

# NEWTON ON THE MOOR & SWARLAND PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the electronic Parish Council Meeting held  
**Monday 23rd November 2020** at 7.00pm online via **ZOOM**: <https://zoom.us/join>  
**DURING COVID 19 EMERGENCY**

1.	<b>Public Question Time (Max 15 minutes in total)</b> – No members of the public present.	
2.	<b>Present:</b> Cllr D. Francis (Chair) Cllr Ms E. Clark, Cllr G. Anderson, Cllr Mrs S. Stanley, Cllr Mrs K. Howard-Row, Cllr N. Mansfield, Cllr S. Woolfrey. The Clerk was in attendance.	
3.	<b>Apologies for absence:</b> Cllr. S Cutforth (NB Cllr Rixon tendered apologies, retrospectively)	
4.	<b>Declarations of Interest in items on the agenda:</b> Cllr Stanley and Cllr Mansfield declared an interest in Item 11a 19/05021/FUL.	
5.	<p><b>AUDITOR’S REPORT AND PUBLIC INTEREST MEETING</b></p> <p>The Council had received a ‘completion of audit’ certificate and also a Public Interest Report from the External Auditor. The clerk confirmed that this meeting was taking place within one month of receiving the PIR, and that more than 8 days’ notice of the meeting had been given. No members of the public had requested sight of the reports which were, anyway, available for inspection on the Council’s website. Two issues had been raised by the Auditor: the clerk’s signature on the 2019-20 should have been added and dated before the Council had approved the Annual return; and the Auditor had considered that the Council had inappropriately exempted itself from the 2018-19 audit. Members noted a conflict of advice within the national ‘Proper Practices’ manual, between the mandatory requirement to exclude all transactions (without exception) from the Annual Return which arise from the Council’s role as the sole managing trustee of the Vynner Park Charity, and the non-mandatory advice which suggests that such transactions should be included if they have been incurred from the Council’s main bank account. The Council had sought, and acted upon, the Auditor’s advice in September 2020, which had resulted in this discrepancy.</p> <p>After discussion, it was agreed as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) To ensure that we apply the appropriate dates to the signing of future annual accounts</li> <li>b) That we follow the mandatory guidance of Proper Practices, by not incurring transactions on behalf of VPC using our main bank account, and ensure that we do not include VPC transactions within our core parish council accounts</li> <li>c) That we draw to the attention of the Joint Panel on Accountability and Governance the contradiction which exists within their Proper Practices.</li> <li>d) We will retain the audit information on our website until 31 December, and also inform the Auditor of our conclusions.</li> </ul>	
6.	<b>Minutes of the ‘virtual’ meeting held on 28th October 2020: Agreed.</b>	
7.	<p><b>To consider matters arising from the electronic meeting 28th October 2020.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. <u>Road Safety Issues around A1 Guyzance turnoff</u> - Cllr Clark had nothing further to report.</li> <li>b. <u>Grants from Cllr Thorne for Interactive Speed Monitoring signs</u> – The Clerk had contacted the NCC Grants officer who had not been able to get a response</li> </ul>	

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	<p>from County Cllr Thorne. Clerk to write to Cllr Thorne.</p> <p>c. <u>Percy Wood – Issues with trees, signage, refuse, etc.</u> – As site meeting not possible due to Covid, a letter has been sent to the site manager suggesting an on-line meeting. No response as yet. NCC Planning enforcement has been contacted re: unauthorised cutting down of trees, and will get back to the PC.</p> <p>d. <u>Poor Broadband Speeds</u> – The Clerk was waiting to hear back from iNorthumberland but had found there is a new Government funding scheme available until the end of March 2021 for faster speeds which only requires 2 applicants.</p>	
<p><b>8.</b></p>	<p><b>Requested agenda items:</b></p> <p>a. <u>Vyner Park update</u> – Cllr Woolfrey reported that it had been very quiet and no meetings held since AGM at end of October. Tennis courts closed due to Covid but play area open and being well used. The park is in good order and the new trees are doing well. Cllr Stanley said that David Blackshaw has agreed to cut the east field but too wet, and now equipment issues so it will not be cut until Spring 2021 which will affect wild flower management.</p> <p>c. <u>Budget 2021/22 and precept request to NCC.</u> Feedback and recommendations from Finance Group meeting 16th November. Predicted spend in 21/22 and bank reconciliation attached as Appendix A. There would be planned top-ups to the Community Fund both this and next year. This was discussed at and it was agreed to accept the 1st draft budget and a precept of £22,700.</p> <p>In 2021/22 the Council tax base in the Parish will increase by 6% so in effect this is a reduction per property.</p> <p>d. <u>Complaint about fence at Low Wood &amp; lack of enforcement by NCC</u> – For discussion and decision on way forward. Cllrs had received from a resident the copy of a pro forma checklist supplied by NCC (used to decide whether action would be taken ). A letter had been sent to the Director of Planning and he had responded positively to reviewing the pro forma weighting. Cllrs were concerned that installations of 6ft fences in close proximity to the highway, without planning permission, would set a precedent. Low Wood has an open character and the fence stands out. It was agreed to write to NCC planning enforcement to contest the pro forma scores and ask that a planning application be required.</p>	<p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p>
<p><b>9.</b></p>	<p><b>Report by County Councillor and meetings attended by Councillors:</b> None.</p>	
<p><b>10.</b></p>	<p><b>Finance:</b></p> <p>a. Clerk’s salary £395 Clerks Expenses £14.34 + Back pay and working from home allowance to 1.4.20 £262.85 = £623.35          Plus £35.00 for 7 months working from home allowance £5/month.          Payment to HM Revenues &amp; Customs PAYE = £124.80          Payment to Clerk = £623.35 + £14.34 + £35 - £124.80 = £547.89</p> <p>b. Other receipts and payments:</p> <p>i)Receipts: None.</p> <p>ii)Payments: Three invoices from NCEL for issues 103, 104 and 105 The Column. Invoice for 103 was paid in October 2019 but cheque not banked and has now been cancelled. Total £245 inc VAT.</p> <p>PKF Littlejohn LLP external audit fee - £240 inc VAT.</p> <p>Repayment to Cllr Greg Anderson for purchase of new battery for PC computer -£38.65 inc VAT.</p>	

