

Newton on the Moor & Swarland Parish Council

DRAFT 2 Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held in Swarland Village Hall,
Coast View, Swarland.
Wednesday 25th June 2025

1.	Questions and comments from Parish residents (Max 15 minutes in total): None.	
2.	Present: Cllr M. Whiteley (Chairman), Cllr S. Woolfrey, Cllr D. Francis, Cllr R. Simpson, Cllr G. Anderson (minute taker), Cllr D. Rixon, and Cllr J. Peacock. Also present were County Councillor Thorne, Donna Corbin, Liz Kitson and Linda Oldroyd.	
3.	Apologies for absence: J. Anderson (Parish Clerk) and Cllr N. Mansfield.	
4.	Declarations of Interest in items on the agenda: None.	
5.	Minutes of the Annual Parish Council Meeting held on 14th May 2025 – Agreed subject to amendment from Cllr Francis.	
6.	<p><u>Matters arising from the Annual Parish Council Meeting held on 14th May 2025 ;</u></p> <p>a. <u>Condition of Swarland Estate Roads (update)</u> – Cllr Francis said he and Cllr Whiteley met with Robin McCarthy. There were 17 different parcels of land, each of which would need addressing individually by NCC. Cllr Francis agreed to send a reminder email to chase up.</p> <p>b. <u>Repair of ruts beside road in Park Road</u> – Cllr Simpson said that most of the edges appear to have been done. The Clerk has sent a further request for the section by the field gate.</p> <p>c. <u>War memorial/garden of remembrance</u> – Cllr Simpson said that an article had gone into The Column and on Swarland Residents Facebook page, asking for suggestions about the best location. 45 responses had been received supporting Vyner Park, and 25 supporting location in The Square. Cllr Francis commented that there was already a very good memorial in Felton. Cllr Simpson suggested that a compromise could be a plaque or name bricks in The Square, and locating a formal memorial/garden in Vyner Park. County. Cllr Thorne said he would be happy to recommend a contribution towards the scheme. Cllr Woolfrey commented that there seemed to be a clear momentum for locating a memorial in Vyner Park. Cllr Peacock said it would be good to have name bricks as well.</p> <p>Cllr Woolfrey proposed that a garden of remembrance be constructed in Vyner Park. This was seconded by Cllr Simpson and agreed with one abstention. Cllr Simpson will liaise with the Heritage Group.</p> <p>d. <u>Change to Parish Council contact email address/website</u> - Cllr Anderson advised on behalf of the Clerk, that there was no update yet. Cllr Whiteley said he hoped to have progress in the next three months. Cllr Peacock said that the new site had option of an emergency email.</p> <p>e. <u>Parish Emergency Plan</u> - Cllr Peacock provided an update. There have been several meetings and a draft plan has been produced. This was sent to NCC's Contingency Officer for review. Vulnerable residents wishing to participate will need to provide written consent, and for any contractors, First responders. Cllr Thorne has agreed to recommend funding for £1000 for items for an emergency pack eg flasks, hi viz vests, torches etc. Food items could not be funded through the NCC members scheme. Cllr Peacock estimated that £100 would probably be adequate for food and drink supplies. This sum was agreed by Cllrs</p>	<p>Cllr Francis</p> <p>Cllr Simpson</p>

