

PONTELAND TOWN COUNCIL

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1 November 2023

To: ALL MEMBERS OF PONTELAND TOWN COUNCIL

I hereby give notice that a Meeting of Ponteland Town Council will be held on **WEDNESDAY 8 NOVEMBER 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.**

Yours sincerely



K MAVIN

Clerk to the Council

AGENDA

- 72. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE
- 73. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST
- 74. MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 11 OCTOBER 2023.
Copy attached.
- 75. MATTERS ARISING
- 76. PLANNING
 - (i) Planning Committee – Minutes of meetings held on 26 September, 10 and 24 October. Copies attached for information.
 - (ii) Report on recent planning decisions
- 77. GRANT APPLICATION
 - (i) Application from Jameson Manor Community Group – see attached

- 78. RISK MANAGEMENT/INTERNAL CONTROLS REPORTS
 - (i) Risk Management report – copy attached
 - (ii) Review of Internal Audit report – copy attached
 - (iii) Review of Internal Controls report – copy attached
- 79. BRIDGES INSPECTION IN PONTELAND PARK – See attached report
- 80. REVIEW OF PONTELAND NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN – Report attached.
- 81. HIGHWAYS WORKING PARTY – Minutes of a meeting held on 9 October 2023 are attached for consideration.
- 82. NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL REPORT
- 83. MAYOR'S REPORT
 - (i) Mayor's diary
- 84. REPORTS BY TOWN COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES ON LOCAL ORGANISATIONS
- 85. ACCOUNTS/BANK RECONCILIATION/BUDGET REPORT - Reports attached.

PONTELAND TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD AT MERTON HALL ON 11th OCTOBER 2023

Present: Councillor K Overbury (in the Chair)

Councillors S Ahmed, C Caisley, L Darwin, R Dodd, C Greenwell, A Hall, S Johnson, N Sehgal, A Varley, K Wilson and K Woodrow.

58. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

59. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

60. MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 13th SEPTEMBER 2023

The Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 13th September 2023 were submitted for approval.

RESOLVED – The minutes be approved.

61. MATTERS ARISING

Minute 52 Events Working Party

A meeting of the above had been arranged for 26 September but had had to be postponed due to unavailability of members.

The issue relating to D-Day 80 would be discussed at the rearranged meeting.

62. PLANNING

(i) Planning Committee

Minutes of meetings held on 29 August and 12 September 2023 were circulated for information.

Councillor Varley raised the issue of farm workers' dwellings, and said he was grateful for information that had been circulated on this topic. He felt that the Committee needed to look carefully at these applications in the future.

(ii) Report on recent planning decisions

There were no reports.

63. GRANT APPLICATION

(i) Request from Archaeological Investigation Services for funding for an information panel

A report by the Clerk in relation to the above request was circulated.

63. GRANT APPLICATION(Continued)

(i) Request for Archaeological Investigation Services for funding for an information panel

The Town Council had been contacted by the above-mentioned organisation after being asked by NCC to produce a panel relating to investigations carried out on the site of the Ponteland Leisure Centre when a discovery of human burials and cremations had been made. The Town Council had been approached for funding of this project as the NCC Archaeologist did not have funds available to produce the item.

There were various locations where this panel may be situated. This included the school, the leisure centre, or the library. Various options had been provided for types and costs of plaques however it appeared that a digital file could be produced which could then be printed onto Foamex board with a cost-effective mounting solution. The anticipated cost of this was £550.

Members suggested that the library would be the best option where such a panel could be seen by the public. They also felt it was important to mark the history of this find. It was also suggested that the Clerk ask the company to come forward with a costed proposal including details of the agreed location and this would be further considered by the Town Council.

RESOLVED – The Clerk be asked to request the company to produce an agreed and costed proposal which would include details of location which the Council would consider at a future meeting.

64. NOTICE OF CONCLUSION OF AUDIT 2022-23

A report by the Clerk in relation to the above had been circulated.

The report stated that the External Auditors Report and Certificate had been received on 26 September and this was circulated to Councillors together with a copy of sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Annual Return (AGAR). The auditors, Mazars, had not raised any matters with the Town Council although they did note that box 11a in Section 2 of the AGAR had been left blank. This was raised as a minor issue for internal reporting only as they did agree that the answer could be inferred from the other answers on the AGAR form. The Council was asked to ensure that in future, all boxes were filled in, marking nil or not applicable where appropriate,

The information was displayed on notice boards and on the Town Council's website on 27 September for a period of 14 days. The information had to be published by the 30 September.

RESOLVED – The Council approve and accept the External Auditors Report and Certificate for 2022-23 and sections 1 and 2 of the AGAR.

65. REVIEW OF STANDING ORDERS AND FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

Councillors were reminded that a small Working Party was needed to carry out the annual review of the above documents. It was felt that a meeting was required as soon as possible to review the information.

RESOLVED – That Councillors Greenwell, Hall, Overbury and Varley be appointed to the Working Party to review the Standing Orders and Financial Regulations.

66. ENVIRONMENT WORKING PARTY

Minutes of a meeting of the above Working Party held on 18 September had been circulated for consideration. There were no recommendations for approval.

Under item 4, Ash trees in the park, the Clerk had been asked to request that the contractor carrying out the work be asked to remove the timber from the park. It had been suggested that a community wood bank could be approached if this was a problem for the contractor.

There were potential problems with access to the park for the necessary machinery and the Clerk was asked to obtain a price for removing the timber.

RESOLVED – The Minutes be approved.

67. NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL REPORT

Councillor Dodd reported that an announcement had been made about dualling a section of the A1 between Morpeth and Alnwick, this was part of the distribution of funds following the cancellation of part of the HS2 project. He also mentioned again about defibrillators and asked Councillors to make him aware of any information relating to this subject in the parish area.

Councillor Jones referred to the budget and stated that there were some difficult decisions to be made however, the County Council were keen to retain services such as grass cutting, leisure centres and libraries. She reported that she had taken on the role of overseeing the Inequalities Portfolio.

Councillor Jones mentioned the Local Transport Plan information and asked if she could be informed of the Town Council's priorities.

She also asked if it would be possible to keep her informed of any planning applications within her ward that the Town Council objected to. It was agreed to add Councillor Jones to the distribution list for the Planning Committee minutes.

67. NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL REPORT(Continued)

Councillor Overbury mentioned her attendance at the Town and Parish conference with NCC on 5 October. The Leader of the Council had said that the Council was committed to keeping public toilets open and perhaps opening others. She had heard a comment made recently by a member of the public praising the provision of public toilets in the county.

68. MAYOR'S REPORT

A report by the Mayor, Councillor Overbury had been circulated.

69. REPORTS BY TOWN COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES ON LOCAL ORGANISATIONS

There was a brief discussion regarding the Newcastle Airport Consultative Committee. Councillor Varley agreed to produce a summary report for circulation to members if required.

70. ACCOUNTS/ BANK RECONCILIATION/ BUDGET REPORT

The Accounts Committee approved payments totalling £41,979.27 for September 2023.

A copy of the budget reports for September were also circulated, as well as the bank reconciliation for that month.

RESOLVED – The reports be accepted.

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.

71. STAFFING COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting held on 27 September 2023 had been circulated.

RESOLVED – The Minutes be approved.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING – THE NEXT MEETING OF THE TOWN COUNCIL WOULD BE HELD ON WEDNESDAY 8 NOVEMBER 2023 AT 6.15 P.M. AT MERTON HALL.

PONTELAND TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING

26TH September 2023

Present: Councillors Mrs S Johnson (in the chair), Mrs K Woodrow & Mr A Hall.

1. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

A list of planning applications received since the previous Committee meeting had been circulated.

The Committee made no comments about the 5 applications considered.

2. DECISIONS: APPLICATIONS AND APPEALS; WITHDRAWN APPLICATIONS

2.1 DECISION: 23/02719/FUL 19 Parklands, Darras Hall, Ponteland, Northumberland. NE20 9LL

Proposed: Proposed new roof to existing dormer bungalow to form two storey house with same ridge height as existing dormer bungalow. Two storey extension to front and rear and single storey extension to front and side to form double garage. New entrance gates.

Comment: The application was **REFUSED** on 18th September 2023.

The Committee made no comment about this application.

2.2 DECISION: 23/00897/FUL 2 Moor Lane, Darras Hall, Ponteland NE20 9AD

Proposed: Demolition of existing garage and construction of two storey side extension with front elevation bay windows and rendered finish. Convert loft into two bedrooms and bathroom and construction of double dormer on rear elevation and single dormer on front elevation.

Comment. The application was granted on 22nd September 2023.

The Planning Committee made the following comment: The Planning Committee wish to support residents and request that all construction vehicles are kept within the site. The Committee request that a condition be included as part of any approval given.

3. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

3.1 Ponteland Neighbourhood plan

Councillors had previously discussed that the Ponteland Neighbourhood Plan (PNP) needed to be reviewed to ensure it coincided with the Northumberland Local Plan and the National Planning and Policy Framework (NPPF).

The Clerk had asked the Council's planning consultant if she would be willing to undertake this work on behalf of the Town Council. A fee proposal had been received outlining the work that needed to be undertaken. This involved 7 stages of work which would take approximately 7 days.

The Planning Committee were willing to be the appointed group to oversee this work.

The Chair mentioned that she had been approached by a former member of the Ponteland Neighbourhood Plan Group to offer his services to review the PNP and it was suggested that he could assist with some of the preparatory work.

The Clerk stated that a report would need to go to Council seeking approval for the Planning Committee to carry out this task and for approval of the necessary expenditure. It was likely that a report would be included on the November Town Council agenda. Members noted that there was funding available in the budget for 2023-24 which had been agreed at the special Council meeting held on 24 January 2023.

The Clerk was asked to invite the planning consultant to the next meeting of the Planning Committee to be held on 10 October. The former member of the PNP group may also be invited to attend.

Members also asked if they could be sent a copy of the Made PNP by email prior to the meeting.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING: Tuesday 10th October 2023

PONTELAND TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING 10th October 2023

Present: Councillors Mrs S Johnson (in the chair), Mrs K Woodrow, Mr A Hall, Mr S Ahmed & Mr A Varley.

1. Ponteland Neighbourhood Plan

The Chair reported that the Council had stated that there was a need to update the Ponteland Neighbourhood Plan to coincide with the Northumberland Local Plan. The Clerk had contacted the Council's Planning Consultant who had provided a brief for this work up to the point of preparation of a final scoping report. The planning consultant and Mr Will Moses (a former member of the Ponteland Neighbourhood plan SG) were in attendance at the meeting to discuss this issue. Mr Moses had offered to assist on a voluntary basis with some of the work if needed.

The planning consultant went through the brief she had supplied and outlined the work that was required. She also offered to talk to the planning department at NCC to see if they had any information that would assist with updating neighbourhood plans. She also reported that grants were available for the work, and she offered to assist with signposting the Council towards this funding.

The next stage was to submit a report to the Town Council in November to seek approval to proceed and for the funding.

Both parties were thanked for their attendance at the meeting.

2. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

A list of planning applications received since the previous Committee meeting had been circulated:

Application No: **23/03462/FUL**

Location: **Auberne, Callerton Lane, Ponteland, Northumberland, NE20 9EG.**

Proposal: Demolition of existing dwelling and construction of dwelling and detached garage

Applicant: Mrs Li Xing Stephenson

Objection: The Committee welcome the development of this neglected site but feel that the proposals are overbearing within the confines of the plot and its proximity to Ponteland Village and the Conservation Area, which it is adjacent to. The application contravenes Policy PNP2 (b) of The Ponteland Neighbourhood Plan: *Respects the character of the site and its surroundings in terms of its location, layout, proportion, form, massing, density, height, size, scale, materials, and detailed design features.*

In addition, the Committee are concerned about flood risk to the proposed site due to its location next to the river Pont.

The Committee made no comments about the other 3 applications considered.

3. DECISIONS: APPLICATIONS AND APPEALS; WITHDRAWN APPLICATIONS

3.1 DECISION: 23/01175/FUL 8-10 Runnymede Road, Darras Hall, Ponteland, NE20 9HE

Proposed: Demolition of 2no semi-detached bungalows and construction of three storey dwelling with Garage + landscaping

The application was **Refused** on 26th September 2023

Comment: The Committee feel that the 2 existing properties which are to be demolished are surrounded by similar style bungalows and they have concerns that the proposed 3 storey building will dominate the landscape, so would therefore like consideration of the profile of the neighbouring properties to be taken into account. The Committee also regret to see one residential property disappearing in its entirety. Should the application be approved, the Planning Committee wish to support residents and request that all construction vehicles are kept within the site. The Committee request that a condition be included as part of any approval given.

3.2 DECISION: 23/02200/FUL

238 Western Way, Darras Hall, Ponteland, Northumberland. NE20 9ND.

Proposed: Loft conversion of main house with first floor extension to rear and dormer windows to front and side elevations, construction of flat over existing detached garage that will be ancillary to the main residential dwelling and used for this purpose. Garage roof to be converted from flat to pitched.

This application was **Refused** on 29th September 2023

The committee made no comment about this application.

3.3 DECISION: 23/02504/VARYCO

Northumbria Police Mounted Services Facilities Kirkley Hall Stables Kirkley Newcastle Upon Tyne Northumberland NE20 0BB.

Proposed: Variation of Conditions 2(Approve plans), 3 (Mitigation Strategy) & 4 (Ecological Appraisal) on approved application 22/03598/FUL to reflect the correct ecology survey.

This application was **Granted** on 29th September 2023.

The committee made no comment about this application.

3.4 DECISION: 23/02952/FUL

167A Runnymede Road, Darras Hall, Ponteland Northumberland. NE20 9HR.

Proposed: 2 Storey front extension, single storey rear extension with balcony and screening, new entrance portico, new roof and entrance gate set 5m back from highway.

This application was **Granted** on 5th October 2023.

The committee made no comment about this application.

3.5 DECISION: 23/01878/FUL

4 Pembroke Drive, Darras Hall, Ponteland, Newcastle upon Tyne NE20 9HS.

Proposed: Demolition of rear conservatory and replace with bi-folding doors and an access door, concrete roof tiles to be replaced with slate roof covering, white PVCu windows to be replaced with dark grey PVCu window frames

This application was **Granted** on 5th October 2023.

The committee made no comment about this application.

3.6 DECISION: 23/02972/FUL

18 Rowan Drive, Ponteland, Northumberland. NE20 9QL.

Proposed: Extension at first floor over garage for bedroom.

This application was **Granted** on 5th October 2023.

The committee made no comment about this application.

3.7 DECISION: 23/03011/FUL

94 Darras Road, Darras Hall, Ponteland, Northumberland. NE20 9PG.

Proposed: Single storey extension.

This application was **Granted** on 5th October 2023.

The committee made no comment about this application.

