provide e mail accounts. Information about this and the PC's current provider are also included.
- The commercial providers emphasise their understanding of parish council requirements and typically have one or more templates which can be customised. Some offer different levels of product with add-on features such as a calendar of events, register of interests, gallery, directory of services and organisations.
- They also provide compliance with all the required accessibility and transparency standards and provide hosting, migration, maintenance, support, training and software updates.
- The cost of creating / migrating a new site typically involves a one-off cost of between £380 and £750, with annual support costs ranging between £125 and £450/year.
- Whilst this is higher than our current provider and the NALC package, it is important to consider what sort of online presence the PC wants to have – and potentially to engage users in helping to shape it.
- The structure and design of the PC's existing website has not been updated for some time. It is not responsive (i.e. it doesn't work properly across all types of device), has limited functionality, is not engaging to the user and probably does not meet all the required accessibility standards.
- However it is Wordpress-based and in theory it should be possible to redesign it. This would require a level of design and technical skills which the PC does not possess. It would also not address the issue of moving to a gov.uk domain.
- The PC is asked to consider the information provided and to indicate whether it wishes to proceed further and if so how.