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	<p>unanimously. Cllr Anderson to look at costs of an LPG generator asap (with the aim that this would be grant funded).</p> <p>f. <u>Annual Audit AGAR 2024/25</u> – The External Auditors have been contacted about the late submission of the AGAR paperwork for 2024/25. The late submission and non-compliance will be highlighted but they will not have any issues with this.</p> <p>g. <u>Red Phone Box in Newton on the Moor</u> – It has been confirmed that the PC purchased the phone box. Cllr Anderson agreed to re-glaze the phone box.</p> <p>h. <u>Request to make Old Park Road one way (around old tank turning area)</u> – Has been referred to NCC.</p>	Cllr Anderson
7.	<p>Requested agenda items:</p> <p>a. <u>Vyner Park Update</u> (Cllr Woolfrey) – See item f below.</p> <p>b. <u>Representation on Vyner Park Charity Cttee</u> – Cllr Simpson had resigned but agreed to rejoin the VPC Cttee – agreed.</p> <p>c. <u>Swarland and Newton on the Moor Action on Climate (SNAC)</u> – Cllr Simpson said that SNAC are asking for volunteers for 11th October 2025 to help clear around the old Swarland Hall boating lake.</p> <p>d. <u>Lease/Freehold changes to Swarland Village Hall (Cllr Woolfrey)</u> Refer to Appendix A Report. Cllr Woolfrey said that SVH Cttee now feel it would be better to have a lease rather than freehold and are keen to move forward on the 5 proposals. Cllr Francis said his concern was what would happen if there were charity failings such as if the Committee departed but the community still wanted the facility, it might be more appropriate to facilitate new governance arrangements. Also if the hall totally falls back on the PC, it would be left with a deteriorating asset. Donna Corbin (DC) commented that the PC would be a safe pair of hands in such circumstances but that the situation would be unlikely. DC said that copies of the existing lease are incomplete, and the missing parts can't be located so a new lease is really needed. Cllr Peacock asked that if the PC still held the freehold, would SVH need to seek PC approval for any changes. DC said that the PC handed the role for management to the Trustees who are then OK to make changes etc. Cllr Francis said that a new lease is needed but that it should reflect as far as possible the current operating arrangements. He went on to say that the SVH and the PC are on the same side with the same aims, so he is not sure that two solicitors are needed. DC said that there are two legal entities, and no solicitor should agree to deal with both. Cllr Francis suggesting checking with the PC's solicitors asap to clarify this. Cllr Whiteley will action this. Cllr Rixon said that as the problems stem from faults by Adam Douglas, the PC shouldn't be paying for further work. The view generally was that this was too long ago to dispute now. The proposals in Appendix A were agreed as follows; <u>Proposal 1</u> – The Parish Council (PC) agrees to offer a lease to Swarland Village Hall (SVH) Charity, with a clause so that if the charity fails for any reason the Hall would automatically revert back to being the responsibility of the PC, but the PC's role would depend on the circumstances– Agreed. <u>Proposal 2</u> – The PC will offer SVH Charity a lease for 999 years – Agreed. <u>Proposal 3</u> – The PC appoints a Solicitors practice as its legal representatives for this process – to be checked.</p>	Cllr Whiteley