3.8 DECISION: 23/02935/VARYCO

39 Edge Hill, Darras Hall, Ponteland, Northumberland NE20 9RW.

Proposed: Variation of condition 2 (Approved plans) and also discharge of conditions 6 (Car parking), 7 (Access) & 11 (Ground gas) on approved application 21/01507/FUL

This application was **Granted** on 5th October 2023.

The committee made no comment about this application.

3.9 DECISION: 23/02400/FUL

33 West Road, Ponteland, Northumberland. NE20 9SX.

Proposed: Construction of a detached garage with two bedrooms, shower/wc Lounge diner and kitchen over (Self Build)

This application was **Granted** 9th October 2023.

The Committee made no comment about this application.

3.10 DECISION: 23/02987/FUL

28 Pembroke Drive, Darras Hall, Ponteland Northumberland. NE20 9HS.

Proposed: Demolish existing garage, construct side, rear and front single storey extension. Construct new front garden walls with gate. Render existing external walls.

This application was **Refused** on 9th October 2023

Comment: The Committee request that a condition can be attached to any approval for some foliage to be planted to soften the aspect which will ensure the property is more in keeping with the current street scene.

3.11 DECISION: 23/02275/FUL

Land at Highham Dykes Milbourne, Newcastle upon Tyne, Northumberland. NE20 0DH.

Proposed: New vehicular entrance from land directly onto A696 crossing grass verge.

This application was **REFUSED** on 9th October 2023.

OBJECTION - The Planning Committee is concerned at the proximity of a new access road proposed at this fast section of the A696. There is dense hedging and mature trees at this point as well as narrow steep verges. There have been a number of fatalities in the past close to this section of the A696 and the Committee request that the Planning Authority take this into account when considering the application. **OBJECTION** - The Planning Committee is concerned at the proximity of a new access road proposed at this fast section of the A696. There is dense hedging and mature trees at this point as well as narrow steep verges. There have been a number of fatalities in the past close to this section of the A696 and the Committee request that the Planning Authority take this into account when considering the application.

The application makes no mention of the reason for the new entrance to the field or to the area blocked in red which is green belt and the Planning Committee hope that this is not for the erection of a residential property in the future.

4. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING: Tuesday 24th October 2023

PONTELAND TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING 24th October 2023

Present: Councillors Mrs S Johnson (in the chair), Mrs K Woodrow, Mr A Hall, Mr S Ahmed & Mr A Varley.

1. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

A list of planning applications received since the previous Committee meeting had been circulated.

Application No: **23/03671/VARYCO**

Location: **92 Errington Road, Darras Hall, Ponteland. NE20 9LA.**

Proposal: Variation of condition 2 (Approved plans) pursuant to planning permission 22/03331/FUL to provide an additional window to provide fire escape access to the approved dormer at first floor on the south elevation.

Comment: The Committee support this application; however they note that the previous application (22/03331/FUL) was approved only when this window was removed.

Application No: **22/1909/CCMEIA**

Location: **Land at Northside, Harle, Kirkwhelpington**

Proposal: Proposed extraction of 3 million tonnes of dolerite, importation of inert infill material and associated highway and landscape works (amended description 16th May 2023).

Objection: The Committee wish to maintain their objection to the application as submitted on 3rd August 2022.

The Committee made no comments about the other 7 applications considered.

2. DECISIONS: APPLICATIONS AND APPEALS; WITHDRAWN APPLICATIONS

2.1 **23/02432/FUL 36 LADYWELL WAY, PONTELAND, NORTHUMBERLAND. NE20 9TE.**

Demolition of existing porch to side, garage, and single storey sunroom to rear. Construction of new porch and bay window to front, two storey extension to side and single storey extension to rear.

This application was **GRANTED** on 13th October 2023.

The Committee made no comment about this application.

- 2.2** **23/02427/FUL 9, LINDEN WAY, DARRAS HALL, PONTELAND, NORTHUMBERLAND. NE20 9DP.**
 Pitched roof over existing garage and forming windows to rear elevation & kitchen.
 This application was **GRANTED** on 13th October 2023.
 The Committee made no comment about this application.
- 2.3** **23/01912/FUL 63 Middle Drive, Darras Hall, Ponteland, Northumberland. NE20 9DN.**
 Ground floor infill extension to west elevation and raising of roof ridge to create rooms within roof space.
 This application was **GRANTED** on 11th October 2023.
 The Committee made no comment about this application.
- 2.4** **23/03059/FUL 93 Darras Road, Darras Hall, Ponteland, Northumberland. NE20 9PQ.**
 Front and rear extensions and internal alterations with lower ridge height of 8.15m
 The application was **GRANTED** on 16th October 2023
 The Committee made no comment about this application.
- 2.5** **23/03441/FUL 9 Tudor Court, Darras Hall, Ponteland, NE20 9PJ**
 Convert loft space to living accommodation, install 2 front and 1 rear dormer window.
 The application was **GRANTED** on 17th October 2023
 The Committee made no comment about this application.
- 2.6** **23/03143/FUL 2 Grenville Court, Darras Hall, Ponteland, NE20 9HT**
 Single storey sun room extension to rear.
 The application was **GRANTED** on 18th October 2023
 The Committee made no comment about this application.
- 2.7** **22/03478/FUL 35 Woodside, Darras Hall, Ponteland, NE20 9JA**
 Proposed dwelling and detached garage (self-build)
 The application was **GRANTED** on 19th October 2023
Objection: The committee feels this is an over development of the site and the scale of the property is too large. Balconies and windows will overlook neighbouring properties on the boundaries to the south and east. They are also concerned about the environmental impact of clearing the trees and pond from the site. It is clear that a precedent for this type of development within Darras Hall was set a number of years ago but looking at the wildlife corridors around the estate that are being decimated and the consequential damage to the environment maybe it is time to call a halt to further developments of this nature. We refer to the Castle Morpeth District Local Plan policy H11 tandem and back land development policy H11 proposals for the residential development of land will be refused planning permission if they would result in the following: i) unacceptable back land or tandem development which would cause a loss of amenity due to a poor

relationship with existing dwellings or garden areas and which creates problems of overlooking, loss of privacy, poor access, difficult servicing, substandard parking and turning facilities, loss of trees or inadequate garden area.

- 2.8 23/02589/FUL Smallburn house, Ponteland, NE20 0AD.**
Proposed 2 storey side extension to provide gym & home office.
The application was **GRANTED** on 23rd October 2023
The committee made no comment about this application.

- 2.9 23/03056/FUL 5 Frost Grove, Jameson Manor, Ponteland
Northumberland, NE20 0FD.**
Pitched roof dormer to front elevation of garage.
The application was GRANTED on 23rd October 2023
The committee made no comment about this application

3. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING: Tuesday 7th November 2023

PONTELAND TOWN COUNCIL

Agenda item number 77(i)

Report by Clerk to the Council

Report to November 2023 Council meeting

Report re grant application

As background to this report, the Clerk received a request in August from Jameson Manor residents for a grant application to provide defibrillators at on this estate. The Clerk replied and said that the group would need to be properly constituted to receive a grant from the Town Council. They would also need to have a bank account.

The request was initially discussed at the September agenda meeting when the Clerk advised the Mayor and Deputy Mayor of the approach she had taken with this request.

A further email from the Jameson Manor Community Group was received on 29 October advising of progress made namely that the body was now properly constituted and had a bank account. They are seeking a grant of £295 to purchase a defibrillator case. They have already secured funding of £200 from Ponteland Lions and are asking the Town Council to make the purchase on their behalf so that the VAT element of the equipment can be claimed back by PTC. This would mean that the £200 would need to be paid to the Town Council or the Council could give an additional £99 to cover the VAT.

