

## **NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL**

### **NORTH NORTHUMBERLAND LOCAL AREA COUNCIL**

At a meeting of the **North Northumberland Local Area Council** held in Northumberland Hall, Alnwick, NE66 1TN at 3.00pm

#### **PRESENT**

Councillor G. Castle  
(Chair, in the Chair, items 116 - 118 and 128 - 133)

Councillor T. Thorne  
(Planning Vice-chair, in the Chair, items 119 - 127)

#### **MEMBERS**

S.C. Bridgett  
T. Clark  
G. Hill  
R. Lawrie (part)

W. Pattison (part)  
G. Roughead  
C. Seymour  
J.G. Watson

#### **OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE**

M. Bird  
M. Bulman  
J. Hitching  
P. Jones  
T. Lowe  
N. Masson  
K. Owen  
  
E. Sinnamon  
N. Snowdon  
  
R. Sittambalam  
I. Stanners  
C. Thompson

Senior Democratic Services Officer  
Lawyer  
Senior Sustainable Drainage Officer  
Service Director - Local Services  
Senior Planning Officer  
Principal Solicitor  
Digital and Social Media  
Communications Assistant  
Senior Planning Manager  
Principal Programmes Officer  
(Highways Improvement)  
Senior Planning Officer  
Housing Enabling Officer  
Principal Highways Development  
Management Officer

29 members of the public and one member of the press were in attendance for the planning section from 3pm, and 42 members of the public and one member of the press were in attendance for the other Local Area Council business section from 6pm.

**(Councillor Castle in the Chair.)**

Ch.'s Initials.....

## **116. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Moore, Murray and Renner-Thompson.

## **117. MINUTES**

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of North Northumberland Local Area Council held on Thursday 25 January 2018, as circulated, be confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

## **118. DISCLOSURES OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS**

- Councillor Clark declared a personal and prejudicial interest in relation to application 17/03621/OUT as the applicant was his employer Northumberland Estates, and left the meeting whilst it was considered
- Councillor Hill declared a personal and prejudicial interest in relation to application 17/04109/FUL due to the proximity of her house to the application site and activity of a residents' group representing this area, and left the meeting whilst it was discussed
- Councillor Roughead declared a personal and prejudicial interest in relation to application 17/04109/FUL as he had chaired an extraordinary meeting of Berwick Town Council that had discussed the issue, so he considered that he could have predetermined it, and left the meeting whilst it was discussed.

**(Councillor Thorne then in the Chair.)**

## **119. DETERMINATION OF PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

The report explained how the Local Area Council was asked to decide the planning applications attached to the agenda using the powers delegated to it. (Report enclosed with official minutes as Appendix A).

**RESOLVED** that the report be noted.

## **120. 17/01819/OUT**

**Application for outline planning permission with all matters reserved for residential development on Land South of St Cuthbert Close, North Sunderland  
Land South West Of St Cuthbert Close, Main Street, North Sunderland, Northumberland**

The Vice-chair (Planning) explained that three applications were being withdrawn from the agenda. Both this application and application 17/04605/FUL had been withdrawn from this agenda by the County Council; both were within the area of

the emerging North Northumberland Coastal Neighbourhood Plan. On 12 February 2018, the plan had been submitted for independent examination following the end of the consultation period. The independent examiner had not identified any omissions or failings in the plan, so it could now proceed to a referendum. The plan was judged to be comprehensive covering a range of topics with good evidence to support it. A small policy issue regarding the settlement boundary methodology had now been resolved so the report would be concluded within days. There were now no unresolved objections to the plan.

The Local Planning Authority (LPA) now needed to give weight to the emerging Neighbourhood Plan as per paragraph 216 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). Both applications therefore needed to be reassessed against the emerging plan as the position had changed since the committee reports were finalised on 9 February.

**121. 17/04605/FUL  
Nine Dwellings  
Land East of the Friars, Radcliffe Road, Bamburgh, NE69 7AE**

Application withdrawn as per the explanation for application 17/01819/OUT.

