

# PONTELAND TOWN COUNCIL

Unit 1 Meadowfield Court  
Meadowfield Industrial Estate  
Ponteland, NE20 9SD

Tel: 01661 825092 Fax: 01661 820244

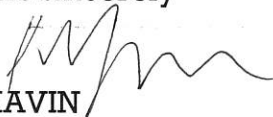
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7 June 2023

To: ALL MEMBERS OF PONTELAND TOWN COUNCIL
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I hereby give notice that a Meeting of Ponteland Town Council will be held on **WEDNESDAY 14<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2023 at 6.15 p.m. IN MERTON HALL. THE MEETING WILL BE PRECEDED BY PUBLIC QUESTION TIME WHICH WILL COMMENCE AT 6.15 P.M. PLEASE NOTE IF THERE ARE NO QUESTIONS THE COUNCIL MEETING WILL COMMENCE AT 6.15 p.m. PLEASE NOTE THE REVISED MEETING TIME AND VENUE.**

Yours sincerely

  
K MAVIN  
Clerk to the Council

## AGENDA

19. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE
20. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST
21. MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 10 MAY 2023
22. MATTERS ARISING
23. CO-OPTION OF TOWN COUNCILLOR TO FILL VACANCY IN NORTH WARD
24. PLANNING
  - (i) Planning Committee – Minutes of meetings held on 9 and 23 May 2023 – copies attached for information
  - (ii) Report on recent planning decisions
25. GRANT APPLICATIONS
  - (i) – Ponteland Memorial Hall - attached
  - (ii) Rotary Club of Ponteland - attached
26. ANNUAL AUDIT OF ACCOUNTS 2022-23 – Report attached

- 27. ENVIRONMENT WORKING PARTY  
Minutes of a meeting held on 22 May 2023 are attached.
- 28. NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL REPORT
- 28. MAYOR'S REPORT  
(i) Mayor's report
- 30. REPORTS BY TOWN COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES ON LOCAL ORGANISATIONS
- 31. ACCOUNTS/BANK RECONCILIATION/BUDGET REPORT – See attached

**EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC – Councillors are asked to pass the following resolution** - That under Section 100A (4) of the Local Government act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting during the disclosure of the following item on the agenda as they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of schedule 12A in the 1972 Act.

- 32. OFFICE ACCOMMODATION – Report attached

**PONTELAND TOWN COUNCIL**  
**Report by Clerk to the Council**  
**Report to June 2023 Council meeting**  
**Report re grant applications**

**Agenda item number 25**

Two grant applications have been received which require consideration by the Council.

The first is from the Ponteland Memorial Hall trustees for payment of the annual grant provided by the Council in the sum of £6,600. This sum is available in the budget for 2023-24.

Members are reminded that a one-off grant of £10,000 for the hall was agreed at the May meeting. This grant was in addition to the annual grant provided by the Town Council.

The second application is from Ponteland Rotary Club for funds to provide portable toilets for the Duck Race on Sunday 3 September. The amount requested is £350 and this amount will be met from the donations to local organisations budget heading.

Councillors are reminded that the sum of £4000 is available in the donations budget heading and an amount of £1030 has already been expended as grants for £400 and £630 were approved in April 2023 for the Ponteland Flower show and a new Pickleball venture. This leaves the sum of £2970 remaining in the budget heading.

Councillors are asked to consider the grant applications from the Ponteland Memorial Hall trustees and Ponteland Rotary Club as attached.

**Recommendation –**

**(i) The Council is asked to consider the grant application from the Memorial Hall trustees in the sum of £6,600.**

**(ii) The Council is asked to consider the request for a grant of £350 from Ponteland Rotary Club for a grant towards the cost of providing portable toilets for the Duck Race to be held on 3 September 2023.**

**Enclosures**

- (i) Grant application form from the Ponteland Memorial Hall trustees.
- (ii) Grant application form from Ponteland Rotary Club.



**PONTELAND MEMORIAL HALL**  
**Darras Road, Ponteland**  
**NE20 9NX**

Ms K Mavin  
Ponteland Town Council  
Council Offices, Unit 1, Meadowfield Court,  
Meadowfield Industrial Estate,  
Ponteland,  
Northumberland,  
NE20 9SD

5 June 2023

Dear Kath

Please find attached a grant application form together with a supporting Business Plan from Ponteland Memorial Hall.