Councillors are reminded that the sum of £4000 is available in the donations budget heading and an amount of £2130 has already been expended from grants awarded between April and September 2023. This leaves the sum of £1870 remaining in the budget heading.

Recommendation –

The Council is asked to consider the grant application from the Jameson Manor Community Group.

Enclosure

- (i) Grant application from Jameson Manor community Group.



GRANT APPLICATION FORM **VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS**

FINANCIAL YEAR 2023-24

Applicant		
Organisation & Charity number if applicable	Jameson Manor Community Group	
Address		
Telephone Number & Email address		
Bank Details Sort code and Account number	Jameson Manor Group Treasurers Account	
What year was your Organisation formed?	As a constituted group adopted constitution 2.10 2023	
What is your current Membership and how much are subscriptions?	Senior	Junior
	No subscription – potentially anyone living on Jameson Manor and adjoining Fields Housing Estate are members	
Organisation's Aims and Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) to consult with and represent the views of the residents in matters that affect or benefit the local community b) to support projects, events and activities that benefit the local community c) to involve members of the community in the work of the organisation d) to share information and communicate project activities with the community e) to liaise with and support other local groups e.g., the Green Group 	
Description of Project or purpose for which a grant is required.	To purchase a defibrillator case to protect a donated defibrillator. Defibsafe 2 Secure Outdoor Defibrillator Cabinet Locked - DefibWarehouse - Wide range of defibrillators	
Estimated Total Cost	£495 (excl VAT) £594.00 (incl VAT)	
Amount Requested from Ponteland Town Council	£295 if Ponteland Parish Council are willing to purchase on our behalf excluding VAT £394.00 if including VAT	

What funds are available from your Organisation towards this project?	£200.00 donated by Ponteland Lions
Have other Authorities or sources for funds been approached for funds towards this project?	Not currently
What were the results from these Applications? (please indicate amounts pledged)	£200 from Ponteland Lions
Have you any plans for raising the additional finance for the project?	Approach other grant funders or willing beneficiaries
Please confirm the proportion of the grant that will be spent in Ponteland.	The full grant would be spent in Ponteland

DECLARATION

<p>I HEARBY DECLARE ON BEHALF OF</p> <p>Jameson Manor Community Group</p>	
<p>THAT:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (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 <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>STATUS: Acting Secretary</p>
<p>DATE: 29.10.2023</p>	

Agenda item no. 78(i)

RISK	ACTION
<p>Covid-19</p> <p>The situation with the Town Council has returned to normal. In all cases face to face meetings have returned although larger meetings are held off-site. The legislation is not in place to allow remote or hybrid meetings if the public can attend. The TC office is fully open. Occasionally staff work one day a Week at home. TC meetings are still being held in Merton Hall but smaller meetings are being held in the meeting room at the offices.</p>	<p>In place</p> <p>Noted</p>
<p>Appointment of Internal Auditor</p> <p>A report is attached under item 77(ii)</p>	<p>Noted</p>
<p>Insurance</p> <p>Covers office equipment, structural assets, machinery & tools Play areas (including equipment & inspections) Public liability (set at £10m), employers' liability, Councillors personal accident & fidelity guarantee. The level of funds held by the Council are checked each month and the Fidelity guarantee figure would be increased if necessary. Current level of Fidelity guarantee insurance is £1million. This is under review as currently the TC is currently close to that figure.</p>	<p>Currently insured</p>
<p>Financial Risk</p> <p>A table which sets out the various risks involved in the financial management operations of the Town Council is attached for comment, consideration & approval. This should also be read in conjunction with the report on Internal Controls and review of Internal Audit.</p>	<p>In place</p>
<p>PROPERTY</p> <p>Council offices – The Town Council offices have a high level of security including reinforced doors and shutters. Maintenance of the building is the responsibility of the landlord. The current landlord is BGH Holdings.</p>	<p>In place</p> <p>In place</p> <p>Noted.</p>
<p>Park – This facility is checked regularly, and incidents reported. Remedial actions taken as soon as possible. PTC employs a Park contractor.</p>	<p>In Place</p>
<p>Bridges – Refurbishment/replacement of the two timber footbridges were carried out in 2013 and are due to be</p>	<p>In place & ongoing</p>

RISK	ACTION
assessed in this financial year. See report at item 78.	
Slope Stability- The slope protection works were carried out eleven years ago, and this has improved the safety for those using the area. The site is at Fox Covert Lane above the path between the Park and Runnymede Road. The path has been damaged by recent flooding in the Park and an inspection by a appropriate company will be arranged.	
Seats/Litter/dog waste bins These are all insured. Most of the seats have now been replaced with recycled plastic although there are still a small number of wooden ones that require replacement. New seats/bins should generally be situated in areas where the risk of vandalism is low. There was a recurring problem at the Waitrose bridge area of the park where the bin was regularly set on fire. This was replaced with a metal bin and in future only metal bins will be installed.	In place & ongoing
Trees Tree management continues to be carried out both inside and outside of the Park. Tree surveys were carried out earlier this year by a qualified tree consultant and there is a lot of work to be done. A survey of Ash trees has recently been received and quotes have been sought for any additional work that has been identified. It is proving to be a challenge finding tree surgeons who can carry out work quickly.	Ongoing
Allotments – Checked regularly by PTC contractors. A new allotment tenancy agreement has been approved and issued to tenants. At the time of producing this report, there are still some tenants who have not signed the agreement. There are a few allotments vacant which will be offered to those on the waiting list. The management of the allotments can be challenging, particularly in view of ongoing issues with the tenancy agreement.	In place and in programme of Contractors work
Sculpture on Coates Green – Insured for all risks. The Green is cut by the Council's contractors on a weekly basis during the cutting season.	In Place
Public Toilets – The toilets were refurbished some years ago to a much improved standard. The toilets are cleaned and checked 7 days a week by an NCC operative as part of a Service Level Agreement (SLA) with NCC. Any issues are dealt with as soon as possible. The building is insured.	In Place
Cemetery – The Cemetery was transferred to PTC in April 2013. The day-to-day operation of the cemetery is provided by NCC under an SLA arrangement. The Cemetery is also checked on a weekly basis by a PTC contractor who in turn reports any issues directly to the Clerk. Landscaping works were carried out	In Place

RISK	ACTION
<p>in the Cemetery several years ago.</p> <p>The shelter in the Cemetery is insured.</p> <p>An inspection of memorials was carried out in 2023 by NCC who have sent letters to anyone whose memorial requires attention.</p> <p>The Clerk will be arranging a Cemetery Committee in the next few weeks.</p> <p>Some revision to the regulations and improvements to signage are needed, particularly in view of recent issues in the cemetery.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>To be arranged</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
<p>Office Equipment – Itemised and Insured.</p> <p>Electrical safety testing is carried out on a three yearly basis.</p>	<p>In place</p> <p>In place</p>
<p>Civic Regalia – Itemised, insured and retained in safe.</p>	<p>In place</p>
<p>Tractor, Mowers, Strimmers, Hedgecutter and Gritter</p> <p>The tractor is insured for use on the highways</p> <p>The operation of the Tractor with or without the various attachments is potentially the most dangerous task that the PTC contractors carry out. Contractors wear reflective clothing, safety footwear and ear protection.</p> <p>They also ensure the warning light is working prior to use. The machinery is serviced twice a year and the tyres have been renewed in the last few weeks.</p> <p>Contractors use protective face masks and ear protectors when the strimmer is in use and wear safety boots at all times.</p>	<p>In place</p> <p>In place</p> <p>In place</p>
<p>EMPLOYEES</p> <p>Office Staff – The staff have been provided with a copy of the Council's Health & Safety Policy and are aware of their responsibilities within the building and when on Council business. Councillor raised the issue of staff shortages last year. There were concerns regarding possibility of illness which would leave the Council vulnerable. The Town Council will be employing a further member of staff soon. There is also an agency worker to assist if one of the existing staff were absent on sick leave.</p> <p>Lone working</p> <p>This possible risk was also raised last year. Currently only two staff are affected by this, and they know that the door must be kept locked and visitors should ring the bell.</p> <p>Staff have panic alarms if an incident did occur.</p>	<p>In place</p> <p>Noted</p>
<p>First Aid – There is a first aid kit located in the communal kitchen area of the offices that is provided and re-stocked as necessary.</p>	<p>In place</p>
<p>COUNCILLORS – Councillors are insured for personal injury. when on official business and for cases of libel and slander, but only if they are acting on the instructions of the Council. there is no cover for individual Members who may make verbal or written statements that may be construed as</p>	<p>In place</p>