**122. 17/03343/FUL  
3 bedroom detached residential dwelling with detached garage, new access point associated landscape works  
Land North West Of East Newton Cottages, Carterside Road, Newtown, Northumberland**

The Vice-chair explained that the application had been withdrawn by the applicant shortly before the meeting.

**123. 17/01670/FUL  
Development of 22 dwellings including 4 three bed roomed affordable homes, new access and landscaping  
Land West Of Village Hall, Acklington Village, Acklington, Northumberland**

Senior Planning Officer Tony Lowe introduced the application by firstly providing an update by explaining that full agreement had not yet been reached on archaeology and drainage matters. The applicant was in contact with the County Archaeologist, who was confident that a scheme of work could be agreed and successfully implemented. The applicant was also in contact with the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) regarding the finalisation of the drainage scheme; the LLFA was confident that an appropriate scheme could be provided. Mr Lowe then continued introducing the application with the assistance of a Slides presentation.

Tessa Sayers then spoke in objection to the application, of which her key points were:

- paragraph 14 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), regarding favouring developments if the local development plan was absent, silent or out of date, did not apply here as the existing plan was

quoted extensively in the report. Paragraph 12 applied more: proposed development that conflicted with the plan should be refused unless other material considerations indicated otherwise

- the proposal was not favoured by core planning principles in paragraph 17 of the NPPF; regarding empowering local people to shape their surroundings, 85 objections had been received; for taking account of market signals, there were several other houses nearby that had been for sale for several years; and this was a greenfield development, whilst brownfield land in the village had planning permission and awaited development
- the development was contrary to paragraph 2.3.7 of the Core Strategy statement regarding the need for a sea change away from developments on greenfield sites and objective 8's aim to prevent unnecessary loss of valuable open land to development. The development did not satisfy any local need. Paragraph 7.7 of the report referred to Acklington being lowest priority for development on a list of four development type areas
- the site was not accessible to jobs or shops. There was a parish church, village hall and pub but no school, doctors, hairdressers or bank. There was limited transport network available so residents would need a car. Three of the four affordable houses built in the same location a few years back were occupied by tenants or employees of the development due to a lack of demand from local people
- the application was unlikely to help create jobs locally, would not lead to a net gain for biodiversity/nature; the proposed red brick houses were at odds with the character of the village; would have no impact on improving conditions in which people lived/worked; and would not widen the choice of high quality homes as many were being built in the area.

Craig Ross then spoke in support of the application, of which his key points were:

- the case officer and consultees were thanked for their advice; the applicants had listened to comments and as a result reduced the site and the number of units. The western boundary now aligned with the village
- the road network had been changed and the Highways Authority did not object to the application
- an ecology buffer area was being provided to the rear of the site, and offsite ecology contributions also provided. Natural England and the County Ecologist did not object. The sustainable drainage pond would provide effective drainage from the site. Their drainage consultant had worked with the Council's Senior Sustainable Drainage Officer
- the Affordable Housing Officer did not object; the affordable housing provision met policy requirements and would be organised through a Section 106 (s106) agreement and provided on site
- it was a sustainable location and development with services nearby and adhered with the presumption in favour of sustainable development. There was no unacceptable impact on the local character, environment or residential amenity.

Members then asked questions of which the key responses from officers were:

- addressing the objector's concerns, there was a mix of house styles in the village; the centre was mostly stone built but there were brick and rendered properties to the east and west
- the SHMA (Strategic Housing Market Assessment) undertaken covered the whole of the county and was based on countywide rather than local evidence. It concluded on a 15% requirement for affordable housing at sites everywhere except for Hexham, which needed a higher level
- regarding the difference in requirements for affordable housing between areas across the county and the previous 35% level set at Alnwick District Council, members were advised that needs could be assessed through means such as Neighbourhood Plans but the depth of information was not available for every local area
- affordable housing was often positioned together on sites as this was easier for providers to manage the properties. The development included a 3% higher level of affordable housing than the minimum required
- work had been taking place to develop a suite of clauses for S106 agreements so allocations were transparent, fit for purpose when available through Homefinder, which applied to private landlords
- affordable rents were defined as 80% of the market level
- the affordable houses would be advertised through Homefinder. The majority usually went to local people, but other people could then apply if still available. There was a cascade system whereby people in the parish got first choice, followed by people in surrounding parishes if not filled, then opened wider if not filled. The risk fell on private landlords to get the properties occupied, and if such applications were not agreed, opportunities for more affordable houses were lost
- the sustainability of villages was based on social economic, social and environmental considerations. It was accessible to a limited level of public transport, had a village hall, and many services did not exist locally now that might have in previous generations. The development would support schools in other nearby locations; the NPPF recognised development in one settlement could support development in another and help to provide services
- regarding strain on local NHS services, national resource could be provided to mitigate pressures. Consultation took place with health commissioners to seek a contribution for developments of 30 or more houses, which did not apply in this application
- officers were not aware of any occasions when affordable housing had remained vacant for long enough that new replacement applications for market housing had been submitted
- the LPA often asked developers to provide the affordable housing element as the first part of schemes to ensure its delivery. If the affordable housing was integrated throughout the site, it was more difficult to complete the scheme. Arrangements could be discussed with the applicant
- regarding the conditions requested by Acklington Parish Council, the hedgerows would be subject to conditions requiring biodiversity, and additional landscaping; site working times would be subject to statutory nuisance requirements as per the Environmental Protection Act; concerns about heavy goods vehicle (HGV) access from the west could be raised

with the Highways Authority. The recommendation was subject to subject to an archaeological survey/ mitigation, and the construction materials would not clash with the wider village as there was a mix of styles

- the objection from the LLFA was on the basis of lack of information provided, not on the principle of the development. The preference was for surface water to be directed to a water course if needed; the Senior Sustainable Drainage Officer was confident that this could be overcome subject to the required information being provided.

Councillor Castle then moved the officer recommendation to grant the application. He considered that there were no sufficient planning reasons to refuse the application subject to the drainage requirements being addressed. Acklington Parish Council's points were valid but affordable housing was needed and could perhaps be built first. The presumption was in favour of sustainable development and there should not be conflict with planning policies. This motion was seconded by Councillor Lawrie.

Debate then followed of which the key points from members were:

- it appeared that the affordable housing was being segregated from the market housing and set next to the main road. It would be preferable to see developments mixed and affordable housing not in the worst position in development sites - a member referred to a similar situation for another development in his electoral division
- the affordable housing element was beneficial to the scheme
- it was important that the LPA looked at its S106 processes
- concern was expressed about comments made about attendance at site visits; one member indicated that he visited sites outside of the organised visit in the time he was able to attend around work commitments. The Vice-chair (Planning) added that he appreciated that most members worked and this impacted on their ability to attend but appreciated when they could. Visits cost to arrange but they did provide benefits
- more modern technology should be investigated/used for site visit requirements
- a member welcomed the £39,600 education contribution towards First School infrastructure and £600 per each dwelling for ecology but was disappointed there was no contribution to sport and play
- if refused, the application was likely to be overturned on appeal
- the position of the affordable housing did not make the development inferior as a result.

Councillor Watson moved amending the motion to include a condition requiring a flashing speeding sign from the western perimeter to be put up and paid for by the developer as there was a speeding issue along the very straight road in question.

Members were advised that this was acceptable as the Highways representative confirmed it could be added as a condition.

Councillors Castle and Lawrie agreed to incorporate this condition into their motion.

Councillor Hill said that she could not support the application and would move it be deferred until the drainage information was received, expressed concerns about any segregation of the affordable housing, and suggested the S106 should be discussed involving the local member and Acklington Parish Council.

Members were advised that Councillor Castle's substantive motion needed to be voted on first. Members could then consider an alternative if the substantive motion was not passed.

Councillor Castle added that the application as it stood had to be considered, and assurances had been provided about overcoming the drainage requirements. It confirmed with the NPPF, and many other villages did not have many local facilities either.