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	<p>Christmas Tree for the Square – Scott Clareheugh - £95 plus tree for Jubilee Hall £30.</p> <p><b>c.</b> Request for Grant by Jubilee Hall Committee for repairs to kitchen roof - £1000. This was agreed, but payment would be deferred, pending receipt of further requested information concerning the JH Committee’s proposed constitutional changes, on which the Council had been consulted.</p> <p><b>d.</b> Account balance as at 16th November 2020 - £29,025.10</p>	
<p><b>11.</b></p>	<p><b>Planning:</b></p> <p><b>a. To report on any planning decisions made by NCC:</b></p> <p><b>19/05021/FUL</b> - Proposed new detached dwelling - 5 Kenmore Road, Swarland NE65 9JS. The Parish Council objected to this application for a range of reasons including that there was insufficient room for the development, and that the proposed development is out of keeping with neighbouring properties. Permission GRANTED 29th October 2020.</p> <p><b>b. Applications pending decision by NCC</b></p> <p><b>19/01687/FUL</b> - Change of use of land for the siting of up to 60 static caravans, along with associated infrastructure and hard and soft landscaping – Land north west of Springwood, Coast View, Swarland, Northumberland. The PC objected for a range of reasons including adverse visual impact, too close to existing buildings, sewerage and drainage capacity issues, and highways safety.</p> <p><b>20/01079/FUL</b> – Proposed four bedroom detached dormer bungalow with attached double garage - Land South West Of 2 The Orchard, Nelson Drive, Swarland, Northumberland. The Parish Council asked for a TPO’d tree to be protected, and for a contribution to the repair of Nelson Drive.</p> <p><b>20/01191/REM</b> - Reserved matters application for layout, scale, appearance and landscaping of approved planning application 16/04129/OUT. Land South Of Mereburn House, Low Wood, Swarland. The Parish Council objected to this application on grounds which included that the application was incomplete, highways safety issues etc.</p> <p><b>20/02082/VARYCO</b> – Removal of Condition 8 (Restrictions of types of flying) - to allow flying training, circuits, touch-and-go manoeuvres to take place at the site on a permanent basis, Variation to Condition 4 (Current Restriction is 120 days) - to allow the number of aircraft arrivals and departures to 150 days per year on a permanent basis, Variation to Condition 5 (Restriction on take offs and landings) - to increase daily aircraft movements to 50 movements in a 24 hour period to accommodate flying training and add 200 movements within a 24 hour period to support air rallies to take place at the site on a permanent basis and Variation to Condition 7 (no air rallies) - to allow the site to be used for up to 4 air rallies, festivals or similar charitable activities per year on a permanent basis on approved planning application 17/03436/VARYCO (revised description 05.08.2020). Poultry Farm, Atheys Moor, Longframlington, Morpeth. The Parish Council objected on the basis of the proposal for a number of festivals and similar events.</p> <p><b>20/02067/FUL</b> - Change of use of existing disused building and extensions to form dwelling. Land to The East Of Overgrass Mill Cottage, Longframlington, Morpeth, Northumberland. Comments invited until 6th August 2020.PC objected to this application with concerns about road access, and safety of building over old mine ventilation shaft.</p> <p><b>20/02437/REM</b> - Reserved matters application for access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale on approved planning application 17/03676/OUT. Woodside 1 Coast View Swarland NE65 9JE. The Parish Council objected to this application mainly on grounds of access.</p> <p><b>20/02525/DISCON</b> - Land South Of Mereburn House, Low Wood, Swarland, Northumberland. Discharge of Condition 6 (Highways) relating to planning permission 16/04129/OUT. The Parish</p>	