If you require any further any information, please let me know.

Yours sincerely

John Harrison  
Chair of the Charity Trustees  
Ponteland Memorial Hall



**GRANT APPLICATION FORM**  
**VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS**  
**FINANCIAL YEAR 2023-2024**

Applicant	Ponteland Memorial Hall
Organisation & Charity number if applicable	A Charitable Incorporated Organisation registered with the Charity Commissioners for England and Wales number 1188263
Address	Ponteland Memorial Hall Darras Road Ponteland NE20 9NX
Telephone Number & Email address	01661 822603 info@pontelandmemorialhall.com
Bank Details Sort code and Account number	
What year was your Organisation formed?	Ponteland Memorial Hall was formed as an unincorporated charity in 1922. It incorporated as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation on 28 Feb 2020.
What is your current Membership and how much are subscriptions?	Senior: N/A  Junior: N/A
Organisation's Aims and Objectives	To further or benefit the residents of Ponteland and the neighbourhood, without distinction of sex, sexual orientation, race or of political, religious or other opinions by associating together the said residents and the local authorities, voluntary and other organisations in a common effort to advance education and to provide facilities in the interests of social welfare for recreation and leisure time occupation with the objective of improving the conditions of life for the residents. In furtherance of these objects but not otherwise, the trustees shall have power: to establish or secure the establishment of a community centre and to maintain or manage or co-operate with any

	statutory authority in the maintenance and management of such a centre for activities promoted by the charity in furtherance of the above objects.
Description of Project or purpose for which a grant is required.	1. Replacement of ACV Boiler 2. Upgrade thermostats to support remote configuration
Estimated Total Cost	£8,000
Amount Requested from Ponteland Town Council	£6,500
What funds are available from your Organisation towards this project?	£1,500 from forecast retained surplus in 2023/24
Have other Authorities or sources for funds been approached for funds towards this project?	No – See attached Business Plan for details of separate Future Capital Projects
What were the results from these applications? (please indicate amounts pledged)	n/a
Have you any plans for raising the additional finance for the project?	No – See attached Business Plan for details of separate Future Capital Projects
Please confirm the proportion of the grant that will be spent in Ponteland.	100%

## DECLARATION

I HEARBY DECLARE ON BEHALF OF

Ponteland Memorial Hall

THAT:

- (i) This application is submitted on behalf of a non-profit making Voluntary Organisation
- (ii) To the best of the Organisation's knowledge, the particulars on this application are correct

I undertake, on behalf of the Organisation, that the grant or such part of it as Ponteland Town Council may determine, will be repaid in the event that the Organisation is found to be in breach of the above, or if the facilities cease to be used for the purpose for which the grant is give, or if the project winds up within five years.

SIGNED:

STATUS

John Harrison

Chair of Ponteland Memorial Hall Charity Trustees

DATE: 5 June 2023





## **GRANT APPLICATION FORM** **VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS**


### **FINANCIAL YEAR 2023-24**

Applicant	Rotary Ponteland	
Organisation & Charity number if applicable	1049648	
Address		
Telephone Number & Email address	0750 3011703 john.r.cooper@talktalk.net	
Bank Details Sort code and Account number		
What year was your Organisation formed?	1964	
What is your current Membership and how much are subscriptions?	Senior 23 £125	Junior Nil
Organisation's Aims and Objectives	To organize fund raising and community events to benefit local charities and the community of Ponteland and Darras Hall	
Description of Project or purpose for which a grant is required.	Provision of portable toilets for Duck race to be held in Ponteland Park on Sunday 3 <sup>rd</sup> September 2023	



Estimated Total Cost	£350
Amount Requested from Ponteland Town Council	£350
What funds are available from your Organisation towards this project?	The organization would make up any shortfall between actual cost and the amount granted but the shortfall would reduce the amount to give to charity (Children North East)
Have other Authorities or sources for funds been approached for funds towards this project?	Yes , we are approaching local business sponsors for support the event.
What were the results from these Applications? (please indicate amounts pledged)	Rotary Ponteland have secured sponsorship from Newcastle Airport for the event
Have you any plans for raising the additional finance for the project?	Yes , we are approaching local business sponsors for support the event.
Please confirm the proportion of the grant that will be spent in Ponteland.	100%