It was also added that the application would not proceed without the drainage and archaeological requirements. The motion was then put to the vote, and agreed by five votes in support to four against and one abstention, and it was thus:

**RESOLVED** that the application be GRANTED subject to a legal agreement pursuant to Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to secure:

- (1) the on site provision of 4 Affordable homes at no more than 80% of market rent inclusive of any service charges, to be provided in perpetuity;
- (2) an education contribution of £39,600 towards First School infrastructure;
- (3) an ecology contribution of £600 per dwelling into a strategic ecology mitigation project;

and,

- subject to a scheme of archaeological assessment (evaluation trenching), which will be undertaken on site, a review of the results of the assessment with the potential to require a mitigation response by way of planning conditions;

and,

- subject to the submission of an acceptable scheme for the disposal of surface water, a review of the scheme, with the potential to require further conditions relating to drainage:

and,

- subject to the conditions in the report and an additional condition requiring a flashing speeding sign from the western perimeter to be put up and paid for by the developer.

*(4.20pm: Councillor Clark then left the meeting in advance of application 17/03621/OUT being considered.)*

#### **124. 17/03621/OUT**

**Outline application with all matters reserved - Change of use of land; demolition of modern agricultural buildings; construction of 20 residential**

**dwellings (including 3 affordable homes); improved junction and new access road; public open spaces; private gardens and other ancillary works**

**Land South West Of Lucker Hall Steading, Lucker, Northumberland**

Senior Planning Officer Ragu Sittambalam introduced the application with the assistance of a Slides presentation.

Kevin Curran then spoke in objection to the application, of which his key points were:

- he was speaking on behalf of local residents who objected
- Lucker had previously been mostly agricultural but now focused on tourism. In addition to a 45 unit timeshare property, this application proposed a further 20 houses which did nothing to enhance Lucker, especially if, as holiday properties, they could be empty much of the time
- the North Northumberland Coastal Neighbourhood Plan sought to limit holiday properties. These properties would be unsuitable if this parish was in that Neighbourhood Plan area, rather than three miles from Bamburgh
- the farm buildings were not out of use. The development would mean a loss of local heritage. There was no mains drainage or gas locally
- there was no objection from the Highways Authority despite the area being served by a single track road
- local people were opposed; the 17 letters in support were from people who did not live locally.

Members then asked questions of which the key responses from officers were:

- it was clarified that reference made to the closure of a local section of the A1 was a Highways England decision, which the County Council had objected to as a result of insufficient consultation being carried out
- there was little public transport, but like the previous application, the NPPF's focus was on connections with nearby settlements. Reference was made to an inspector's recent ruling about a case of a small rural village being sustainable through access to services in neighbouring villages
- regarding the possibility of the affordable housing element again being separated off, this application was outline with all matters reserved. Any concerns about the layout and size of properties, including their bedrooms, could be addressed at the Reserved Matters stage,
- regarding safety concerns about the drainage pond, particularly if families occupied the houses, health and safety assessments would be undertaken at the reserved matters stage
- the application actually proposed market housing rather than holiday lets
- the position of the drainage pond was subject to conditions from the Environment Agency and LLFA; details were also sought for landscaping proposals. The pond was preferred to an underground system. Ponds needed to be of a certain depth for ecological purposes, but also not too deep; Public Protection would consider this later in the process



- the site was currently agricultural and a working farm; there would be increased holiday use locally, which would lead to a change in but not cause demonstrable harm to the local character.

Councillor Watson then moved the officer recommendation to grant the application; which was seconded by Councillor Lawrie.

Debate then followed of which the key points from members were:

- consideration should be given to how applications would be dealt with at appeal, in doing so ensuring that planning laws were strictly applied
- preferably they would be restricted from being holiday homes in perpetuity but that was not possible on this occasion. There were no grounds to refuse the application
- consideration should be given to getting the affordable housing mixed around the site

The motion was then put to the vote, and agreed by seven votes in support to two against and one abstention, and it was thus:

**RESOLVED** that the application be GRANTED subject to the completion of a Section 106 Agreement to include:

- 1) an on-site affordable housing contribution comprising of two no. affordable rented units and one no. unit at discounted market value;
  - 2) coastal mitigation contribution of £600 per dwelling;
- and,
- subject to the conditions as set out in the report.

