

Newton on the Moor & Swarland Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held in Swarland Village Hall
Wednesday 27th November 2024

1.	Questions and comments from Parish residents (Max 15 minutes in total): None.	
2.	Present: Cllr D. Francis (Chairman), Cllr R. Simpson, Cllr M. Whiteley, Cllr G. Anderson, Cllr D. Rixon and Cllr Howard-Row, The Clerk was in attendance.	
3.	Apologies for absence: Cllrs N. Mansfield and S. Woolfrey.	
4.	Declarations of Interest in items on the agenda: None.	
5.	Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 23rd October 2024 September – Agreed.	
6.	<p>Matters arising from the Minutes of the meeting on 23rd October 2024:</p> <p>a. <u>Review of Parish Boundary (update).</u> – Cllr Francis has asked for an update from NCC Democratic Services.</p> <p>b. <u>Installation of defibrillator in Studley Drive/Low Wood area (update).</u> – The PC was unsuccessful in obtaining a British Heart Foundation Grant but was successful with the Department of Health & Social Care scheme match funding obtaining the equipment for half price (£750). The defibrillator and case have arrived and NCC have been contacted to get the installation completed within four weeks.</p> <p>c. <u>Condition of Swarland Estate Roads (update)</u> – Cllr Francis said he would chase this up again. In connection with Nelson Drive a road closure sign has been displayed and NCC Highways seemed to be unaware they own the road. The Road Closure section were contacted for more information on this closure which was for Openreach.</p> <p>d. <u>Repair of ruts beside road in Park Road</u> – Some of the ruts on the south of Park Road have been repaired but others are still present, and the ruts on the north part of the road haven't been touched. The Clerk has taken photographs and will contact NCC to pursue this.</p> <p>e. <u>Replacement Village signpost</u> – Clerk to issue invoices.</p> <p>f. <u>Installation of traffic calming measures</u> – Clerk to contact Wark PC (not Rock as previously reported).</p> <p>g. <u>Improvements to Guyzance/A1 crossing</u> – A letter including photographs of the junction and accident statistics has been sent by the Clerk to our MP, the Mayor's office and National Highways. Responses have been received from all three and circulated. Clerk to action requests for additional information and to contact local resident who has compiled data on the issue.</p> <p>h. <u>Police attendance & information</u> – Clerk to pursue.</p> <p>i. <u>Defective gully cover on road leading to A1 (going south from NotM)</u> – Completed. Works were carried out n by NCC very quickly.</p> <p>j. <u>Memorial Stone in The Square/Vyner Park</u> – The PC is encouraging the various parties to get together to resolve the memorial construction. The PC has agreed in principle to make a donation to the works needed.</p>	<p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p>
7.	<p>Requested agenda items:</p> <p>a. <u>Vyner Park Update</u> (Cllr Woolfrey had sent a written update) – The Bonfire event went well on 1 November with no safety issues. Volunteers felt attendance was slightly down on previous years, but it was a drizzly evening and misty. Nevertheless, the surplus made was around £2k. the VPC is still after an individual to lead the event for next year and into the future – requests</p>	

