



Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on Thursday 11th February 2021 via Zoom at 6.30m

- Present** Cllrs L Wearn, S Allcroft, L Aynsley, P Broom, G Castle, P Edge, B Gridale, J Humphries, M Harrington, J Lyford, S Patience, M Swinbank, A Symmonds, G Watson and L Wood-Mitchell.
- In attendance** P Hatley, Town Clerk & Chief Officer; J Pibworth, Assistant to the Town Clerk; T Kirton, Project & Funding Officer.
Jane Cannam (JC) and Anne Shilton (AS), Alnwick Medical Group.
Sgt Paul Sykes (PS) and Inspector John Swan (JS), Northumbria Police.
- C20/120 Questions from the public**
None.
- C20/121 Apologies for absence**
None.
- C20/122 Declarations of Interest**
Councillor Castle declared a non-pecuniary interest in all County Council matters.
- C20/123 Social Prescribing – Jane Cannam (JC) and Anne Shilton (AS), GP Link Workers for Social Prescribing for Alnwick Medical Group**
JC explained that she and Anne were looking at Social Prescribing for patients by looking at patient centred care. This includes non-medical interventions which at the moment includes isolation issues. She explained that people can now self-refer to the service via their GP surgery. She advised that on-line services have been set up including knit and natter and a book club and that the idea was to connect to existing activities.
AS added that there was a range of support being offered such as providing practical items such as lighter wheelchairs. She explained that many patients have financial / social problems which impacts on their health. She explained that she and Jane would like to know about any groups which are now restarting or setting up which patients may be able to be referred to.
JC advised that the services has developed over the last 12 months and that conversations with patients discussing what is impacting on their health.
Councillor Patience explained that the Community Allotment would be able to take referrals once insurance cover was sorted out. JC advised that his would be especially useful for men’s health.
Councillor Lyford explained that the CAB were taking the lead in this area by through a new project called Thriving Communities which would fund a worker.
Councillor Broom explained that the Aln Valley Railway was always happy to have volunteers. He also explained that there was a potential Alnwick Greenway project which would take volunteers interested in helping in a number of areas including creating paths along the old railway line.
JC and AS left the meeting.
- C20/124 Sgt Paul Sykes, (PS) Neighbourhood Policing**
PS explained that he was part of the Community Team in Alnwick and was speaking following the police’s request for further CCTV cameras in Alnwick. He advised that Inspector John Swan was also listening in.

He started by reporting that the current CCTV system was a good one but that no live monitoring took place. The system has some limitations hence the request for more cameras. He said he was aware of the issue some people had with civil liberties but felt that as it was only used when it was needed he felt personal intrusion was minimal.

He explained that most towns have CCTV systems and that the police get asked if incidents were caught on CCTV. Although some areas of the town had private CCTV systems footage was not always available or was of poor quality.

PS explained that cameras help put things into context and are very useful in court where footage has been used to convict people. Cameras have also been used to track a missing person and to track a vehicle involved in a fatal accident through the town.

He finished by explaining that the list from the police was a wishlist and the police understood that budgets might be an issue but feel that the additional camera would be beneficial.

Councillor Swinbank asked if the police had authority to install cameras in the bus station. PS advised that they hadn't but that if the Town Council agree to the request for cameras here the police would speak to Arriva.

Councillor Edge understood that CCTV system could act as deterrent and wondered if there were signs up around town. PS advised there were no signs but that the cameras were very visible. TK advised that there were signs around the town notifying people that CCTV cameras were installed.

Councillor Grisdale asked if the CCTV would be part of the police's preparation for summer visitors. JS advised that preparation was being done based on what happened last summer and that these included educating people.

PS and JS left the meeting.

C20/125 Approval of the Minutes of the Last meeting (14th January 2021)

The minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 14th January 2021 were tabled for approval.

RESOLVED: The minutes of the meeting held on 14th January 2021 were agreed as a true record.

C20/126 Matters Arising

C20/108 Councillor Castle reported that Cussins had carried out some improvements to the footpaths at Peter's Mill.

C20/127 Meeting Protocols

The Town Clerk advised that as part of his Clerk qualification he was undertaking he had been reviewing some of the procedures the Town Council operated. He noted that the number of items being brought under Any Other Urgent Business at Full Council and Committee meetings was becoming too many to deal with.