*(4.48pm: Councillor Clark then returned to the meeting. Councillors Hill and Roughead then left the meeting for whilst application 17/04109/FUL was considered.)*

## **125. 17/04109/FUL**

### **Change of Use of existing Chapel Street coach park into a public car park Coach Park, Chapel Street, Berwick-Upon-Tweed, Northumberland**

Mr Sittambalam introduced the application by firstly providing an update; a petition of 189 signatures supporting the proposal had been received, which aligned to the public consultation undertaken. Mr Sittambalam then continued introducing the application with the aid of a Slides presentation.

Stephen Scott then spoke in objection to the application, of which his key points were:

- he was representing Berwick Chamber of Trade, which represented 100 local small businesses
- the coach park had opened 10 months previously at a cost of £500,000, without promotion. There should be a return on such investment; agreeing this application would write off a lot of money
- coach parking helped the local economy; Berwick needed to tap into the market for international visitors

- Berwick needed more parking, but closing a coach park and replacing with a car park for 15 vehicles did not make economic sense
- 9 of the 11 letters of support were from residents in either Chapel Street or Church Street.

Gareth Davies, clerk of Berwick Town Council then spoke on the application about the town council's position, of which his key points were:

- Berwick Town Council previously had no objection to the conversion to the car park, but details of the application concerned them regarding congestion, antisocial behaviour, additional traffic and misuse of the location. Highways/antisocial behaviour and crime and disorder had not been addressed in the report
- there were six public and private car parks locally, all usually full to 85% of their functional capacity, so cars often circulated around the local triangle of streets looking for spaces; adding Chapel Street as a car park would add to this issue
- when last converted, it had been conditioned for use between 9am - 6pm, but not now. Consideration should be given to preventing night time use of the site, perhaps using rising bollards
- public benches had been removed from the site following concerns about young people's behaviour disturbing local residents
- contractors had been fitting CCTV facilities in the town as a result of antisocial behaviour; it was hoped that CCTV would not also be required at this location.

Paul Jones, on behalf of the applicant, then spoke in support of the application, of which his key points were:

- there had been 19 objections to the previous application, mostly related to the impact on the area. Since opening in May 2017, ongoing concerns had been raised about the local impact on the quality of life. The average length of stay by coaches there was 90 minutes
- Berwick Town Council and county councillors had been consulted. The town council had supported a proposal for coach parking at the Swan Centre. Both short and long term parking was available at Walkergate and the Swan Centre
- there was significant demand for car parking in Berwick, with 50 spaces needed immediately and 187 by 2020
- the proposal would provide two electric vehicle charging points and a further six places on street, totalling 21 spaces. It would help immediate car parking problems, assist access to the town centre for shoppers and result in less impact on residential amenity
- all town centres suffered from congestion and antisocial behaviour. The close proximity to other car parks was not a material consideration. 10 residents had also expressed support. Controls on overnight stays could be organised.

Members then asked questions of which the key responses from officers were:

- the petition of support had been submitted through the local MP's office

- the key focus was the question of the principle of whether this change of use was acceptable. Other issues such as antisocial behaviour and timings could be looked at, but planning considerations came first
- the location could be conditioned not to be used at night, which could be delegated to officers in consultation with Berwick Town Council. The County Council owned the site so would be able to put on any restrictions
- correspondence on behalf of Berwick businesses counted as one representation as it was a single letter rather than individual letters from different businesses
- other coach drop off points had been identified
- it was not necessarily a £500,000 loss. There would be costs for the changes required - the hatched area, blocking up one of the accesses, but this was not a planning consideration
- there was no evidence that the change of use would necessarily lead to more antisocial behaviour, but residents and the town council could notify of any issues, to which conditions could be placed
- some antisocial behaviour had been reported during its use as a coach park
- all other Berwick car parks were open all night
- the proposal did not include any disabled parking spaces, but there were five others nearby.

Councillor Bridgett then moved the officer recommendation to grant the application, and referred to opportunities for the case officer to discuss some of the concerns raised with Highways and Berwick Town Council; this was seconded by Councillor Seymour.