RISK	ACTION
<p>slandorous or libellous. Care should be taken by Councillors when using social media. A guidance note produced by NCC was circulated to Councillors in 2021 and this covers the various pitfalls that can occur in more detail. Personal safety alarms were purchased for Councillors some time ago and they are available on request. Councillors are advised to be careful when meeting with the public alone.</p>	<p>To be noted.</p> <p>Available for Councillors</p> <p>To be noted.</p>
<p>VOLUNTEERS – Volunteers who carry out work on the Council's behalf are insured for public liability and personal accident through the Council's insurance policy. They are restricted to safe working practices e.g., no power tools, and should advise the Council when and where they are working. They are also advised to wear gloves when working. Risk assessments will be carried out if necessary, prior to starting a project either by PTC, advisors or contractors as appropriate.</p>	<p>In place</p>
<p>CONTRACTORS – Contractors have been provided with a copy of the Council's health and safety policy. They are also made aware of the need to minimise risk to the public. The Council also ensures that Contractors have adequate Public Liability insurance prior to engaging them. This is checked on an annual basis or when a contract is let. They are also responsible for providing their own protective clothing.</p>	<p>In place</p> <p>In place</p>
<p>REMEMBRANCE – The event will be held as usual on Remembrance Sunday – 12 November. Two operatives from St Johns Ambulance have been booked. A risk assessment for the event has been carried out and a traffic management company have been engaged to carry out the necessary road closures.</p>	<p>In place</p> <p>In place</p>
<p>PNV – The Council has editorial control of Pont News & Views. An editorial board including members of the community was appointed in 2021. The Town Council deals with any issues relating to the newsletter in conjunction with the editor. The Council is insured under its current policy and the editor also holds appropriate indemnity insurance. The PNV account is also held by PTC and a member of TC staff is responsible for dealing with all financial transactions, including invoicing and chasing up payments.</p>	<p>In place</p> <p>In place</p>
<p>PTC RECORDS Computer records The Council agreed to opt for a cloud network in 2017. All files have a high level of security provided by the Cloud provider company.</p>	<p>In place</p>

PONTELAND TOWN COUNCIL
FINANCIAL RISK ASSESSMENT AND MANAGEMENT FOR PERIOD 2022-23

Topic	Risk Identified	Risk Level H/M/L	Management of Risk	Action
Precept	Not submitted Not paid by NCC Adequacy of precept	L L L	Submit following approval of budget Confirm receipt Quarterly review of budget to actual	Clerk to confirm Clerk to confirm Already in place – ongoing checks
Other income	Cash handling	M	Very little cash is paid to PTC but is checked by two staff members. Check to bank statements	Already in place- ongoing checks
Investments	Cash banking Surplus funds	L L	Review levels & receive best terms possible.	Already in place – ongoing
Reserves – General	Adequacy	L	Consider at budget setting (3 – 12 months gross expenditure desirable) Council did agree in January 2022 to raise the that figure to £210,000 from £165,000 (Minute 108(iv) refers). General reserves are now in excess of that figure.	Already in place & reviews carried out. Challenging in current economic climate. Annual review
Reserves – earmarked	Adequacy	L	Consider during budget setting process	Annual review
Assets	Loss Damage etc Risk of damage to third party, property or individuals	M M	Annual inspection, update insurance and asset registers Review adequacy of Public Liability Insurance (currently set at £10million)	Annual Review Annual Review
Loss	Consequential loss due to critical damage or third party performance	L	Review adequacy of insurance cover	Annual review
Maintenance	Reduced value of assets or amenities – loss of income or performance	M	Annual Maintenance inspection	Ongoing review
Financial Records	Inadequate Records	L	Regular checks by Clerk & internal audit review. Auditor can report direct to Council if necessary	Ongoing review

Topic	Risk Identified	Risk Level H/M/L	Management of Risk	Action
Legal powers	Illegal activity or payment	L	Education as to legal powers	2 Cllrs sign and approve each payment. Clerk to oversee
Minutes	Accurate and legal	L	Review at following meeting	Ongoing review
Members Interest	Conflict of interest	M	Declarations of interest to be documented/minuted and any conflict addressed as appropriate	Ongoing review
Salaries	Wrong salary/hours/rates paid Wrong deductions – NI and income tax	L L	Check salary to agreed minute, check hours & rate to contract. Check to PAYE calculation – HMRC real time information reporting system used	Salaries prepared monthly by Clerk. Checked by Internal auditor twice per year.
Direct costs & overhead expenses	Goods not supplied to Council Invoice incorrectly calculated or recorded Cheque payable is excessive or to wrong party	M L L	Follow up on all orders Check arithmetic on invoices and produce bank reconciliations on monthly basis Very few cheques now paid due to introduction of electronic banking however signatories initial cheque stub when used.	Ongoing check Ongoing checks carried out In place and regularly reviewed
Grants	No power to pay or no evidence of agreement of council to pay Conditions agreed	L L	Minute council agreement Agree and document any reasonable conditions	Ongoing check
VAT	VAT analysis Charged on purchases Claimed within time limits	L L L	All items in cash book lists Consider all items per cash book lists Agree returns submitted monthly for PTC	Clerk to verify Clerk to verify Clerk to verify

PONTELAND TOWN COUNCIL
Report by Clerk to the Council
Report to November 2023 Council meeting
REVIEW OF INTERNAL AUDIT 2023-24

Agenda item number 78(ii)

Introduction

This report should be considered in conjunction with the report on Internal Controls.
The Council must carry out a review of the work of the internal auditor before the end of the financial year.

Internal Auditor

The Council agreed to appoint Mr Gary Kennedy as the Town Council's Internal Auditor in November 2022.

Role

The process of internal audit is to provide an independent appraisal of systems of internal control for the Town Council. This review does not relieve the Clerk or the Council of the responsibility for ensuring that effective systems of control are in place.

The Internal Auditor fulfils this role by carrying out independent reviews of the Town Council's activities and reporting their findings to the Town Council who can then ensure appropriate action is taken.

Independence

Reports from the Internal Auditor must be produced in their own name and addressed to the Clerk. Reports are presented to the Council at the earliest opportunity. An Internal auditor can request to present their report directly to the Council.

Audit Planning and Reporting

The Internal Auditor uses the Governance and Accountability for Local Councils Practitioner's Guide to inform and direct the audit. **The Internal Auditor has the power to report directly to the Mayor and the Town Council if they wish to do so. If the issue warrants it, they can also report directly to the External Auditor.**

The Internal Auditor should carry out two audits per year, one at the year end and an interim audit.