He explained that although the Constitution does not cover AOUB it does cover questions from Councillors which is in effect what AOUB is. It states that councillors should put their question to the Chair of the Relevant Committee 5 days before the meeting. He felt this was excessive and felt that any questions were sent to the relevant Chair before the meeting.

C20/128 Mayor's Report

The Mayor started by thanking the Town Clerk and his Assistant for continuing the prescription delivery service.

She reported that she had attended an Alnwick Partnership meeting and that it had been well attended, had gone well and that a lot of progress was being made. She felt that there were still a few gaps in the partnership.

She reported that she had received an email from Arcinova advising that they had been bought out by Kosan Biosciences. Arcinova had been the 9th top pharmaceutical company in 2020 which had attracted many potential buyers. This will be very positive for Alnwick, the company will expand and will develop its apprenticeship programmes and liaise with the local schools.

She explained that due to Covid she had been unable to do any fund raising for her chosen charity, the Pottergate Centre, so she was planning on doing a virtual walk along Hadrian's Wall to purchase them percussion instruments. She had given herself 9 weeks to complete the challenge and said councillors were welcome to join her.

Councillor Broom said he was supportive of the idea and that councillors could do a relay system to help the Mayor.

C20/129 Updates

a) County Council

Councillor Castle reported that:

There is a Covid testing centre at the Willowburn Sports Centre.

NCC had paid out £36mill so far in business grants. He suggested that councillors advise people looking for more information to go to NCC website.

The designs for the crossing outside St Paul's School had been finalised.

There were no plans for CCTV or information boards at the new car park on the old DCHS site so if the Town Council wanted these they should consider paying for them.

Councillor Symmonds asked Councillor Castle for his comments about the report in The Journal about Arch. Councillor Castle advised that as this was a leaked report he could not comment.

Councillor Swinbank reported that the Town Council had not yet seen a planning application for the new car park. Councillor Castle advised that NCC were awaiting budget sign off by the end of February before submitting any plans. Once signed off work should start in September 2021.

b) Advisory Groups

i. Sustainable Travel

Councillor Swinbank reported that the group were continuing with the work on the Alnwick Greenway. The group had also recently had an NCC Office taking about lost footpaths around Alnwick which had been missed off more recent maps. The group would be looking at travel during the summer season and the impact on Alnwick.

ii. Retail and Town Centre

Councillor Harrington reported that the group were looking forward to getting back to normal for the town centre and were working on projects to join together the Alnwick Garden and Town Centre.

He reported the new digital Town Trail system would be ready by the end of the month.

Councillor Swinbank advised that the approved Lily Dory project at Alnwick Garden one of the conditions related to signage from the Garden to the Town Centre. Councillor Harrington said that there were a number of projects which the group were working on but because people couldn't meet these were difficult to take forward.

Councillor Aynsley reported that ITV had contacted her wanting to interview businesses in Alnwick following the announcement that staycations would not be promoted.

Councillor Harrington felt that it would be difficult to stop people from visiting.

Councillor Castle advised that the work at NCC to allow the Town Council to take charge of the events programme in the Market Place is being progressed along with the work to semi-pedestrianise the Market Place to allow the café culture to be able to expand.

iii. Environmental

Councillor Watson advised the group specifically looked at the CAPs in the Neighbourhood Plan and recommended that 7 CAPs were kept as they are, 4 were merged into 2 and an additional CAP added relating to Climate Change.

The group were also working on how the Thomas Percy Wood and adjoining field could become a better community site. He reported that the site needs considerable work undertaking but that a useful conversation had taken place with NCC about the ways Alnwick Town Council could take charge of the site. He asked for councillor approval to submit an expression of interest to NCC to be able to take this forward. He also reported that he had received several contact from several residents about the site which he felt was a fantastic site with a number of potential uses including an outside classrooms.

iv. Housing, Economy and Employment

Councillor Lyford reported that she was working on building up members of the Advisory Group to include some local businesses including Arcinova and MSP and felt that the CAB could also be invited to join the group. She advised that an initial meeting would take place shortly.

She reported that the Youth Housing was complete and that the recommendation was to undertake a new Housing Needs Survey.