### DECLARATION

I HEARBY DECLARE ON BEHALF OF ROTARY PONTELAND	
<p>THAT:</p> <p>(i) This application is submitted on behalf of a non-profit making Voluntary Organisation</p> <p>(ii) To the best of the Organisation's knowledge, the particulars on this application are correct</p> <p>I undertake, on behalf of the Organisation, that the grant or such part of it as Ponteland Town Council may determine, will be repaid in the event that the Organisation is found to be in breach of the above, or if the facilities cease to be used for the purpose for which the grant is give, or if the project winds up within five years.</p>	
<p>SIGNED:</p>  <p><small>Digitally signed by John Cooper Date: 2023.05.30 10:39:01 +01'00'</small></p>	<p>STATUS:</p> <p>Event organiser</p>
DATE: 30/05/2023	

**PONTELAND TOWN COUNCIL**  
**Report by Clerk to the Council**  
**Report to Council meeting June 2023**

**Agenda item number 26**

**ANNUAL AUDIT OF ACCOUNTS 2022-23**

The Annual Audit **Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR)** has to be sent to the Town Council's external auditors, PKF Littlejohn by 30<sup>th</sup> June 2023. This relates to the annual audit of accounts for 2022-23.

The period for the exercise of public rights must include the first 10 working days of July which are 3 to 14 of July.

A copy of the relevant sections of the AGAR is attached.

A copy of the Internal Auditors report (page 3 of the AGAR) is attached for approval.

The Council must consider and approve the Annual Governance Statement (page 4) and Councillors need to review this information and approve the Statement in advance of approving the Accounting Statement.

A copy of the draft final accounts is also attached. These are presented on both a receipts and payments and income and expenditure basis.

Finally, a copy of the Accounting Statement (Page 5 of the AGAR) is attached for approval. Councillors should also note that the Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) must sign and date the Accounting Statement **before** it is presented to the Council.

Like the Annual Governance Statement, Councillors need to review this information, approve the Accounting Statement by resolution and ensure it is signed and dated by the person presiding at the meeting.

It is suggested that the notice of public rights information starts from Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> June ending on Monday 7<sup>th</sup> August. Information must be published on the website one day before the start date so by Monday 26<sup>th</sup> June.

**Recommendations –**

- (i) The Council is asked to consider and approve the Internal Auditors report (page 3 of the AGAR).**
- (ii) The Council is requested to consider the Annual Governance Statement (Page 4 of the AGAR) and approve the document.**
- (iii) The Council is asked to consider and approve the draft final accounts as presented.**
- (iv) The Council is requested to consider the Accounting Statements (page 5 of the AGAR), approve them by resolution and ensure the Statements are signed and dated by the person presiding at the meeting.**
- (iv) The Council is asked to note that the process for the exercise of public rights as set out within the report to start from Tuesday 27th June ending on Monday 7<sup>th</sup> August. Information must be published on the website one day before the start date so by Monday 26<sup>th</sup> June.**

**Attachments –**

- (i) Copies of relevant sections of the AGAR for 2022-23 including the Annual Internal Auditors report, the Annual Governance Statement and the Accounting Statement.**
- (iii) Final Accounts 2022-23**

# Annual Internal Audit Report 2022/23

## Ponteland Town Council

www.ponteland-tc.gov.uk

During the financial year ended 31 March 2023, this authority's internal auditor acting independently and on the basis of an assessment of risk, carried out a selective assessment of compliance with the relevant procedures and controls in operation and obtained appropriate evidence from the authority.

The internal audit for 2022/23 has been carried out in accordance with this authority's needs and planned coverage. On the basis of the findings in the areas examined, the internal audit conclusions are summarised in this table. Set out below are the objectives of internal control and alongside are the internal audit conclusions on whether, in all significant respects, the control objectives were being achieved throughout the financial year to a standard adequate to meet the needs of this authority.