There is a fee involved for this work.

Audit Scope

All areas of work of the Town Council are open to the scrutiny of the Internal Auditor. The scope of the Audit considers the following:

- Checks that proper bookkeeping is carried out
- Payment controls
- Review of whether Standing Orders and Financial Regulations have been adopted and applied.
- Risk Management arrangements
- Budgetary controls
- Income controls
- Petty cash procedures
- Payroll controls
- Assets controls
- Bank reconciliations (checks on regularity of completion and against bank statements)
- VAT Claims
- Year end procedures

Appointment of Internal Auditor

The Town Council is asked to delay agreement of the appointment of the Internal Auditor to the next meeting.

Conclusion

The Internal Audit in place is effective since the Auditor is acting in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations, they are acting independently from the Council and carry out a wide range of tests. An Internal Audit review checklist is attached for consideration and approval.

Recommendations

- (i) Councillors are recommended to approve the report and the checklist.**
- (ii) The Council asked to delay the appointment of the Internal Auditor to the December meeting.**

Attachments –

- (i) Audit review checklist

PONTELAND TOWN COUNCIL

INTERNAL AUDIT REVIEW CHECKLIST

Part one – Meeting standards

Expected Standard	Evidence of Achievement	Yes or No	Areas for Development
1. Scope of internal audit	Terms of reference for internal audit approved by Council on annual basis Internal audit work takes into account both the Council's risk assessment and wider internal control arrangements. Internal audit work covers the Council's anti-fraud and corruption arrangements.	Yes Yes Yes	
2. Independence	Internal audit has direct access to those charged with governance. Reports are made in own name (G Kennedy) to management. Internal auditor does not have any other role within the Council.	Yes Yes No	
3. Competence	There is no evidence of a failure to carry out internal audit work ethically, with integrity and objectivity.	No	
4. Relationships	All responsible officer(s) (Clerk/RFO) are consulted on the internal audit plan. Respective responsibilities for officers and internal audit are defined in relation to internal control, risk management and fraud and corruption matters. The responsibilities of council members are understood.	Yes Yes Yes	
5. Audit Planning and reporting	The annual internal audit plan properly takes account of all the risks facing the Council and is approved. Internal audit has reported in accordance with the plan.	Yes Yes	

Part two – Characteristics of Effectiveness

Characteristics of effectiveness	Evidence of Achievement	Yes or No	Areas for development
Internal Audit work is planned	Planned internal audit work is based on risk assessment and designed to meet the Council's needs.	Yes	
Understanding the whole organisation, its needs and objectives	The annual audit plan demonstrates how audit work will provide assurance for the Council's Annual Governance Statement (Section one of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return - AGAR)	Yes	
Be seen as a catalyst for change	Internal audit supports the Council's work in delivering improved services to the community.	Yes	
Add value and assist the organisation in achieving its objectives	The Council makes positive responses to internal audit's recommendations and follows up with action where this is called for.	Yes	
Be challenging	Internal audit focuses on the risks facing the Council. Internal audit encourages managers/members to develop their own responses to risks, rather than relying solely on audit recommendations.	Yes Yes	
Ensure the right resources are available	Adequate resource is made available for internal audit to complete its work. Internal audit understands the Council and the legal and corporate framework in which it operates.	Yes Yes	

PONTELAND TOWN COUNCIL
Report by Clerk to the Council
Report to November 2023 Council meeting
Statement of Internal Control for the
year ending 31 March 2024

Agenda item number 78(iii)

1. RESPONSIBILITY

Regulation 4 of the Accounts and Audit (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2011 requires Councils to carry out a review of their internal controls annually before the end of the financial year.

Ponteland Town Council is responsible for ensuring that its business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, and that public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for.

In discharging this responsibility, the Council is also responsible for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control which facilitates the effective exercise of the Council's functions and which includes arrangements for the management of risk.

2. SYSTEM OF INTERNAL CONTROL

The system of internal control is based on an ongoing process designed to identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of the Council's policies, aims and objectives, to evaluate the likelihood of those risks being realised and the impact should they be realised, and to manage them effectively, efficiently and economically.

The Council

The Council has elected a Mayor who is responsible for the smooth running of meetings and together with the Clerk for ensuring that all Council decisions are lawful.

The Council reviews its obligations and objectives and approves budgets for the following year at its January meeting. As part of this process the Council will also examine its level of reserves at this time. The January meeting of the Council approves the level of precept for the following financial year.

The full Council meets at least 11 times per year. A decision was taken in July 2019 not to hold a monthly meeting in August in future.

A monthly budget report is prepared and submitted to the council showing income and expenditure together with a monthly bank reconciliation statement. Quarterly budget revision reports are also reported for information wherever possible and these set out any changes to the budget as per Council decisions or any known budget over or underspends.

Clerk to the Council

The Council has appointed a Clerk to the Council who acts as the Council's advisor and administrator. The Clerk is the Council's Responsible Financial Officer and is responsible for administering the Council's finances. The Clerk is responsible for the day-to-day compliance with laws and regulations and advises the Council on managing risks. The Clerk also ensures that the Council's procedures, control systems and policies are adhered to. The Clerk also manages the staff and contractors.

Payments

A schedule of all payments is approved by the Council's Accounts Committee and submitted to the Council for information at each meeting. The Town Council now makes most payments via electronic banking. Very few payments are made by cheque. Two Members of the Council from the current list of nine authorised signatories (the Accounts Committee) must authorise every payment against invoices before authorising the payment using their own login details provided by the bank.

Those Councillors also check the bank reconciliation against the bank statements and sign to say they have carried out this review.

There is a facility for making urgent payments out of meeting if necessary. Such payments then appear on the pay order for the following month.

Risk Assessments/Risk Management

The Council carries out regular risk assessments in respect of actions to be taken.

The Clerk makes an annual risk management report to the Council. A review of financial management risks is included as part of the review report.

Internal Audit

The Council appointed an Internal Auditor, Gary Kennedy in November 2022. The Internal Auditor is asked to base his report to the Council on the adequacy of its:

- Records
- Procedures
- Systems
- Internal control
- Regulations
- Risk management
- Reviews
- Insurance cover

A review of internal audit must be carried out before the end of each financial year.

External Audit

The Council's External Auditors are Mazars who were appointed in 2023 for a period of 5 years up to the financial year 2026-27.

The External Auditors submit an annual Certificate of Audit, which is presented to the Council, together with a copy of their report listing any issues to be raised. At the end of the Audit the Council must display the Notice of Conclusion of Audit for 14 days and must make the Annual Governance and Audit Return (AGAR) and Final Accounts available on request. These are also displayed on the Town Council's website.

A report was submitted to the October 2023 meeting informing the Council that the External Auditors report and certificate had been received on 26 September and they did not raise any issues with the Town Council other than a minor point relating to box 11a in Section 2 of the Annual Governance and Annual Return (AGAR) not being ticked. This information, together with sections 1 and 2 of the AGAR were displayed on the Council's noticeboards from the 27 September for 14 days.

4. REVIEW OF EFFECTIVENESS

The Council has a responsibility for conducting an annual review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control. The review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control is informed by the work of:

- The full Council
- The Clerk to the Council who has responsibility for the development and maintenance of the internal control environment and managing risks
- The independent Internal Auditor who reviews the Council's systems of internal control
- Mazars, the Council's external auditors, who make the final check using the AGAR, which is completed and signed by the Responsible Financial Officer, the Mayor and the Internal Auditor.