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	<p>Council strongly objected to this application as the culvert planned was a change from the bridge originally agreed in the outline planning permission.</p> <p><b>20/02884/CCMEIA</b> - 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. Cllrs Cutforth and Howard-Row objected to the development.</p> <p><b>20/02923/FELTPO</b> - Tree Preservation Order: T8 (Horse Chestnut), T9 (dead stem), T10 (dead stem), T13 (Cupressaceae Spp), T14 (European Larch) - remove to ground level; T1 (Beech) - prune historic tree surgery limb removal back to main stem In accordance with BS3998: 2010; T2 (European Larch) - remove to ground; T3 (European Ash) - remove to ground level or habitat stump 3m; T4 (Beech) - remove hanging branch and deadwood; T5 (Beech) - remove broken top and deadwood. Reduce crown &lt; 20% in order leave tree as decaying habitat; T6 (English Oak) - area surrounding buttress to be cleared and branches to lower main stem up to 1.8 m to be cut back in order to allow future inspection. T7 (Horse Chestnut) - remove to ground; T11 (Wych Elm) - 15% crown reduction, clear epicormic growth up to 1.8 m and surrounding area. Monitor as per valid policy; T12 (European Larch) - remove to ground; T15 (English Oak) - cut back broken branch and deadwood where required; T16 (Beech) - reduce roadside crown 15%; Tree Group G1 (4no. Acer Pseudoplatanus, Sycamore, 2no. European Ash) - remove to ground; Tree Group G2 (2no. Aesculus Hippocastanum, Horse Chestnut) - incremental removal to ground.</p> <p>Land West Of The Woodlands The Avenue Swarland Northumberland. Comments invited until 22nd October 2020. Due to the contents of Tree Surgeon report, the Parish Council had no objections to this application but asked for replacement trees to be planted as soon as possible.</p> <p><b>20/03077/FUL</b> - Conversion of 2No. redundant farm buildings to 2No. dwellings. Land South East Of Whittle Farm, Felton, Northumberland, NE65 9LN. The Parish Council did not object to the application but suggested the installation of a kitchen window in building A and using slate tiles.</p> <p><b>20/03241/CLEXIS</b> - Certificate of Lawful Development of an Existing Use for vehicular access to Pine Lodge off B6345 (resubmission of 20/00570/CLEXIS) Pine Lodge, Old Swarland, Swarland, NE65 9HU. The PC objected to this application as it felt the case had not sufficiently been made.</p> <p><b>c. Planning matters for Parish Council to consider.</b></p> <p><b>20/03365/FUL</b> – Extension to rear of single story [sic] property (sun room) – 27 Kenmore Road, Swarland, NE65 9JS. Comments invited until 17th November 2020.</p> <p><b>20/01296/SN</b> - Street Naming Consultation - Land south of Mereburn House, Low Wood, Swarland. Name proposed is 'Alexander Grove'. Comments invited until 26th November 2020.</p> <p><b>20/03501/DISCON</b> - Discharge of conditions : 12 (highways) pursuant to planning approval 19/016 Land Parcels South West Of Liseswood, Old Park Road, Swarland Northumberland</p> <p><b>20/03622/FUL</b> - Increase no of dwellings by 2 dwellings from 9 to 11 dwellings. Land South Of Mereburn House, Low Wood, Swarland, Northumberland. Comments invited until 7th December 2020.</p> <p>The Chairman said that draft comments had been circulated today. It had been assumed that work was to be halted on the culvert until the current complaint was resolved but is continuing. It was suggested that a request for a contribution to resurfacing Studley Drive be asked for as further damage had/would occur during construction.</p> <p>The Clerk asked if she should contact the Environment Agency regarding the culvert. This was agreed with the sewage problem mentioned by complaints be included. PC has an additional interest as the Mereburn runs through Vyner Park, and through the whole village.</p>	<p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p>
<p><b>12.</b></p>	<p><b>Complaints:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leamington Lane drain and manhole outside Swarland Primary school – blockage issues referred to NCC 5.2.2020. Being taken up by NCC/OpenReach.</li> </ul>	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Worn road markings at NotM reported 10.3.2020.</li> <li>• Broken off directions footpath sign on Footpath No 35 (south end) reported to NCC 10.3.20 and photos sent in to Countryside Officer.</li> <li>• Emails about proposed Cussin's development at Low Wood. (see 20/03622/FUL above).</li> <li>• Emails about visitors to Percy Wood Retreat making wrong turnings onto private property.</li> <li>• Emails about high fence obstructing view of Highway, Swarland.</li> <li>• No footpath sign at entrance of The Springwood knocked down.</li> <li>• Emailed complaint about no-show of Police Engagement van for a second time at NotM. No response received – Clerk to pursue.</li> <li>• Emailed complaint about signage issues in Swarland.</li> <li>• Overhanging branches on C106 from Alnwick Fords to Glantlees turnoff.</li> <li>• Resurfacing needed on Kenmore Road. Cllr Woolfrey said he had given information to one of the complainants on this matter. Complainant keen to help. Cllr Francis said repairs by NCC do seem to have fallen by the wayside and a PC point of contact is needed to keep pushing this. Cllr Woolfrey said he would consider this.</li> <li>• Complaints of speeding vehicles in connection with development in Swarland.</li> </ul>	Clerk
<b>13.</b>	<p><b>Correspondence:</b>          FOI further request regarding current planning application in Swarland.          CC'd Emailed complaint about Cemetery Joint Cemetery Committee          Forestry Commission – contact details of new Beat Forester.          External Auditor Report. Public Interest Report on 2018/19 accounts.          GNAA – Receipt and thank you for £50.00 donation.          Letters to Cussins and NCC regarding culvert at Low Wood.          Jubilee Hall notification of application for Charitable incorporated Status.          NCC Letter from Ian Selby (Legal Services) re archive information on land south of Leamington Lane.</p>	
<b>14.</b>	<p><b>Requests for Next Agenda:</b> None.</p>	
<b>15.</b>	<p><b>Urgent items:</b> None.</p>	
<b>16.</b>	<p><b>Date of Next Meeting:</b> No meeting Dec, 27/1/2021, 24/2/2021, 24/3/2021, 28/4/2021. Venues/meeting arrangements to be confirmed depending on Government advice.</p>	

