

ALNMOUTH PARISH COUNCIL

PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

8th April 2025

Draft Minutes

Present: Cllrs Susanne Gair (Chair), David Denton, Lorna Pringle, Simon Rushton, Richard Sim, George Ternent, John Wilson.

In Attendance: Deb Still (Clerk), County Cllr Martin Swinbank & Wendy Pattison and 1 member of the public.

The Meeting opened at 7.05pm.

52/25 Apologies

Cllr Harriett McHugh & County Cllr Gordon Castle.

53/25 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

It was RESOLVED that the Minutes of the APC meeting of 11th March 2025 be accepted as a true record of the meeting.

54/25 Declarations of Interest

None were declared.

55/25 Public Participation

A member of the public thanked APC for their effort and support in relation to the Coastal Erosion issues.

Elanor Johnson of Northumberland Coast National Landscape (NCNL - formerly AONB) introduced the Visitor Access and Interpretation Project focussed on new interpretation/signage and sustainable and active travel along the coast. Projects will be developed focussing on Public transport; Active travel; Travel infrastructure and facilities; Public realm improvements; Footpath, cycle, and greenway routes; Welcome, orientation and interpretation signage; and Access for All improvements. NCNL will map projects (of all sizes and scopes) and hold open drop-in sessions in community venues in the coming months. Individuals and groups can put forward ideas and discuss options via info@northumberlandcoast-nl.org.uk

56/25 Alnmouth Coastal Erosion

- i) NCC confirmed that there was a limited response to the recent NCC Management Plan consultation.
- ii) Church Hill is under consideration as an official location for coast Snaps <https://www.coastsnap.com/> - an international Citizen science Coastal erosion monitoring scheme.

57/25 Planning Matters

a) Planning Applications

i) 25/00793/FUL & 24/02394/LBC High Buston Farm Northumberland

Change of use of parts of farmyard to land ancillary to residential use approved under class Q. Agreed that Clerk submit a neutral response expressing concerns about potential increase in traffic and for the Highways Department to consider attaching conditions that might be appropriate to maintain road safety where the access track meets the public road and/or whether an alternative access route might be appropriate.

b) Planning Decisions

i) 24/02394/LBC Shepherds House 1 High Buston Main Street High

Buston Northumberland Listed building consent for internal and external alterations (amended description 15.01.2025)

NCC Decision: Granted

c) Lack of enforcement action by Planning Authority

NCC has not provided any updates to the enforcement actions below. County Cllr Swinbank will raise the issues again.

i) 24/00316/LISTED (door) & 23/00732/FUL & PP/P2935/W/23/3323621

(decking & installation of new door and lighting) Schooner Hotel

ii) 22/01187/NOAPLN) & 23/00908/NONMAT & 19/04744/FUL

(unauthorised glazed structure) 6 Riverside Road.

iii) 23/04314/DISCON & 24/00930/BRCOND Estuary Drive land west of Schooner (parking arrangements and inadequate turning area for emergency and delivery vehicles).

58/25 Street Lighting for Northumberland Street

No update has been received from NCC. APC agreed that the Clerk escalate the issue with NCC.

59/25 Policies and Procedures

The Policy & Procedure for awarding s. 137 Grants was AGREED.

60/25 Old School Gallery

It was AGREED that APC make an application for the Old School Gallery to become an Asset of Community Value. The Clerk to bring the final draft to the next meeting.

61/25 Clerk's resignation and recruitment of new Clerk/RFO

i) APC AGREED the wording of the advertisement and the recruitment timetable.

ii) The short-listing & interview panels (and draft interview questions and interview scoring matrix) were deferred until the next meeting.

iii) The handover period was deferred until the next meeting.

62/25 APC Benches

i) The Clerk wrote to the owners of three benches that needed refurbishment/maintenance to request they confirm whether they can carry out maintenance/renovation of the benches by 31st May 2025. One family has removed the bench and is not replacing it. The Clerk has not heard from the other two families.

ii) The style of memorial bench to be sited outside the Church has been approved. APC has not yet heard from the applicant who will liaise with Cllr Denton on installation. The signed agreement from the second applicant to be sited opposite the Whittling House has not yet been returned and agreed and type of bench and engraving/plaque has not been approved. The Clerk to contact the applicants.

iii) A new Memorial Bench request has been received for the second site outside the church but the application has not been signed and returned to the Clerk. The Clerk to contact the applicant.