5. SIGNIFICANT INTERNAL CONTROL ISSUES

As stated above, the Auditors did not raise any significant issues with the Council as part of the 2022-23 Audit but did mention a minor point as outlined above.

Recommendation – Councillors are requested to approve the report.

PONTELAND TOWN COUNCIL

Agenda item number 79

Report by Clerk to the Council

Report to November 2023 Council meeting

Report re inspection of bridges – Ponteland Park

The Clerk has contacted the company, Anthony Davies Associates (Consulting Civil and Structural Engineers based in Newcastle) who carried out inspections to the park bridges some years ago to ask if they would be willing to carry out this task.

A response has been received and the firm have quoted a price of £975.00 plus VAT to carry out the work on the two timber footbridges and the Millennium bridge.

It is proving difficult to obtain other quotes. As this is specialist work and due to the need to have the bridges checked, particularly after the recent flooding it is suggested that the quote should be accepted, and the work carried out as soon as possible. This is in accordance with Financial Regulation 11.1(d) which states:

“When applications are made to waive financial regulations relating to contracts to enable a price to be negotiated without competition the reason shall be embodied in a recommendation to the Council.”

Recommendation – The Council is recommended to approve the quote from Anthony Davies Associates in the sum of £975.00 plus VAT in accordance with Financial Regulation 11.1(d) for the reasons outlined above.

PONTELAND TOWN COUNCIL

Agenda item number 80

Report by Clerk to the Council

Report to November 2023 Council meeting

Report re review of Ponteland Neighbourhood Plan

The Ponteland Neighbourhood Plan (PNP) was made in November 2017.

The Town Council has on several occasions mentioned that a review of the Plan is required so that it coincides with the Northumberland Local Plan which was adopted in March 2022.

The sum of £2100 was set aside for the review as part of the budget deliberations for 2023-24 which were agreed at a special Council Meeting held on 24 January 2023. There is also £1000 available in the planning budget heading.

The Clerk recently approached the planning consultant who assists with complex planning applications, for advice and a proposal to carry out the review. The planning consultant had also worked on the PNP in the latter stages when external consultants had been brought in to complete the work, so she is familiar with the content.

The planning consultant has compiled a list of tasks that she can provide which she estimates would take 7 days to complete. This would involve an initial desktop review of the plan, meeting with representatives of the Town Council and a review of planning decisions within the plan area since the adoption of the PNP including discussions with various officers at NCC. The final part of this work would be the preparation of a scoping report. However, it is likely that other work will be needed, and some public engagement would be required.

She provided a fee proposal for consultancy support in the sum of £3,850 to complete the work up to the preparation of a scoping report.

At a meeting of the Planning Committee held on 26 September, the members did discuss this subject briefly and they agreed that they were willing to be the appointed group to oversee this work.

It was also agreed that the planning consultant be invited to attend a meeting of the Planning Committee on 10 October to discuss the way forward in more detail. An approach had been made to a former member of the original Ponteland Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group (PNPSG) to attend as they had expressed an interest in assisting with the process on a voluntary basis.

At the meeting the planning consultant set out the various ways in which the review could be carried out. It may be that a small steering group is established to oversee the work, or an alternative approach could be taken. She was flexible in terms of which way the Council wanted to complete this task and would adjust her fee

proposal accordingly. The consultant also advised the meeting that there were grants available for this work and she would assist with directing staff to the appropriate funding streams.

It was mentioned at the 10 October Planning meeting that the next stage was to submit a report to the Town Council in November to seek approval for funding.

It is recommended that the Council approve the sum of £3,850 for the work suggested by the planning consultant although this could change slightly if volunteer assistance was available. There was a slight shortfall from the amount agreed in the budget which could be met from contingencies. It would also be useful for staff to liaise with the planning consultant in terms of sourcing potential grant monies.

It should be noted that further funding may be required at a later date to complete this work.

It is also recommended that the Planning Committee be given delegated authority to initially oversee the work carried out by the planning consultant and the volunteer with update reports provided at regular intervals. It should be noted that the establishment of a small steering group has been mentioned but the Planning Committee did not feel they were able to consider the suggestion at this stage.

Recommendations –

(i) The Council agree to engage the planning consultant at a cost of £3850 to carry out the tasks outlined in her proposal dated 19 September 2023. This would be met from funds already earmarked for this purpose with any shortfall being met from contingencies.

(ii) The Council agree to delegated authority being given to the Planning Committee to oversee the work carried out and issue update reports to the Council at regular intervals.

PONTELAND TOWN COUNCIL

NOTES OF THE HIGHWAYS WORKING PARTY MEETING HELD AT THE TOWN COUNCIL OFFICES ON 9 OCTOBER 2023

Present: Councillors Mr A Hall, C Caisley, L Darwin, R Dodd, C Greenwell, N Sehgal, A Varley and K Woodrow.

Also, in attendance Mr R McKenzie, NCC Highways.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies. All members were present.

2. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETINGS HELD ON 12 JUNE 2023

The Minutes had been circulated and had been agreed by the Council.

3. NORTH ROAD SPEEDING ISSUES

A report by the Clerk relating to various emails received by Councillors regarding speeding issues on North Road had been circulated.

There had been various speed surveys carried out on North Road recently and there was one currently in operation. The data did not demonstrate a speed issue at the lower end of North Road towards the Blackbird. Councillor Caisley disagreed with this suggestion as she knew of a resident who lived in this location who witnessed speeding. There was some debate about this data but it was agreed that any speeding was very exceptional because of the narrowness of the road on this stretch of carriageway.

Members were informed that the Speed Watch was starting again from today but there were currently only two volunteers for Ponteland. Councillor Dodd mentioned that he hoped to participate in the next course in January and it was felt that more volunteers were needed. It was suggested that the Police or the Town Council place an article in PNV seeking assistance for this initiative.

Councillor Caisley was asked to check if the data from the speed watch sessions could be shared with this group.

Mr McKenzie was also asked if he could circulate speed survey data to the Clerk who would pass this onto members of the Working Party.

It was suggested that another speed indicator display sign could be installed on North Road at the Jackson Avenue junction. However, members felt it was important to see the results of the data from NCC and the speed watch sessions if this was possible prior to deciding on the installation of a further SID.

It was agreed – To consider the data outlined above prior to making any further decisions regarding the installation of a SID in the middle of North Road.

4. NORTH ROAD – VANS PARKED ON PAVEMENT

It was reported that several Councillors had been contacted about a continuing problem with vehicles parked on North Road between Guardians Court and the Jackson Avenue junction.

Mr McKenzie reported that NCC were currently in the process of considering installing double yellow lines at the junction of Jackson Avenue. Councillor Dodd asked if the other junctions on Darras Hall could be examined as part of this project which would reduce the legal costs.

It was also suggested that this issue of parked vehicles should be raised with the Police but there was doubt expressed about what action, if any, the Police might take.

Mr McKenzie was also asked to look at the possibility of installing bollards on the pavement between the two junctions. Councillor Dodd agreed to consider funding this as part of his small schemes budget.

It was agreed – That Mr McKenzie report back on the situation with the double yellow lines and examine the possibility and cost of installing bollards along the pavement between Guardians Court and the Jackson Avenue junctions.

5. COMPLAINT RE SPEEDING TRAFFIC AT BERWICK HILL ROAD

Members were informed that Councillor Dodd and the Clerk had been contacted by a resident of Berwick Hill Road expressing his concern at the speed of traffic entering and exiting Ponteland at the above location.

The resident had provided videos of traffic of differing types speeding at this location. He was concerned at the safety aspect and the lack of pavements for residents. He asked if the installation of some safety measures could be examined and/or the installation of a speed indicator display sign.