Councillors Harrington thanked Councillor Lyford for her work.

RESOLVED: i) To note the updates, ii) To submit an expression of interest to NCC for the Thomas Percy site.

C20/130 Councillor Vacancy

Councillor Watson proposed that item 11 was moved to Private.

RESOLVED: To move item 11 into Private.

C20/131 Neighbourhood Plan Refresh

Councillor Swinbank reported that the Alnwick & Denwick Neighbourhood Plan was started in 2011 and made in July 2017. He explained that Neighbourhood Plans age quickly and as many things relate to the policies and CAPs in the plan. As it is the guiding document of the Town Council it needs to be updated to maintain its relevance and that it aligns to NCC's Local Plan. He reported that another example is that there is a new settlement boundary which is not referenced in the Neighbourhood Plan.

Planning Committee recommendation is to review the Alnwick & Denwick Neighbourhood Plan once the NCC Local Plan is approved.

Councillor Watson said he supported the recommendation from the Planning Committee.

Councillor Patience asked if NCC administration changes in May she felt that the Town Council should not wait until NCC's Local Plan is approved and should start their refresh.

Councillor Castle advised that this was just a refresh and not a complete re-write. He felt that the relevant people should be involved in the rewrite process.

Councillor Wearn advised caution following the presentation from David English from NCC who had explained the different types of updates which could be done.

Councillor Swinbank advised that the level of refresh had yet to be agreed and that the decision at this stage was to agree that a refresh would take place.

Councillor Grisdale asked if the new refreshed plan could be digital rather than a printed document. He also recommended that it was put onto the new Town Council website.

Councillor Harrington asked if there was a date in mind for the refresh started.

Councillor Swinbank advised that the next step would be a meeting with Peter Biggers in the next month.

RESOLVED: To approve the commencement of the ADNP refresh.

C20/132 Covid 19 Remembrance Garden

Councillor Castle gave credit to Councillor Grisdale for the idea of a Covid Remembrance in Green Batt Gardens. The area has been faithfully looked after by Alnwick in Bloom for many years. He advised that he had put the proposal to Northumberland Estates, the landowners, and advised that the Duke and Duchess personally feel it is a good idea.

A range of things will need to be thought through but the item for tonight was to get approval for the idea.

He reported that AiB had discussed the idea and were fully supportive.

Councillor Wearn advised that she had received an email from the Secretary of Churches Together in Alnwick that they have carried out a number of litter picks in the garden.

Councillor Humphries reported that there would also be a small commemorative garden in Alnwick Cemetery.

Councillor Harrington felt that the name was not great.

Councillor Swinbank felt it was a good location as it was a quiet space.

Councillor Watson advised that he had planted the roses in Green Batt garden and that the seats had been made and provided by Northumberland Estates.

Councillor Grisdale explained that the garden does not yet have a formal name and that a project group would need to be pulled together to take the idea forward. He added that as part of the project disabled access would need to be improved. He also reminded councillors that all War Memorials were not create until a few years after the war.

Councillor Symmonds took the point Councillor Harrington made, that people should be involved in any decisions, and take on board a level of sensitivity to the matter. He felt the garden would be a helpful thing and was supportive of setting up a group to take the project forward.

RESOLVED: To approve the creation of a Covid Memorial Garden in Green Batt Gardens.

C20/133 Dog Fouling

Councillor Lyford explained that this issue comes up perennially and explained that last Spring she looked at what was available locally then set up a small local Covid scheme. She thanked Councillor Castle for the update from NCC which she summarised.

She explained that NCC have a carrot and stick approach. Their carrot approach, which has been incredibly successful and has won awards, is a Green Dog Walkers Scheme and is an engagement approach where volunteers wear a very visible badge and give out free bags. The stick is NCC officers patrolling and giving out fines which in the North of Northumberland are relatively low.

The Retail and Town Centre Advisory Group had discussed providing bag dispensers which had been trialled in Prudhoe and Newbiggin and she felt the results would be

useful. On a local basis she felt that an agreement was needed on what the Town Council could do, providing more substantial bag dispensers, and seeing how the Green Dog Walker Scheme could be promoted.