A member then made the following key points:

- the coach park was not fit for purpose; coaches struggled to enter it and passengers could not get on and off in situ
- there were no toilets or cafe, and only 19 out of 415 respondents to a survey agreed that it had been a good decision
- 189 people had recently signed the petition in support of this proposal
- there was a chronic shortage of car parking in Berwick
- a meeting between the Chamber of Trade, Berwick Town Council and Councillor Sanderson had been arranged to discuss alternatives for coach parking

The Vice-chair added that he supported it but not if it damaged any trade and business in Berwick. The motion was then put to the vote, and agreed by seven votes in support to one against, and it was thus:

**RESOLVED** that the application be GRANTED subject to the conditions in the report, and authority be delegated to the County Council, in consultation with Berwick Town Council and the local member to confirm the details of the car park's opening times.

*(5.27pm: Councillors Hill and Roughead then returned to the meeting.)*

**126. 17/03431/ADE**

**Retrospective Signage application - Please note: the application is only for items : 7,9,4 and 5. All other signs have been previously approved following appeal under reference 16/03131/ADE. All signs shown are in place**

**Proposed Pets At Home, Prince Edward Road, Tweedmouth, Northumberland, TD15 2EX**

Mr Sittambalam introduced the application with the aid of a Slides presentation.

In response to a question it was confirm that the previous application fo the site had been refused but the applicant had subsequently won on appeal. This application was for the remainder of the signs at the location to be regularised.

Councillor Hill expressed concern that the original application had been rushed through over Easter 2017 proving little opportunity for comment. The site was an eyesore at the gateway part of the Town. The situation should not be made worse; she moved that the application be refused on the grounds of visual amenity. This was seconded by Councillor Roughead.

Debate then followed of which the key points from members were:

- it was in a residential area and many objections had been received from residents
- the previous application had been to appeal and overturned; it was not worth opposing this application
- the Conservation Officer had objected to the proposal.

On there being no further debate, the motion to refuse was then put to the vote, and agreed by five votes in support to four against with one abstention, and it was thus:

**RESOLVED** that the application be REFUSED on the grounds of its impact on visual amenity.

**127. Planning Appeals**

The report was for members' information to report the progress of planning appeals. (Report enclosed with the official minutes as part of Appendix A.) Members agreed that it was useful to receive updates on appeals and it was:

**RESOLVED** that the information be noted.

**OTHER LOCAL AREA COUNCIL BUSINESS**

***On the conclusion of the development control business at 5.37pm (at which point Councillors Lawrie and Pattison exited the meeting), the meeting briefly adjourned as the remainder of the agenda consisted of other Local Area Council business, which was scheduled to begin at 6.00pm.***

**(Councillor Castle back in the Chair: 6.00pm.)**

## **128. COMMUNITY CHEST AWARDS**

The Chair explained how the Community Chest fund enabled charitable organisations to apply for funding, and recipients of funding within the current year had been invited to the month's Local Area Council meetings to be presented with certificates.

Vice-chair Councillor Bridgett, who was also the chair of the north area's Community Chest Grant Panel, presented certificates to representatives of local organisations who had received funding in the current year. Photos were taken with recipients in attendance, followed by a group photograph of all recipients and members of the Local Area Council.

The following organisations had received funding and responded to the invite::

● 1801 Alnwick Air Cadets	● Alnwick Cricket Club
● Northern Learning Trust	● Alnwick Spring Show
● 1st Whittingham BP Scout Group	● Dance Dynamic
● Community@NE66 Charitable Trust	● Longhoughton Community and Sports Centre Trust Ltd
● Rothbury Highland Pipe Band	● Lesbury Bowling Club
● The Vyner Park Charity (Swarlan)	● Tweedmouth Community Football Club
● Crookham Village Hall	● Berwick Voluntary Forum
● Cramlington Rockets RLFC	● Tweed 1000
● Rothbury Bowling Club	

Thanks were expressed to all involved.

## **129. ELECTRIC CHARGING INFRASTRUCTURE**

With the Chair's agreement, the agenda was reordered. Alnwick Town Council had requested a discussion about electric charging infrastructure in Alnwick. Councillor Martin Swinbank, Chair of Planning, Highways and Transport Committee, Alnwick Town Council, attended to introduce a discussion paper on behalf of Alnwick Town Council. (Discussion paper enclosed with the official minutes as Appendix D.)