Internal control objective	Yes	No*	Not covered**
A. Appropriate accounting records have been properly kept throughout the financial year.	✓		
B. This authority complied with its financial regulations, payments were supported by invoices, all expenditure was approved and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	✓		
C. This authority assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these.	✓		
D. The precept or rates requirement resulted from an adequate budgetary process; progress against the budget was regularly monitored; and reserves were appropriate.	✓		
E. Expected income was fully received, based on correct prices, properly recorded and promptly banked; and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	✓		
F. Petty cash payments were properly supported by receipts, all petty cash expenditure was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for.	✓		
G. Salaries to employees and allowances to members were paid in accordance with this authority's approvals, and PAYE and NI requirements were properly applied.	✓		
H. Asset and investments registers were complete and accurate and properly maintained.	✓		
I. Periodic bank account reconciliations were properly carried out during the year.	✓		
J. Accounting statements prepared during the year were prepared on the correct accounting basis (receipts and payments or income and expenditure), agreed to the cash book, supported by an adequate audit trail from underlying records and where appropriate debtors and creditors were properly recorded.	✓		
K. If the authority certified itself as exempt from a limited assurance review in 2021/22, it met the exemption criteria and correctly declared itself exempt. (If the authority had a limited assurance review of its 2021/22 AGAR tick "not covered")			✓
L. The authority published the required information on a website/webpage up to date at the time of the internal audit in accordance with the relevant legislation.	✓		
M. In the year covered by this AGAR, the authority correctly provided for a period for the exercise of public rights as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations (during the 2022-23 AGAR period, were public rights in relation to the 2021-22 AGAR evidenced by a notice on the website and/or authority approved minutes confirming the dates set).	✓		
N. The authority has complied with the publication requirements for 2021/22 AGAR (see AGAR Page 1 Guidance Notes).	✓		
O. (For local councils only)	Yes	No	Not applicable
Trust funds (including charitable) – The council met its responsibilities as a trustee.			✓

For any other risk areas identified by this authority adequate controls existed (list any other risk areas on separate sheets if needed).

Date(s) internal audit undertaken

Name of person who carried out the internal audit

21/03/2023 11/05/2023 30/05/2023

GARY KENNEDY

Signature of person who carried out the internal audit

*[Signature]*

Date

30/05/2023

\*If the response is 'no' please state the implications and action being taken to address any weakness in control identified (add separate sheets if needed).

\*\*Note: If the response is 'not covered' please state when the most recent internal audit work was done in this area and when it is next planned, or if coverage is not required, the annual internal audit report must explain why not (add separate sheets if needed).

## Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2022/23

We acknowledge as the members of:

**Ponteland Town Council**

our responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control, including arrangements for the preparation of the Accounting Statements. We confirm, to the best of our knowledge and belief, with respect to the Accounting Statements for the year ended 31 March 2023, that:

	Agreed		'Yes' means that this authority:
	Yes	No*	
1. We have put in place arrangements for effective financial management during the year, and for the preparation of the accounting statements.	✓		prepared its accounting statements in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
2. We maintained an adequate system of internal control including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.	✓		made proper arrangements and accepted responsibility for safeguarding the public money and resources in its charge.
3. We took all reasonable steps to assure ourselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and Proper Practices that could have a significant financial effect on the ability of this authority to conduct its business or manage its finances.	✓		has only done what it has the legal power to do and has complied with Proper Practices in doing so.
4. We provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors' rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.	✓		during the year gave all persons interested the opportunity to inspect and ask questions about this authority's accounts.
5. We carried out an assessment of the risks facing this authority and took appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required.	✓		considered and documented the financial and other risks it faces and dealt with them properly.
6. We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the accounting records and control systems.	✓		arranged for a competent person, independent of the financial controls and procedures, to give an objective view on whether internal controls meet the needs of this smaller authority.
7. We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit.	✓		responded to matters brought to its attention by internal and external audit.
8. We considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year-end, have a financial impact on this authority and, where appropriate, have included them in the accounting statements.	✓		disclosed everything it should have about its business activity during the year including events taking place after the year end if relevant.
9. (For local councils only) Trust funds including charitable. In our capacity as the sole managing trustee we discharged our accountability responsibilities for the fund(s)/assets, including financial reporting and, if required, independent examination or audit.	Yes	No	N/A
			✓

**\*Please provide explanations to the external auditor on a separate sheet for each 'No' response and describe how the authority will address the weaknesses identified. These sheets must be published with the Annual Governance Statement.**

This Annual Governance Statement was approved at a meeting of the authority on:

**14/06/2023**

and recorded as minute reference:

**26**

**MINUTE REFERENCE**

Signed by the Chairman and Clerk of the meeting where approval was given:

Chairman

**SIGNATURE REQUIRED**

Clerk

**SIGNATURE REQUIRED**

**www.ponteland-tc.gov.uk PUBLICLY AVAILABLE WEBSITE/WEBPAGE ADDRESS**

## Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2022/23 for

Ponteland Town Council

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2022 £	31 March 2023 £	
1. Balances brought forward	602,146	673,859	Total balances and reserves at the beginning of the year as recorded in the financial records. Value must agree to Box 7 of previous year.
2. (+) Precept or Rates and Levies	429,096	445,180	Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.
3. (+) Total other receipts	65,153	79,274	Total income or receipts as recorded in the cashbook less the precept or rates/levies received (line 2). Include any grants received.
4. (-) Staff costs	112,393	112,356	Total expenditure or payments made to and on behalf of all employees. Include gross salaries and wages, employers NI contributions, employers pension contributions, gratuities and severance payments.
5. (-) Loan interest/capital repayments	0	0	Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the authority's borrowings (if any).
6. (-) All other payments	310,143	332,390	Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cash-book less staff costs (line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (line 5).
7. (=) Balances carried forward	673,859	753,567	Total balances and reserves at the end of the year. Must equal (1+2+3) - (4+5+6).
8. Total value of cash and short term investments	671,509	749,924	The sum of all current and deposit bank accounts, cash holdings and short term investments held as at 31 March – <b>To agree with bank reconciliation.</b>
9. Total fixed assets plus long term investments and assets	529,069	525,928	The value of all the property the authority owns – it is made up of all its fixed assets and long term investments as at 31 March.
10. Total borrowings	0	0	The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB).

For Local Councils Only	Yes	No	N/A	
11a. Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)				The Council, as a body corporate, acts as sole trustee and is responsible for managing Trust funds or assets.
11b. Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)			✓	The figures in the accounting statements above do not include any Trust transactions.

I certify that for the year ended 31 March 2023 the Accounting Statements in this Annual Governance and Accountability Return have been prepared on either a receipts and payments or income and expenditure basis following the guidance in Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices and present fairly the financial position of this authority.

**Signed by Responsible Financial Officer before being presented to the authority for approval**

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

Date

05/06/2023

I confirm that these Accounting Statements were approved by this authority on this date:

14/06/2023

as recorded in minute reference:

26

MINUTE REFERENCE

Signed by Chairman of the meeting where the Accounting Statements were approved

SIGNATURE REQUIRED



PONTELAND TOWN COUNCIL									
Receipts and Payments Account 1st April 2022 to 31 March 2023									
Income			Prepayments at 31 March 2022	Accruals 31 March 2022	Other Provisions 31 March 2022	Prepayments at 31 March 2023	Accruals 31 March 2023	Other Provisions 31 March 2023	Income and Expenditure Account 31st March 2023
Allotments		827.00							827.00
Merton Hall		0.00							0.00
Hanging Baskets		0.00							0.00
Bank Interest		781.05							781.05
Wayleaves		7.28							7.28
									0.00
Precept		445,180.00							445,180.00
PN & V Advertising		35,998.44							35,998.44
DHEC con to Speed Monitor		0.00							0.00
Cemetery		38,197.00							38,197.00
Reimbursements		3,462.99							3,462.99
Deposit Refunds									0.00
Miscellaneous/Paper Map Income									0.00
Total Income		524,453.76	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	524,453.76
Expenditure									
Highways and Footpaths		43,129.28	341.32			(494.09)	382.52		43,359.03
Environment		84,082.15		-895.25		(65.00)	948.95		84,070.85
Planning		683.43							683.43
Park		26,134.44		-357.60			325.00		26,101.84
Play Areas		10,001.69		-410.18			951.60		10,543.11
Cemetery		13,107.03		-5918.64			4,388.84		11,577.23
Village Halls		7,550.00							7,550.00
Grant / Contributions		22,079.12							22,079.12
Pont News and Views		43,494.34							43,494.34
Skate Park		0.00							0.00
Public Offices		28,333.88							28,333.88
Administration		134,730.91	3,489.09	-2104.01		(4,015.88)	1,952.60		134,052.72
Other Expenditure		13,942.85	4,932.14	-239.68		(5,190.05)	0.00		13,445.26
Projects		16,990.22							16,990.22
Capital Reserves		0.00							0.00
Contingency		0.00							0.00
Invoices to be Reimbursed		2,465.00							2,465.00
Total Expenditure		446,724.34	8,762.55	(9,925.36)	0.00	(9,765.02)	8,949.51	0.00	444,746.03
Net Income		77,729.42							79,707.74