Councillor Harrington reported he found the issue very frustrating and had seen people who walked other people's dogs who allowed them to foul pavements and green spaces. He felt NCC's Green Dog Walker Scheme should be better promoted in Alwick.

Councillor Wearn asked where the matter should be discussed further. The Town Clerk advised that the matter sat with the Recreation & Amenities Committee.

Councillor Castle felt that more needed to be done and that NCC's Scheme should certainly be promoted better. He advised that NCC would co-operate as far as possible with any actions the Town Council would propose.

Councillor Broom advised that it would be added to the next Recreation & Amenities Committee meeting.

RESOLVED: To refer dog fouling issues to the Recreation & Amenities Committee

C20/134 Communications

The Town Clerk explained that for some time councillors have been discussing the need for better communications.

He reported that there would be a revamped Cryer which would only service Alwick and felt that this could be used to communicate to residents alongside the new website and was looking for approval for the expenditure.

RESOLVED: To approve the expenditure of the Communications budget with The Cryer.

C20/135 Advisory Group Chairman – Appointments and Resignations

The Town Clerk advised that he had received two resignations from the Chairs of the Environmental and Heritage Advisory Groups and that replacements were needed.

Councillor Watson proposed Councillor Patience for the role as Chair of the Environment Advisory Group. Councillor Patience thanked Councillor Watson and hope she would do a good job.

Councillor Castle proposed Councillor Gridale for the Chair of the Heritage Advisory Group. Councillor Gridale felt it fell in with his other roles including Trustee of Bailiffgate Museum. He felt there were some very exiting projects in relation to heritage coming up.

RESOLVED: To appoint Councillor Patience and Councillor Gridale as Chairs of the Environment Advisory Group and Heritage Advisory Group respectively.

C20/136 To receive the Minutes of the Committees

Minutes of the Planning, Highways & Transport Committee (21st January 2021) were tabled to be received.

RESOLVED: The minutes of the Planning, Highways & Transport Committee held on 21st January 2021 were received.

Minutes of the Recreation & Amenities Committee (28th January 2021) were tabled to be received.

RESOLVED: The minutes of the Recreation & Amenities, Committee held on 28th January 2021 were received.

C20/137**a) Payments**

PAYEE	TOTAL	VAT	DETAILS
Northumberland County Council	£123.19	£20.53	Resiting of planter
Northumberland County Council	£12,666.00	£0.00	2 x loan repayments (2020)
Gordon Wilson Ltd	£67.20	£11.20	Materials for hand sanitiser boxes
The Northumberland Estates	£18.36	£3.06	Postcrete
Davidson & Son	£313.06	£52.17	Materials for play areas and street furniture
T Kirton	£41.88	£6.98	Replacement rope
J Pibworth	£285.57	£47.61	Printer cartridges, hand sanitiser dispensers (12)
T Kirton	£138.00	£23.00	Application fee to NWL for St Georges water
Electratest Northern Ltd	£54.00	£9.00	Pat testing at Greenwell Lane
James N Mclean	£163.14	£27.14	Materials and tools
W R Batey	£89.99	£15.00	McAfee annual subscription
Total	£13,960.39	£74.14	

* Indicates LGA 1972 s137 Expenditure

The following invoices were paid by direct debit & were reported for information:

Barclays Bank charges (Nov/Dec)	£27.30	£0.00	Bank charges
British Gas	£28.08	£0.00	British gas contract
Biffa	£119.71	£19.95	Trade waste Nov
BT	£134.88	£22.48	Phone (Cemetery / Greenwell Lane (Dec)
Corona Energy	255.43	12.16	Electricity charges Dec 2020
	£565.40	£54.59	

RESOLVED: To approve the payments £13,960.39 and note the direct debit payments of £565.40.

C20/138 Any Other Urgent Business

The Town Clerk apologised and explained that he had received a question from the public which he had overlooked. He advised that he would email the question to councillors and that any comments should be sent him.

Councillor Watson reported that the initial meeting of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee meeting had gone very well. He explained that there would be activities on each of the 4 days and advised that he had sent the notes of the meeting out to councillors. Everyone the Town Council have spoken to are very keen on the event and the parade being organised by Councillor Wood-Mitchell. A second meeting will be arranged in about 6 weeks time.

The public meeting closed at 8.20pm.