Councillor Swinbank delivered a verbal presentation; key details included:

- 2.1% of new vehicles sold currently were either electric or hybrid, and this was expected to increase to 50% by 2025
- given this increasing demand, vehicles needed power so a sufficient charging network was required across the country. It would be very important for residents and visitors
- it was the right time to review the County Council's planning guidance on charging facilities. A further revision to the NPPF was due shortly
- capacity for charging within new housing estates was very important, especially if there was a surge in demand at particular times
- NCC policy currently did not require electric vehicle parking provision in new developments
- given the disruption caused by digging up roads for facilities such as Broadband, the sooner that electric charging was introduced would be better and result in less disruption, otherwise applications would be passed and built in the meantime without any electric charging facilities
- Alnwick Town Council were requesting a minimum level of facilities to be provided in local areas
- consideration should also be given to circular routes for buses in new developments to enable easier access to charging points
- some areas in the UK were well ahead with this work. Northumberland had the chance to pursue it, which needed County Council support.

Members also noted the differences in price between the faster and rapid charging facilities. Residents were not charged for electricity at the points.

Senior Planning Manager Liz Sinnamon, Northumberland County Council, responded by explaining that this issue was being addressed in the emerging Local Plan process and the Highways Design Guide. In the short term, negotiation could take place with developers to secure charging points, but they had to be proportionate to the size of developments. Nothing could be guaranteed until a policy was agreed. In response to questions, Mrs Sinnamon advised that electric vehicle contributions would be sought from developers, who would have to demonstrate viability arguments if they considered they could not provide them. There were various stages for the Local Plan to develop yet, so this issue would be addressed at the appropriate time. Councillor Swinburn also advised that an online campaign organisation had sent a freedom of information request to every local authority in the UK asking about their plans to address this requirement.

Members agreed that consideration of best practice was needed and it was important that sufficient numbers of charging points were installed in the county. The Chair thanked Councillor Swinburn for his very good and comprehensive presentation, and it was:

**RESOLVED** that

- (1) the report be noted; and

(2) a further progress update be provided for the North Northumberland Local Area Council in future when appropriate.

### 130. PETITIONS

Members were presented with a report in response to a petition received about one hour parking restriction times on Queen Street in Amble. (Report enclosed with the official minutes as Appendix B.)

As per the petition protocol, members were addressed first by the lead petitioner, Mrs Sullivan, whose key points were:

- 272 people had signed the petition, supporting increasing the parking limit on Queen Street to longer than one hour
- nine businesses had recently closed; an extra waiting hour was needed urgently
- people were receiving fines resulting from the short stay time, putting some off from returning to shop there
- it was people wishing to shop and go to cafes who had commented. She had worked on the street for 38 years and had never known it so quiet. There should be consultation with people on the street about their views.

The Chair then asked the two local members, whose electoral divisions included parts of Amble, to speak.

Councillor Clark's key points were:

- 60 minutes was not enough for people parking there to shop and socialise along Queen Street
- shoppers should be encouraged to use the Queen Street
- the 60 minute limit was having an impact on local shops; many retailers were struggling
- the petitioners' request would enable more time for people to shop and visit cafes; increasing the time to 120 minutes would benefit all these aims, or even 90 minutes to provide some buffer time.

Councillor Watson's key points were:

- regular meetings took place between the business club, Development Trust, Amble Town Council and county councillors, in a parking group
- the parking group supported the one hour limit; people parked, shopped then moved on, the timing increased the turnover of visitors
- research was being undertaken including about how to increase the number of spaces
- local shops had not been closing as a result of the one hour limit.

The Service Director for Local Services advised that meetings had taken place with Amble Town Council, the parking group, Development Trust and Amble Business Club. Arrangements along Queen Street had been harmonised. Consideration could be given to dialogue about the timings, but the parking group's view was that the one hour limit was sufficient and there was other

parking available nearby on local streets. A parking study was proposed to assess the levels of utilisation and whether the times worked and spaces utilised.