It was agreed – That a speed survey be carried out at this location to determine the level of the problem which would be considered further once the results had been provided.

6. REPORT RE MEETING WITH DARRAS HALL ESTATE COMMITTEE

The Chair had circulated a report of a meeting held with two members of the Darras Hall Estate Committee (DHEC), County Councillors for the area, Mr McKenzie and himself on 25 September 2023.

The Chair expressed his thanks to Mr McKenzie for attending the meeting and for providing some useful information to those present.

One of the issues raised related to the road junctions on the estate and members had been informed of the plan to introduce or extend double yellow lines at some of these junctions. The DHEC were hoping to write out to residents asking them to cut back vegetation at these problem areas.

The discussion on various issues including speeding and potholes had been very useful and both members of the DHEC were pleased that the meeting had been held.

It was agreed – That the report be noted.

7. UPDATE REPORT RE PARKING PROBLEMS AT PRESTWICK ROAD ENDS

A report had been circulated which related to actions taken from the last meeting and an approach that had been made to the MP, Guy Opperman by Councillor Overbury as one of the ward councillors for the East ward.

At the June Highways meeting the Clerk had been instructed to write to the Airport management expressing concerns at the impact on this area of Ponteland by those parking to pick up at the airport. A response had been received on 11 July and had been circulated to the Working Party.

A summary of approaches made by the MP to NCC, and the Airport was included in the report together with details of the responses received.

Councillor Dodd suggested that he and Councillor Varley should raise this issue again at the Airport Consultative Committee after the winter and then discuss this with the Police, the Airport and neighbouring Councils to see if anything could be done to alleviate the problem.

Councillor Greenwell suggested removing the bus shelter at Prestwick Road Ends although she recognised that there should be some consultation with members of the public in that area.

It was also felt that the completion of the works on Rotary Way and the A696 may assist. Those present felt this was a good idea but agreed that the suggestion made by Councillor Dodd be explored before considering further action.

8. DARRAS ROAD BRIDGE PAINTING

The Chair had asked if this item could be discussed at the meeting.

He recognised that the cleaning work carried out earlier in the year had been well received but asked for the views of members as to whether the bridge should be repainted as it was some time since the work had been carried out.

The consensus was that the work had improved the look of the bridge and it was agreed that this should be reviewed in the Spring.

It was agreed – To review the appearance of the bridge in Spring 2024 and decide whether to repaint at that time.

9. PAVEMENT AND STEPS LEADING FROM CALLERTON PLAY AREA TO THE SCHOOL

This issue had been raised by Councillor Sehgal.

The Clerk had reported this via Fix My Street and had been advised that this was not NCC land. Contact had been made with officers at NCC and the facilities manager had reported that the land was likely owned by the Pele Trust.

The Clerk was asked to report this issue direct to the Pele Trust.

10. OUTSTANDING MATTERS LIST.

An outstanding matters list had been circulated for consideration.

Mr McKenzie and the Clerk reported on several outstanding matters as set out below:

Meeting with DHEC members

It was agreed that this be removed from the list.

Update of North Road/Thornhill Road new layout.

The work was complete other than the junction of Thornhill Road and North Road. Mr McKenzie reported that various pieces of data were being collected and this was an ongoing matter. He reported that discussions were ongoing with adjacent landowners.

North Road – Timber logging review

The Clerk had provided all the information received to the appropriate officer at NCC. It was agreed that this item be removed from the list.

E-petition lodged by residents of Jameson Manor

The Clerk reported that the SID had been installed on 3 October however, it was facing in the wrong direction. She had contacted the installers who would be back on site on 11 October to turn the equipment around.

Update on Broadway shops including roads and footpaths

This was on a list to work to be carried out by NCC. This had been discussed at the meeting with the DHEC representatives who had indicated that they were trying to open a dialogue with the owners regarding the site.

Merton way North Car Park – lack of signage.

This was to be removed from the list.

Condition of road at top of Western Way turning onto Stamfordham road.

This was on a list of road improvements to be carried out this year.

Request to turn planted area outside Click-em-in into footpath.

Mr McKenzie agreed to advise Councillor Darwin what was needed to progress this item. He also agreed to invoice the Town Council for half of the cost of the scheme.

Report re junctions on Darras Hall/North Road

This had been dealt with under items 4 and 6.

Request for additional signage at Callerton Court

The proposed signage had not been agreed by officers at NCC. Councillor Darwin agreed to advise the residents who had made the request of this decision. There was some discussion about extending the yellow lines and this was left with Councillor Darwin.

Housing estate name.

Councillor Darwin said he would make contact at NCC to see who PTC needed to contact re the proposed renaming of the estate.

Junction at the A69/Throckley

It was agreed this would be removed from the list as it was a National Highways matter.

Road markings between Dobbies roundabout and Prestwick Road Ends

It was envisaged that this work would be done as part of the current work on Rotary Way.

Complaint re condition of footpath from Blackbird to Henderson Court

Only a small part of the path belonged to NCC. There was an alternative to this path. No further action at present. The Chair agreed to provide the Clerk with photographs of the path.

Illegal parking at Prestwick Road Ends

This had been dealt with under item 7 above.

Path between Fairney Edge and Sainsburys

Mr McKenzie had looked at the path and could not see a problem. The Clerk reported that a resident was regularly visiting the office in relation to the area of green space next to Fairney Edge and opposite the Golf Club. The land was not owned by PTC. Mr McKenzie agreed to investigate this further.

Footpath from Merton Way shops to the public toilets

Councillors Caisley and Greenwell both reported the poor condition of this path. There had been a recent accident there which had been reported to NCC. Mr McKenzie agreed to investigate this.

Road from Stamfordham Road to Medburn

Councillor Greenwell asked if NCC would consider including this C class road on the regular schedule for gritting. Mr McKenzie felt it was unlikely, but he would look into it.

She also asked about the grit bins and was advised that residents had been asked to request these themselves.

11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

To be arranged.

PONTELAND TOWN COUNCIL
Report by the Mayor
Report to November 2023 Council meeting

Agenda item number 83

Mayor's report November 8, 2023

Meetings and events attended by Coun Karen Overbury representing Ponteland Town Council since the last meeting of the full Council (October 11, 2023).

Please ask if you want further information.

Tuesday, October 24

PC Cameron Makepeace, drop-in
– Ponteland Leisure Centre.

Wednesday, October 25

Age UK Friendship Group first anniversary
– St Mary's Parish Centre

Saturday, October 28

NALC (Northumberland) agm
– Stakeford and Bomarsund Social Welfare Centre, Stakeford.

Saturday, November 4

Wreaths laid on Commonwealth War Graves with Ponteland 1st Cubs
– St Mary's Churchyard.

Remembrance Day

Ponteland's Remembrance Parade will be held on Sunday, November 12, 2023, leaving the Leisure Centre promptly at 10.40am, arriving at the War Memorial just before 11am, in time for the two minutes' silence.

I am grateful to Coun Alan Hall who will be helping to co-ordinate the parade at the Leisure Centre, leaving the Town Clerk and her team to concentrate at the War Memorial. All councillors are invited to join the parade, falling in after the wreath layers. As Mayor, I will be laying a wreath on behalf of Ponteland Town Council and Coun Hall, as Deputy Mayor, will be parading with me and the Deputy Lord Lieutenant. The parade returns to the Leisure Centre after the Service.

Once again, representatives of St John Ambulance will be at the War Memorial.

Everyone is invited for refreshments in the Memorial Hall after the parade.