**Meeting finished at: 20.08**

Estimated expenditure for PC 2021-22 (shaded column)

	Expenditure in 2019/20	Planned Expenditure Apr 20	Expenditure to date 30-9-20	Variance from Planned Exp. 30-9-20	Expected expenditure by 31-3-21	Estimated expenditure 21/20
PC Insurance***	471.70	471.70	527.77	56.07	527.77	471.70
Audit Fee	65.00	270.00	30.00	0.00	270.00	270.00
Clerks salary	4,512.69	4,512.69	2,188.02	0.00	4,746.00	4888*
Clerks expenses	216.66	400.00	254.54	54.54	573.00	450**
Donations	285.00	300.00	60.00	0.00	300.00	400.00
Subscriptions	218.91	245.00	222.89	0.00	245.00	255.00
IT Provision	195.00	180.00	180.00	0.00	180.00	180.00
SVH Grant	2,200.00	2,400.00	0.00	0.00	2,400.00	2,400.00
Newsletter	414.90	375.00	0.00	(200.00)		375.00
Jubilee Hall Grant	1,800.00	2,000.00	0.00	0.00	2,000.00	2,000.00
Davisons Obelisk	190.73	200.00	0.00	0.00	200.00	200.00
Cemetery & War memorial	1,099.68	1,417.67	0.00	0.00	1,417.67	1,417.67
The Square	148.12	150.00	17.99	0.00	150.00	150.00
Defibrillator	190.28	300.00	39.54	0.00	100.00	100.00
Vyner Park Grant***	7,863.20	7,000.00	6,999.28	0.00	6,999.28	7,000.00
Vyner Park back grant	525.85	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Contribution to Community Fund	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	0.00	1,000.00	1,000.00
Contribution to Reserves	3,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	0.00	1,000.00	1,000.00
VAT	2,294.02	1,000.00	56.00	0.00	1,000.00	100.00
Transfer of NCC grant to VP	0.00	0.00	2,000.00	2,000.00	2,000.00	0.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£26,691.74</b>	<b>£23,222.06</b>	<b>£14,576.03</b>	<b>1,910.61</b>	<b>25,108.72</b>	<b>17,319.37</b>

Notes:

\* Estimated 3% pay award in 21/22

\*\*Includes £60 working from home allowance.

**Bank Reconciliation**

Balance as at 30.9.20 £36,270.57  
 Outstanding cheques £2,620.64  
**Calculated remaining balance £33,649.93 a.**

Expected spend by 31-3-20 £25,108.72  
 Actual spend by 30.9.20 £12,536.23  
 Therefore further spend due **£12,572.49 b.**

Remaining funds = a minus b. **£21,077.44**  
 Less £500 held for Covid Vols. £500  
 Less £500 printer/laminator £500  
**£20,077.44**

Allocation of remaining funds:  
 Reserves: £4,000  
 Community Fund: £11,000  
 £15,000

£20,077.44 minus £15,000 =  
**Uncommitted funds: £5077.44**