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<p>have been put on Facebook and will appear again in Column. Please advise Cllr Woolfrey if any Councillor might be interested. Otherwise, the Park is functioning normally, and the new Nelson's Directors are settling in well.</p> <p>b. <u>Swarland and Newton on the Moor Action on Climate (SNAC)</u> – An update about SNAC has been circulated. The key issue is that we should not be complacent about the bus service. Its not guaranteed to continue forever and another bidding round will be required. SNAC hope ARRIVA will bid again. SNAC have submitted a budget request of £100 but if further funds are needed for projects which arise, SNAC hopes the PC will be willing to consider further funding. SNAC is encouraging the PC to respond to the regional consultation on transport (see item e below).</p> <p>c. <u>Neighbourhood Plan</u> – An update has been circulated. The update contained information referring to affordable housing which is welcomed. Cllr Francis said he had attended both the CAN and the NALC AGMs, and both touched on affordable housing in rural areas. Rob Murfin, NCCs Head of Planning & Housing is keen to support the building of more affordable housing. CAN currently has a housing officer in post funded by DEFRA. The PC could contact this advisor re: funding, management models etc and is having a meeting in the new year which the Neighbourhood Planning team can attend if they wish. NCC has funding from S. 106 agreements which can be tapped into. Cllr Francis suggested we contact CAN's Housing Officer to arrange a meeting in the New Year. Also, that he could advise on how best to assess local housing need.</p> <p>19.35 At this point in the meeting Cllr Rixon apologised and left the meeting.</p> <p>d. <u>Feedback from the Finance Group & Staff Review</u> – Meetings were held on 19th November to review the Clerks post, and the PC draft budget and precept 25/26.</p> <p>a. Clerk Review – This review was carried out by Cllrs Francis, Whiteley and the Clerk. The job description was found to be out of date having not been amended to show the removal of secretarial work for Vyner Park. Cllr Francis said that when the Clerk/s post was initially graded, the PC was much simpler, with a smaller budget and fewer meetings. Guidance on gradings from NALC had been referred to and the recommendation was that the post should be upgraded from SCP 12 to fixed point 21. Further the national pay awards for 23/24 and 24/25 hadn't been implemented so there was an increase to the hourly rates of the Clerk and the Vyner Park Secretary. Cllr Francis suggested that when the next award comes out it should be just included in payments for approval, and the job description should be amended and needs to be clear that she retains overall responsibility for Vyner Park compliance re governance and finance. This was agreed.</p> <p>b. Draft budget & precept - Draft Budget attached as Appendix A. For discussion and decision on way forward. Budget/precept to be finalised at the PC meeting on 22nd January 2025. A draft budget had been circulated before the meeting and this needed to be amended to include revised staff figures and a one-off provision for SVH windows. A provision for unspecified improvement works for SNAC or other groups was discussed (£500), and accurate figures for the Cemetery were needed. Cllr Anderson was hoping to get figures the following night's meeting of the Cemetery Cttee. The Clerk to give Cllr Anderson figures relating to insurance which was thought to be overstated. Cllr Francis</p>	Clerk
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	<p>said he thought the precept may need to be raised by £10,000 and was going to put this in an item in The Column. Cllr Whiteley suggested adding that this increase may just need to be for one year, then the precept can be decreased. This was agreed.</p> <p>e. <u>North East Mayors Local Transport Plan Consultation</u> – Request for input from SNAC. Consultation until 26.1.25. Information has been sent to Cllrs comments to the next meeting.</p>																													
<p>8.</p>	<p>Report by County Councillor and meetings attended by Councillors: See Item 7c above.</p>																													
<p>9.</p>	<p>Finance:</p> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 80%;">a. Clerk’s salary for November & December 2024</td> <td style="text-align: right;">= £1005.20</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Back pay from 23/24 and 24/25</td> <td style="text-align: right;">= 1484.25</td> </tr> <tr> <td> Payment to HM Revenues & Customs PAYE</td> <td style="text-align: right;">= £498.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td> Payment to Clerk = £2489.55 + expenses £10.00 - £498.00</td> <td style="text-align: right;">= 2023.54</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2"> </td> </tr> <tr> <td>b. Vyner Park Secretary salary November & December 2024</td> <td style="text-align: right;">= £172.32</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Back pay from 23/24 and 24/25</td> <td style="text-align: right;">= £200.68</td> </tr> <tr> <td> Payment to HM Revenues & Customs PAYE</td> <td style="text-align: right;">= £72.60</td> </tr> <tr> <td> Payment to Sec = £363.00+ exp’s £10.00 – PAYE £72.60</td> <td style="text-align: right;">= £300.40</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total cheque for HMRC £498.00 + £ 72.60</td> <td style="text-align: right;">= £570.60</td> </tr> </table> <p>Please note, the salary figures include a £2.00 increase in hourly pay in 23/24 in the National Pay Award, and a further increase of £0.63 in the 24/25 National Pay Award. Please note also that an increase in the Clerks Salary Scale position is pending. Any back pay due will be claimed in January 2025.</p> <p>c. Receipts: None.</p> <p>d. Other payments:</p> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 80%;">Repayment of VAT element of SNAC grant to NCC Climate Change</td> <td style="text-align: right;">= £121.56</td> </tr> <tr> <td>ForvisMazars – AGAR external audit 23/24</td> <td style="text-align: right;">= £210.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Liz Clark (Coffee & Chat)</td> <td style="text-align: right;">= £112.31</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Confirmation of payment for defib via BACS to London Hearts</td> <td style="text-align: right;">=£750.00</td> </tr> </table> <p>e. Account balance as at 21.11.24 = £26,201.42</p> <p>All the above were agreed/noted. The Clerk said that the need to repay money to NCC had not been confirmed yet, nor had the invoice been received from ForvisMazars but both were expected shortly.</p>	a. Clerk’s salary for November & December 2024	= £1005.20	Back pay from 23/24 and 24/25	= 1484.25	Payment to HM Revenues & Customs PAYE	= £498.00	Payment to Clerk = £2489.55 + expenses £10.00 - £498.00	= 2023.54			b. Vyner Park Secretary salary November & December 2024	= £172.32	Back pay from 23/24 and 24/25	= £200.68	Payment to HM Revenues & Customs PAYE	= £72.60	Payment to Sec = £363.00+ exp’s £10.00 – PAYE £72.60	= £300.40	Total cheque for HMRC £498.00 + £ 72.60	= £570.60	Repayment of VAT element of SNAC grant to NCC Climate Change	= £121.56	ForvisMazars – AGAR external audit 23/24	= £210.00	Liz Clark (Coffee & Chat)	= £112.31	Confirmation of payment for defib via BACS to London Hearts	=£750.00	
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<p>10.</p>	<p>Planning:</p> <p>a. Decisions made by NCC & Planning Inspectorate:</p> <p>24/02361/FUL – Retrospective agricultural building for the storage of general-purpose agricultural machinery. Land east of Park Road, Swarland. The Parish Council had no objections to this application. Application PERMITTED 25.10.24.</p> <p>24/02419/FUL – Construction of 1 no. self/custom build detached dwelling. Swarland Garage, Home Farm Cottages, Swarland, Morpeth, NE65 9JH. The Parish Council had no objections to this application but commented on drainage issues. Application PERMITTED 1.11.24.</p> <p>b. Applications pending decision by NCC:</p> <p>20/02884/CCMEIA - Land North Of Shiel Dykes, U3050 Swarland Junction to Stouphill</p>																													