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	<p><u>Proposal 4</u> – It is proposed that cost of a lease be split between the two organisations at 25% for the VH and 75% for the PC – Agreed with the proviso that this would be upto a maximum of £3000 for both solicitors' fees</p> <p><u>Proposal 5</u> – The PC will propose to its legal advisors that Warcup Solicitor's, who will be representing SVH Charity, will act as the lead solicitor and prepare the lease for subsequent approval by the PCs legal advisors (tentatively, Adam Douglas) – Agreed.</p> <p>e. <u>Neighbourhood Plan</u> – Donna Corbin presented the case for appointing Ludman Planning Ltd costing £2475 (no VAT). (Appendix D quote) as the next stage on the NP process. Cllr Whiteley asked if any further costs were to follow? DC said no further costs would fall to the PC except for a consultation at very minor cost. Cllr Anderson noted concern about the costs of the Referendum and if these will be covered by NCC. DC said the NP team have been assured the referendum will be covered. County Cllr Thorne also confirmed this and stated that to help the PC's budget, he would be prepared to recommend a contribution of £1500 to the Memorial Garden to free up funds from the PC's budget. Cllr Thorne was thanked for his offer. Cllr Francis had earlier stated that the PC shouldn't be agreeing to this unbudgeted cost. Also that there had been limited engagement with the community and he'd prefer some consultation on the draft plans first. DC explained the legal process and that its not recommended to do this before the full process is followed. Cllr Francis noted that there had been few NP team meetings since May 2024. DC said that this was because they had agreed to work via email which is what they have been doing.</p> <p>It was agreed to pay the £2475 fee to Ludman Planning Ltd but subject to written confirmation from NCC that the referendum fee will definitely covered by NCC.</p> <p>21.10 – At this point in the meeting it was agreed to suspend standing orders so the meeting could be completed.</p> <p>f. <u>Vyner Park Pavilion Solar Panels</u> – Request for the PC to agree in principle to solar panels being installed so further information can be sought. Cllr Woolfrey described the scheme which included 102 panels and a Kw battery at no cost. Following installation, a reduced rate of electricity will be provided at 15p/Kwh (at 24p currently). Cllr Peacock queried the community benefit. Cllr Woolfrey said it was the greener option and that review of Nelson's rent would take into account increasing income, cheaper energy costs etc. Cllr Peacock said that its possible to get a grant to install your own panels and get a much higher benefit. Cllr Woolfrey said that VPC wouldn't get a 100% grant so would need to have money up front. Cllr Rixon queried issue where work couldn't be done to the roof without permission from NCEL. Cllr Peacock disagreed with the proposal as it would b mean leasing out the roof for 20 years and the fact that the f difference between 15p and 24p/Kwh was not going to the VP charity. The PC agreed (with the exemption of Cllr Peacock) in principle to installation so further information can be sought.</p> <p>g. <u>Proposed feasibility study for new school in Longframlington</u> – Cllr Thorne has been requested to attend the PC meeting to provide an update. (See item 8 below).</p>	
8.	<p>Report by County Councillor and meetings attended by Councillors:</p> <p>Cllr Thorne said he was still Chair of Strategic Planning following the May Election. Two major planning application coming up; Percy Wood caravan</p>	

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	<p>expansion – feels the same issues will apply. Whittle Colliery Site – He has asked Rob Murfin to extend the time for consultation as it will affect residents in Hampeth. One concern is speed, another the proposed routing for traffic (including through Shilbottle).</p> <p>He is meeting with SNAC to discuss the bus service and is hopeful for an extra weekday service.</p> <p>Recently there have been repairs to the Longframlington road but he sees this as a precursor to proper resurfacing.</p> <p>Cllr Thorne confirmed his recommendation of £1000 for emergency materials plus a significant contribution to the Memorial Garden construction.</p> <p>With regards to the school issue, Cllr Thorne stated that a feasibility study had been done some time ago and ‘put to bed’. Cllr referred to the minutes on the Longframlington PC website which referred to a more recent study. Cllr Thorne will forward a copy of this to the PC (via Sue Aviston). Cllr Peacock asked if the £25,000 earmarked for the study had been spent.</p>	
9.	<p>Finance :</p> <p>a. Clerk’s salary for June 2025 = £502.60 Payment to HM Revenues & Customs PAYE = £100.40 Payment to Clerk = £ 502.60 + expenses £20.49 - £100.40 = £422.69</p> <p>b. Vyner Park Secretary salary June 2025 = £86.16 Payment to HM Revenues & Customs PAYE = £17.20 Payment to Sec = £86.16 + expenses £25.81 – PAYE £17.20 = £94.77</p> <p>Total payment for HMRC £100.40 + £17.20 = £117.60</p> <p>c. Receipts: None.</p> <p>d. Other payments: Lloyds bank Service Charges for May (£4.25) and June (£4.67). £8.92 Ratification of repayment to Groundworks from Neighbourhood Planning £491.71 Ratification of premium payment to Clear Insurance £1810.40 Repayment of SNAC Climate Change grant overpayment to NCC £121.56</p> <p>e. Account balance as at 18th June 2025 £25,323.85 All the above were agreed/noted. Cllr Francis asked about the outstanding payment for the Cemetery. An amended invoice was awaited. Cllr Whiteley said he was not willing to agree payment until an accurate invoice had been provided.</p>	
11.	<p>Planning:</p> <p>a. Applications decided by NCC and the Planning Inspectorate.</p> <p>25/00601/FUL - Construction of balcony onto rear of property Location Highfield Newton-on-the-moor Morpeth Northumberland NE65 9JY. The Parish Council had no objections to this application. Application APPROVED 12th May 2025.</p> <p>25/00685/FUL Retrospective application to brace unstable fence with 6ft fence and additional posts. To keep top rail height even, the panel lengths will vary. Orchard</p>	