Debate followed in which other key points from members included:

- as different opinions had been raised, some kind of survey, consultation or a public meeting could be considered to attain people's views
- Amble Town Council should take the lead on this; any views received during this process should be passed to them
- it had 272 signatures from a town of 6,000 people; was it representative of or able to be tested against wider local opinion?
- it was important to defer to the relevant local member/s, but a compromise on this occasion might be to also undertake a consultation.

Following further discussion about how to take this issue forward, it was:

**RESOLVED** that the issue be referred back to Amble Town Council to consider how they wish to progress this issue, in consultation with the County Council, and the minutes of this meeting be sent for their information.

## **131. REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR FOR LOCAL SERVICES**

### **Local Transport Plan Programme 2018-19**

The report set out the detail of the draft Local Transport Plan (LTP) programme for 2018-19 for consideration and comment by the Local Area Council prior to final approval of the programme. (Report enclosed with the official minutes as Appendix C.)

Councillor Sanderson explained that a different approach had been taken to the LTP for 2018/19. Points raised included:-

- funding for rural road improvements would increase by 10%. £200,000 had been allocated to Highways Area Managers for general carriageway and drainage repairs
- there were many more potholes than usual for this time of year and £420,000 had been funded from contingencies to enable repairs to be made. This was in addition to £930,000 from Government. It was planned to do repairs in a very sustainable way, which should last at least 10 years
- all members and town/parish councils would be contacted explaining which schemes had been successful and which would be reserves
- any drainage issues should firstly be raised with the Area Highways Managers who would liaise with the Head of Technical Services and work organised on a priority basis
- work on schemes would commence as soon as possible in the new financial year.

Members discussed the LTP in detail, of which the key details were:

- a member referred to a proposed pedestrian crossing in Rothbury, but was reserving judgement until seeing the designs as it might result in the loss of some car parking spaces



- the £130,000 allocated to a survey for the B6344 was welcomed as it was important to assess concerns about the structure beneath the road
- it was clarified that the £20,000 for retaining wall validation work was a regular check up
- recent improvements made and thanks for the work undertaken at the war memorial and Denwick
- thanks were expressed for the proposed footpath link at the Pastures Estate in the Berwick West with Ord electoral division
- it was important that pedestrian crossings were installed where needed, especially to ensure safe routes to schools.

In response to some questions, Councillor Sanderson and the Service Director of Local Services responded to questions with the following key points:

- £5,000 was allocated to a feasibility study for a pedestrian crossing in the Berwick North division
- the approach was to undertake more substantial repairs that would last for longer, but some potholes did have to be filled quickly
- he requested that a member put his concerns into writing to him about the impact on the Alnwick/Rothbury road resulting from the closure of the A697 - B6341 resulting from work to Corby Bridge, concerns about the C176 and whether work due to the C172 and C178 could be undertaken at the same time
- he would speak to the Head of Technical Services about a member's request to see the hotboxing equipment in operation
- the jetpatcher equipment was not operational in colder weather
- Berwick was receiving £600,000 on road maintenance, and further funding was allocated for long term repairs to sewers. Work was undertaken on the basis of need, priorities and road condition
- the funding from the Government was not ring fenced to a specific type of repair, the Council could decide how to allocate it. It was important to get seek government support and investment for roads in local areas
- if road defects were not satisfactorily reported, needs would be picked up through officers' road condition inspections.

**RESOLVED** that the report be noted and members' views be reported to Local Services so they can be considered in the finalisation of the LTP Programme for 2018-19.

## **INFORMATION ITEMS**

### **132. FUTURE MEETINGS**

It was noted that the next meeting would take place on Thursday, 22 March 2018 at the Jubilee Centre, Spittal, Berwick-upon-Tweed, and the following meeting on Thursday, 19 April 2018 at Northumberland Hall, Alnwick.

### **133. URGENT BUSINESS (IF ANY)**

The Chair agreed that members could be reminded of forthcoming community engagement activities planned for seeking residents' views on what should be included in the developing Norham and Islandshires Neighbourhood Plan, which covered the parishes of Ord, Horncliffe, Norham, Ancroft, Holy Island, Duddo, Kyloe and Shoreswood.

**CHAIR**.....

**DATE**.....