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	<p>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 comments. As at 21.11.24 decision still awaited.</p> <p>24/01868/VARYCO – Retrospective variation of condition 7 (permitted development rights) and discharge of condition 2 (materials), 3 (boundary treatment), 9 (rain and surface water) and 10 (surface water) on approved application A/2007/0345 – condition 7 relates to modification of living space. 2 Nelson Drive, Swarland, Morpeth, NE65 9JR. The Parish Council objected to this application. As at 21.11.24 decision still awaited.</p> <p>24/00795/FUL – Construction of 2 detached dwellings with associated garages and shared access – Woodside, 1 Coast View, Swarland. This is a consultation on an amended application. The Parish Council objected to this application for a number of reasons including sewerage disposal concerns, and poor access. This application was agreed at the NCC North Area Planning meeting 21.11.23.</p> <p>24/02968/LBC – Listed building consent for replacement of existing windows with double glazed wooden frames – Swarland Village Hall, Coast View, Swarland. The Parish Council had no objections. Application not decided as at 21.11.24.</p> <p>24/03084/FUL – Rear extension, replacement windows and internal alterations. Swarland Mill, Old Swarland, Swarland, NE65 9HX. The Parish Council had no objections. Application not decided as at 21.11.24.</p> <p>24/03558/FUL - Construction of log cabin to provide annex to existing dwelling - 14 Park Road Swarland Northumberland NE65 9JD. The PC had no objections but asked for a condition to prevent the cabin being used as holiday accommodation.</p> <p>24/0356/FELTPO - Tree Preservation Order application - T16 - Fagus sylvatica (Beech) - Fell to near ground level to mitigate safety risk; T19 - Salix caprea (Goat Willow) - Repollard to 2m above ground level (previous pollard points) to mitigate safety risk - 3 Low Chesters Swarland Northumberland NE65 9ND. The Parish Council had no objections to this application.</p> <p>c. Planning matters for Parish Council to consider</p> <p>24/03777/PRUTPO - Tree Preservation Order application: T1, T2, T3, T5 Lime - Remove lower hanging branches and reduce epicormic growth; T6, T7, T8 Birch - Remove branches hanging into garden; T4, T9 Horse Chestnut - Remove low hanging branches – Woodside, The Woodlands Swarland Morpeth Northumberland NE65 9HE. Comments invited until 5th December 2024.</p> <p>23/03421/FUL – PLANNING APPEAL REF: APP/P2935/W/24/3355135 – Erection of 2no Self/Custom build dwellings. Land SE of The Park, Old Park Road, Swarland. Comments to be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate by 12th December 2024.</p>	
<p>11.</p>	<p>Correspondence: Query from resident about defib progress – answered. Query from resident about planning application 24/00795/FUL – answered NCC Wheeled Action Sports Strategic Document</p>	

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	Letters from Mayors Office, National Highways and David Smith MP re Guyzance/A1 crossroads safety. NCC Revised 2024 Register of Electors. National Highways – A1 Morpeth to Ellingham scheme cancelled. NCC Free trees to community groups and residents.	
12.	Requests for next agenda: a. Decision on the PC Budget and Parish Precept 2025/26. – To be submitted to NCC by 25 th January 2025.	
13.	Urgent Items: a. A decision notice had been received from the ICO. Clerk to contact the ICO to clarify what information is outstanding, and what information is needed in the response to the complainant.	Clerk
14.	Date of Next Meeting: No meeting in December 2024, 22.1.25 JH.	

Meeting Finished: 20:21