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	<p>House 1 Hardy Close Swarland Northumberland NE65 9PG. The Parish Council objected to the height of the fence but suggested a lower height of 1.2m would be acceptable. Application APPROVED 30th May 2025.</p> <hr/> <p>25/00117/PREAPP - Pre-app Meeting including Head of Planning for comprehensive redevelopment of site including the reconfiguration of the existing golf course, change of use of the 7 Northernmost golf holes to accommodate up to 210 additional new static caravans and creation of a new leisure hub building with associated access and landscaping works. - Percy Wood Golf Club and Country Retreat Coast View Swarland Morpeth Northumberland NE65 9JW. A range of objections were submitted by the Parish Council.</p> <p>b. Applications pending decision by NCC: 20/02884/CCMEIA - 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 comments. As at 18.6.25 decision still awaited.</p> <p>25/01332/FUL – Inert construction and demolition waste recycling facility (Use ClassB2) - Whittle Colliery, Hampeth, Northumberland, NE66 9LG. The Parish Council objected to this application for a range of reasons including disturbance of the tranquillity of nearby residents. As at 18.6.25 decision still awaited.</p> <p>c. Planning matters for Parish Council to consider 25/02163/LBC - Listed Building Consent for conversion of outbuilding to home office Location 4 Nelson Drive Swarland Morpeth Northumberland NE65 9JR. Comments invited until 10th July 2025.</p> <p>25/02236/FUL - Single storey extension to existing integral garage and associated internal alterations; Constructing single storey extension to create an entrance hall; Alteration to 1no gable end to a hipped roof arrangement; Installing an additional photo voltaic array to the east roof pitch; Replacing all timber windows with upvc windows; Replacing north elevation sliding doors with windows, french doors and bifold doors. Inserting 'artstone' cills to all windows; Applying render finish to all elevations to terminate above dpc level; Installing wood burner with black external flue on east roof pitch; Construction of timber framed gazebo in rear garden. - Mallor 6 The Old Tweed Mill Swarland Northumberland NE65 9LX. Comments invited until 16th July 2025.</p>	
12.	<p>Correspondence: NetWiseUK -Acknowledgement that contract will terminate 3rd May 2026. Reminders from Felton Cemetery Joint Cttee about paying balance for 24/25. 25/25 Accounts. It was agreed that FPC would be reminded that a revised invoice was still awaited, as requested some months ago. Clear Insurance – Confirmation of cover and PC documents for 25/26. Complaint from resident about recent Neighbourhood Plan group letter. Forestry England – Comments invited on survey by 14th July 2025.</p>	Clerk
13.	<p>Requests for next agenda: a. Annual Audit AGAR 2024/25 – Approval of accounts, AGAR form and other paperwork.</p>	

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14.	Urgent Items: a. Formal Complaint – Cllr Whiteley asked for three Cllrs to deal with a formal complaint from a local resident. Only Cllrs Whiteley, Peacock and Anderson were eligible, and all agreed to form the panel.	
15.	Date of Next Meeting: 23.7.25 JH, 27.8.25 SVH, 24.9.25 JH, 22.10.25 SVH, 26.11.25 JH.	

Meeting Finished at: 21:50