

Alnmouth Parish Council

Minutes

**Parish Council Meeting
The Hindmarsh Hall, Northumberland Street, Alnmouth Tuesday 12th
December 2023 – 7pm**

Present: Cllrs Susanne Gair (Chair), Ian Armstrong, David Denton, Josie McDonough, Simon Rushton, George Ternent, Shelley Straughan, Simon Walford.

In Attendance: Deb Still (Clerk), County Cllr Martin Swinbank, two members of the public.

The Meeting opened at 7 pm.

195/23 Apologies

None received.

196/23 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

It was RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting of 14th November 2023 be accepted as a true record of the meeting.

197/23 Declarations of Interest

None declared.

198/23 Public Participation

A member of the public raised issues about recent damage to the highway in High Buston; parking at High Buston and planning issues. The comments were NOTED.

199/23 Planning Matters

a) Planning Applications/Discharge of Conditions

23/04314/DISCON Discharge of Condition 6 (Vehicular Access/Cycle Parking) on approved application 22/03555/VARYCO Land West Of Schooner Hotel Northumberland Street. APC RESOLVED to object to the proposed discharge of Condition 6. The site plan accompanying the application fails to show any turning area, contrary to the standards required by NCC Highways. It would be impossible for any delivery or emergency vehicles to exit the site in forward gear.

b) Update on Planning Decisions (for information only)

i) 23/03711/FUL 5 Northumberland Street Alnmouth Alnwick Northumberland
Demolition of small outbuilding (outbuilding 5) to west of 5 Northumberland Street, Alnmouth
Permission Granted by NCC.

Signed Dated 9th January 2024

ii) Appeal Ref: APP/P2935/W/23/3323621 The Schooner Hotel, 8 Northumberland Street, Alnmouth, Northumberland NE66 2RS

To NOTE that the Planning Inspectorate in its decision of 8th December dismissed the appeal made by the Schooner Hotel against the NCC Decision to refuse planning permission for the outside decking. NCC will enforce the decision to remove the decking.

200/23 Rescue Boathouse

Historic England do not have grants available for these buildings but have sent details of possible options. The Clerk to explore and seek quotations for works.

201/23 County Council Matters

The access to Seaton Point beach will be improved by NCC recasting steps at the bottom of the existing flight which were eroded by recent storms.

Following the recent introduction of a parking charge by the railway operator of the Southbound car park at Alnmouth Railway Station, County Cllrs Swinbank and Castle have asked for a full review to assess and look to address any negative effects for local residents, bus and emergency services and the functioning of the NCC operated station car park.

202/23 Training

The Clerk will attend free online VAT training by HMRC on 21st December 2023.

203/23 Shepherd's Hill – NCC Plans for Lay-by

The NCC Consultation with residents ends on 22nd December.

204/23 Fred & Gladys Bettess Fund

Cllr McDonough has been exploring options for digitising and making publicly accessible the Bettess archive in collaboration with Newcastle University with a view to using the Bettess Fund. Newcastle University are keen (Gladys Bettys was an alumni of the university). Cllr McDonough will report on any further progress at the next APC meeting.

205/23 Street Lights in Alnmouth

Cllr Rushton was thanked for his excellent work on the proposals for improvements to the street lighting (more attractive heritage columns, brackets and lanterns with LED warm lighting with a lower Kelvin) in Alnmouth. Northumberland Coast National Landscape (formerly AONB) is supportive of APC proposals. The Clerk to write to NCC with the proposal drafted by Cllr Rushton.

206/23 Finance

a) It was RESOLVED that the following payments be approved:

DATE	PAYEE	DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT (incl VAT)	VAT
APC				
08 Dec 2023	Xero UK Ltd	Inv 17408497 Dec 2023 (direct debit)	36.00	6.00
14 Dec 2023	Hindmarsh Hall	Inv HH-2023-40 14.11.23	24.00	0.00
14 Dec 2023	Deb Still	Clerk's Expenses Dec 23	30.50	0
14 Dec 2023	PPD Printgroup Ltd	Inv 19344 Dec 23 NL	113.00	0
14 Dec 2023	Deb Still	Clerk's back pay increase to April 2023 for APC	240.00	0
14 Dec 2023	The Alnmouth Gardener	Inv 38 Nov 2023	96.00	0
14 Dec 2023	Parkinson Partnership	Inv 1228 12.12.23 VAT Advice	264.00	44
14 Dec 2023	NCC	Winter Servicing of Toilets 23-24 Inv 271845	2000.00	0
22 Dec 2023	IONOS	Inv 203039410395 Dec 2023 (direct debit)	16.80	2.80
31 Dec 2023	Deb Still	APC Net Salary Dec 23	489.00	0
Xmas Lights				
14 Dec 2023	TLC (Portsmouth) Ltd	Inv 15403990	159.88	26.65
14 Dec 2023	Hindmarsh Hall	HH-2023-41 Nov 2023	36.00	0.00
Arts Festival				
14 Dec 2023	Hindmarsh Hall	HH2023-31 deposit for 24.2.23	50.00	0.00
14 Dec 2023	Deb Still	Clerk's Back pay increase to April 2023 for AAF	21.05	0.00
Retrospective Approval or amended amounts				
21 Nov 2023	Northumberland Logs	Inv 06537 13.11.23 for Xmas Trees (Xmas Lights Fund)	536.30	89.38
14 Dec 2023	PPD	Newsletter for Nov 2023 (separate inv to NCC) Inv 19328	113.00	0.00

b) The finance report for November 2023 was NOTED.