# **PONTELAND TOWN COUNCIL**

## **MINUTES OF THE ENVIRONMENT WORKING PARTY HELD ON 22 MAY 2023 AT THE TOWN COUNCIL OFFICES**

**Present:** Councillors C Greenwell, S Ahmed, K Overbury and N Sehgal

### **1. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR FOR 2023-24**

RESOLVED – Councillor C Greenwell be appointed Chair of the Working Party for 2023-24.

### **2. APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIR FOR 2023-24**

RESOLVED – Councillor N Sehgal be appointed Vice Chair of the Working Party for 2023-24.

### **3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.**

There were no apologies, all members were present.

### **4. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING HELD ON THE 25 JANUARY 2023**

The Minutes were accepted.

### **5. SPREADSHEET REPORTS**

#### **(i) Report covering three main priorities of EWP for 2022-23**

#### **(1) Rockery on Main Street.**

All the items agreed at the March 2023 meeting had been ordered except the seat for the area to the right of Peel House entrance. The bus stop seats had been installed and a brass plaque put on the commemorative seat outside of the shelter. The bus stop signage had been erected. The bin was on order and the planters from Plantscape were being installed on 25 May. The other Coronation planter was on order.

The black seat was not yet ordered but the Clerk was asked to progress this as soon as possible as it had been agreed at the April Town Council meeting.

The Chair suggested obtaining another plaque to commemorate the coronation for the seat and the Clerk was asked to obtain a price for this which would likely be less than £100 including delivery.

The Chair suggested that some colour and small flowering plants would improve the rockery and the Clerk was asked to discuss this with the gardening contractor who had suggested two lilac trees may be an option.

**It was recommended – That a plaque be ordered for the seat to the right of the Peel House entrance.**

#### **(2) Sensory garden**

This area was much tidier than previously but required further work.

This area required further discussion as the next project for the EWP.

#### **(3) Project for resurfacing the path between Callerton Lane and Waitrose bridge**

The order had been placed for the work with NCC. A start date was awaited.

#### **(ii) Report re items discussed at previous meetings**

#### **(1) Allotments**

The Clerk reported that all but one of the new plots had been let.

#### **(2) Allotment tenancy agreements**

The new tenancy agreement had been approved by the Council at the May 2023 meeting. The Clerk would be sending this out to tenants very soon.

#### **(3) Ash trees in the park**

The Clerk reported that the tree survey for trees outside of the park had been received and there were 9 urgent items that required attention. The Clerk would be seeking quotes for the work.

In relation to the Ash trees at the bus stop at the park entrance, the Clerk had been asked to forward the information to Mr Paul Jones at NCC following a discussion that had been held with the Chair of this Working Party recently.

### **(iii) Watching brief items**

Several items were deleted from the list including the Twizell Play area lease and the commemorative tree at Dunsgreen. Councillor Overbury mentioned that Richard Coates school had not responded to a request for a photo shoot for the commemorative tree in the park and it was felt this was too late to progress this now.

The Clerk mentioned a problem raised by the gardening contractor re a sign erected on Fox Covert Lane. The Clerk was asked to write to the organisation advising them of the need to obtain permission before signs could be erected.

## **6. COMMUNITY ORCHARD IN THE PARK**

This item had been included for discussion. It had been intended to hold a site visit to the park, but it had not been possible to organise this at short notice.

The suggested location for the above was on the 'path to nowhere' in the park.

Some concerns were raised regarding the location.

Councillor Overbury had carried out some initial research of community orchards which specified the type of trees etc to be used to minimise nuisance such as vermin, wasps etc.

A second location was suggested which was in the triangle where a commemorative oak tree had been planted.

It was agreed that a site visit would be organised in early July and this issue would be further discussed at the July meeting.

## **7. COMMUNITY ORCHARD ON LADYWELL ESTATE**

A request had been received from a resident of the above estate for a community orchard which had been circulated

An original request had been made by another resident some months ago. A group of residents had met up last year to discuss this project and they wanted to take it forward in the autumn.