63/25 Small Boathouses

It was AGREED that Cllr Denton meet with the contracted builder to agree which windows need replacement and which only reglazing and to agree the amount and cost of repointing to the Small Boathouse.

64/25 County Council Matters

A brief update for the year was provided including the refurbishment of the toilets (and NCC agreeing to pay for winter servicing) and the agreement to refurbish Lovers Walk.

65/25 Finance

- a. APC APPROVED the invoices and expenses claimed below:

Account	Payee	Description	Amount (incl VAT)	VAT
APC				
02 Apr 2025	Xero UK Ltd	Inv 23324099 Direct Debit	39.60	6.60
10 Apr 2025	IONOS	Inv 2030 47539119 Direct Debit	16.80	2.80
09 Apr 2025	Hindmarsh Hall	Inv for April APC 2025 HH-2023-261	25.00	0.00
09 Apr 2025	Hindmarsh Hall	Inv for May Xmas Lights Quiz Night 2025 HH-2023-261	56.00	0.00
09 Apr 2025	PPD Printgroup Ltd	Inv 21660 PPD for April 2025 (not yet received)	113.00	0.00
09 Apr 2025	Deb Still	Clerk's Expenses April 2025	35.00	0.00
30 Apr 2025	Deb Still	Net salary April 2025	503.10	0.00
Payments Agreed by Chair and Clerk				
11 Mar 2025	Ashridge Trees Ltd	Invoice 100297111 Bare Root Hedging for Dr Joy's Garden	104.05	17.34

- b. The monthly finance report was RECEIVED.
- c. The credit on the HMRC PAYE account which may be an error is now reducing. The Clerk has received no response to the letter sent. The Clerk managed to reach an HMRC officer by telephone who was unable to explain how the credit had arisen. It was AGREED that the Clerk continue to monitor the position and screen shot the HMRC online accounts on a regular basis.

- d. It was AGREED to increase the spend on the planters by £50 for each bi-annual planting on the Wynd in order to maintain a good display and to replace the conifer in one of the planters. The Clerk to apply to the Burgage Holders for a Grant.
- e. The Clerk confirmed that all s. 137 Grant recipients have expressed their gratitude.
- f. The Clerk reported that there was an underspend against the budget of £350 at 31.3.25 which it was AGREED would reduce the transfer from the Community Fund by £350 (from £1750 to £1400).
- g. Cllr Wilson AGREED the quarterly bank reconciliations pursuant to Financial Regulations as at 31st March 2025.
- h. APC AGREED the contents of the Asset Register.
- i. The Clerk is continuing to transfer the APC accounts over to Scribe.

66/25 Reports from Working Groups

a. Christmas Lights

Three lights are still to come down with the help of Andrew Carr's cherry picker. The next Christmas Lights Fundraising Quiz is at Hindmarsh Hall at 7pm on Friday 16th May.

b. Village Maintenance

It was AGREED to purchase a replacement broken bike rocker. The Clerk to check installation cost and whether the company can use the existing foundation plinth.

Cllr Sim will relocate the APC bench at Peases Cottages to the Bus Shelter..

The new hedging and planting has been completed at Dr Joy's Garden.. The volunteer team will continue to tend the garden but cannot cut the grass. Cllr Gair will make enquiries about options.

c. Senior Citizens Christmas Lunch

This will need a lead councillor for 2025-26.

d. Climate Change

Friends of the Earth Public Meeting Wednesday 16th April 7pm, St James Church Hall, Pottergate Alnwick. A talk by Professor Brycchan Carey 'Northumberland, Climate Change, Action!'

67/25 Confidential Matters

The comments from Alnmouth Community Rowing concerning quotes for works to the Large Boathouse were noted. The Clerk to obtain an exact costing for the pointing to the Large Boathouse.

The meeting closed at 8.35pm.

Date & Time of Next Meeting: 7pm 13th May 2025 (and Annual General Meeting), The Hindmarsh Hall, Northumberland Street, NE66 2RS.

Future Meeting Dates: 10th June 2025, 8th July 2025, 12th August 2025, 9th September 2025, 14th October 2025, 11th November 2025, 9th December 2025, 13th January 2026, 10th February 2026, 10th March 2026.