c) Report on VAT

The Clerk is preparing the first VAT return due by 5th February backdated to VAT registration date of 24th June 2022 with support from VAT specialist.

d) It was RESOLVED to backdate to April 2023 the nationally agreed increase (agreed in November) to the Clerk's salary pursuant local authority pay scales as per contract of employment.

e) Update on payment for winter servicing of public toilets and decision on whether APC to continue to pay for the winter servicing. It was AGREED that will keep the toilets open during the winter of 2023-24 by payment of £2000 to NCC. County Cllr Swinbank offered in principle to put monies towards this cost from his own 'Members Local Improvement Schemes Grant' after seeking officer guidance.

f) Review of draft budget for 2024-25 with a view to setting the precept. Discussion ensued and the Clerk will bring a revised budget to the next meeting.

207/23 Reports from Working Groups

a. Christmas Lights

A Vote of Thanks was offered to the Xmas Lights Committee who have worked so hard fundraising throughout the year and creating a spectacular display for Alnmouth residents and visitors.

b. Village Maintenance

i) Repairs to Bus Shelter floor – Cllr Denton is sourcing some paving slabs.

Signed Dated 9th January 2024

ii) Play Park & RoSPA checklists.

Cllr Denton reported on repairs for which he is in the process of sourcing materials and carrying out.

c. Senior Citizens Christmas Lunch

The free Xmas Lunch will be on Sunday 21st January 2024 for 80 people. Invitations will go out soon. Any willing volunteers to contact Cllr Straughan.

d. Arts Festival

The Committee is continuing to agree events for next year.

e. Climate Change

It was AGREED that APC will sign up and join the campaign to support the Climate and Ecology Bill.

208/23 Bike Racks in Alnmouth

It was AGREED to site the cycle racks on Marine Road as per the NCC report.

209/23 Church Hill - Repairs to Sea Wall

This item was deferred to the next meeting.

210/23 Correspondence

i) Complaint concerning restricted access to the Beach at Alnmouth following the recent storms and responses from Northumberland Estates, NCC, AONB and the Burgage Holders.

It was NOTED that the Burgage Holders will be reviewing access to the beach in March/April 2024.

ii) Request by Hindmarsh Hall Committee to remove APC tables from the Hall. It was agreed that 6 of the tables would be stored in the St John the Baptist Church's new shed. A Vote of Thanks was agreed for the kind offer. The other tables will be taken to the Small Rescue Boathouse.

211/23 Large Boathouse Lease

The final draft of the lease was AGREED and will be signed by the Chair of APC and the Chair of Alnmouth Community Rowing.

212/23 AONB/National Landscapes Conservation Area Character Appraisals

Consultation with APC – this item was deferred to the next meeting.

213/23 APC Meeting Dates for financial year 2024-25

To agree - 9th April 2024 (and Annual Parish Meeting); 14th May 2024 (and Annual General Meeting); 11th June 2024; 9th July 2024; 13th August 2024; 10th September 2024; 8th October 2024; 12th November 2024; 10th December 2024; 14th January 2025; 11th February 2025; 11th March 2025.

214/23 Any Other Business for Information

It was NOTED that the X18 is wrongly stated on the NCC website as stopping at Argyll Street (it stops at the Methodist Church and no longer goes into the Village). The Clerk to write to NCC.

215/23 Confidential Matters

It was RESOLVED to exclude the public due to the confidential nature of the business (quotations received) to be discussed. It was RESOLVED to engage Northumberland Accountants in Alnwick to prepare the annual accounts and undertake the internal audit of APC for the financial year 2023-24.

The meeting closed at 9.10pm.

Date & Time of Next Meeting: - 9th January 2024 at 7pm, The Hindmarsh Hall, Northumberland Street, NE66 2RS.

Future Meeting Dates

13th February 2024; 12th March 2024; 9th April 2024 (and Annual Parish Meeting); 14th May 2024 (and Annual General Meeting); 11th June 2024; 9th July 2024; 13th August 2024; 10th September 2024; 8th October 2024; 12th November 2024; 10th December 2024; 14th January 2025; 11th February 2025; 11th March 2025.

Signed Dated 9th January 2024