Information regarding the location as well as other issues that had been raised by the Council when the original request had been received had been circulated.

The Clerk had been asked to check if neighbouring residents had been contacted. The response received seemed to indicate this was the case. However, the Clerk was asked to write to residents who lived on the boundary of this land to ask for their views.

The Clerk also needed to double check the exact location of the land to be used with the applicant.

## **8. MERTON WAY PLANTERS**

The Working Party discussed the future planting and maintenance of the planters on Merton Way. The Clerk said that several different ideas had been implemented but the beds had always been problematic for various reasons including continued anti-social behaviour.

The Chair had spoken to some of the business owners in Merton Way and discussed various options such as using soft pour to fill in the beds and total removal of the structures. Neither option was very attractive as it was felt if the area was completely open it would become an informal kickabout or skateboarding area.

The Chair suggested filling some of the beds with shrubs and bulbs that flowered at different times of the year. The Clerk agreed to discuss this with the gardening contractor. Summer planting was just about to commence, and some planting will have been ordered for this area.

The Chair showed a photograph of the large planter near to the One Stop. The top bricks were crumbling, and this required attention.

There was some debate about land ownership, and it was agreed this would be investigated and reported to the EWP.

## **9. PLAY AREA AT CALLERTON, FENCING**

The Clerk reported on a recent case of vandalism at the play area where several fence posts had been kicked off the fence and discarded. This was a regular occurrence and the Clerk felt that it may be time for the Town Council to consider replacing the fencing with a more suitable alternative.

She was asked to look initially at composite and steel options and report back.

## **10. CORRESPONDENCE**

### **(i) Email from resident of Jameson Manor – bin request**

The Clerk reported that a request received from a resident for a bin at the above location. She seemed to recall that a bin had been installed inside the development some time ago but needed to check this out.

If a bin was to be installed it was agreed that this should be a metal one.

It was agreed that the Clerk would report back on whether there was a bin at this location.

### **(ii) Email via MP re litter picker**

The Clerk had received a request via the MP for a litter picker. The Clerk queried the address which was not in Ponteland and was asked if the equipment could be dropped off at a relatives address in Ponteland. The Clerk was asked to direct the request to NCC who now offered litter pickers for volunteers.

### **(iii) Email from Rotary re Coronation commemorative tree**

The Clerk had received a request from Ponteland Rotary who as part of their ten year plan for the environment, they wished to plant an Oak tree or similar to commemorate the Coronation of King Charles III. They were aware of the tree survey that was commissioned for Ponteland Park and asked if this could possibly identify a location for this tree in the park.

It was the intention of the Council to install a tree with tree guard in the park later in the year. The group felt that nothing had changed since 2022 when Rotary were advised that a tree couldn't be planted in the park as there was a policy not to allow such planting other than by the Council as owners who were planting on behalf of the community.

The Clerk was asked to advise Ponteland Rotary of this decision.

## **11. Report re FOPP**

There was nothing to report.

## **12. Any other business**

The Chair mentioned the Darras Road bridge which was in need of painting. The Clerk said this was a highways project and it was on the list of items to progress.

Councillor Ahmed expressed concern at the condition of footpaths on Darras Hall and Darras Road in particular.

He was advised that NCC were responsible for pavements. It was suggested that he write to the Chair of the Highways Working Party and ask him to include this as an item on the next meeting for discussion.

**9. Date of next meeting**

The next meeting would be held on Monday 24 July 2023 at 10.00 am. at the Town Council offices. A site visit would be organised in advance of the meeting in early July.

**PONTELAND TOWN COUNCIL**  
**Report by the Mayor**  
**Report to June 2023 Council meeting**  
Mayor's Diary

**Agenda item number 28(i)**

See below events/meetings attended by the Mayor:

Thursday, May 25

Town and Parish Councils Liaison meeting (attended via Zoom).

Friday, May 26

Judge at Badger Macmillan coffee morning.

Wed, May 31

Memorial Hall car park consultation discussion, with Town Clerk plus councillors - Christine Greenwell, Richard Dodd and Sue Johnson. Representing Memorial Hall - John Harrison, John Lowden, Victoria Grace and Dominic McVey

Sun, June 4

Guest and speaker at Aymadiyya Muslim Community Peace Conference, with Lord Mayor of Newcastle Veronica Dunn and Mayor of Gateshead Eileen McMaster.