

NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL

NORTH NORTHUMBERLAND LOCAL AREA COUNCIL

At a meeting of the **North Northumberland Local Area Council** held at St. James's Church Centre (upstairs hall), Pottergate, Alnwick, Northumberland, NE66 1JW on Thursday, 19 September 2019 at 6.00pm.

PRESENT

Councillor G Castle
(Chair, in the chair)

MEMBERS

T Clark	G Renner-Thompson
G Hill	G Roughhead
R Moore	C Seymour
A Murray	T Thorne
W Pattison	J Watson

OFFICERS

M Bird	Senior Democratic Services Officer
G Bucknall	Highways Delivery Area Manager
B Hodgson	Neighbourhood Services Area Manager (North)

Also in attendance: press: 1, public: 5

61. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Bridgett and Lawrie.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

62. POLICING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY UPDATE

The Chair brought forward this item on the agenda and expressed regret that late notification had been provided by the police that they were unable to attend this meeting. He would look into this further and apologised if any attendees had come to the meeting especially for this item.

63. MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the meeting of North Northumberland Local Area Council held on Thursday, 22 August 2019, as circulated, be confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chair, subject to two amendments being made:

- page 6, first paragraph - to refer to Embleton Hall, not Eshott
- typographical correction on page 9.

64. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

No questions were asked by any members of the public.

65. PETITIONS

(a) New petitions:

Members noted that an e-petition requesting improvements to the path leading from South Lane/North Sunderland to the Primary School and nursery side gate had qualified for a written response as it had now received 70 signatures. A report would be organised for the Local Area Council's meeting on 21 November 2019.

(b) Updates on petitions previously considered:

An update was provided by the local member regarding the petition considered at the previous meeting about the replacement of a dog waste bin in Warkworth. Warkworth Parish Council, who would be responsible for purchasing any replacement bin, had since considered this issue further and had decided that there were enough dog waste bins in the area concerned; people leaving that location would pass another of the three bins nearby. Warkworth Parish Council would not thus be reinstating the bin.

Members were advised that this outcome would be communicated to the lead petitioner in writing.

RESOLVED that the information be noted.

66. LOCAL SERVICES ISSUES

Members received a verbal update from the Area Managers from Technical Services and Neighbourhood Services in attendance about any key recent, ongoing and/or future planned Local Services work for the attention of members.

Neighbourhood Services Update:

- the waste service collection was operating well, bar one or two vehicle breakdowns
- the income expected from garden waste, commercial waste and bulk collection service was on target
- grass cuts numbers 11 and 12 wet conditions during August were a challenge for the teams. Arisings were greater than officers would have liked in some places and there was a less desirable appearance than they would have liked

after being cut. Progress had recovered reasonably well and the core number of cuts had already been achieved this year

- progress on weed killing had also been impacted by weather conditions; areas would be addressed on request
- street cleansing activity had operated well and the small sweepers were effective. Required work had been achieved well ahead of the Tour of Britain on 9 September
- all verge cutting requirements had been completed by the end of July. Members should advise officers about any further requirements.

Members then raised a number of issues of which the key points were:

- feedback had been received from visitors about how well Northumberland was maintained
- it was very welcome to see communities helping in addition to work carried out by the County Council; around 80 people had participated in a recent litter pick at Alnwick
- the service level agreement with Amble Town Council was welcomed; the resulting work had made a big difference to the town
- thanks sent from the Bamburgh Village Show Committee for all the recent local services work at Bamburgh.

Thanks were also expressed by members for:

- excellent work at Longframlington cemetery. A path there would be funded using members' local improvement scheme money
- a resident who had undertaken litter picking around Longframlington
- all the work undertaken in the Berwick area before and after the Tour of Britain.

Members also asked for a number of issues to be followed up, of which the key points, including any responses from officers, were as follows:

- strong concern was expressed about the condition of public toilets at Holy Island. Members were advised that there had been a sewage problem caused by the volume of usage over the last Bank Holiday weekend; consideration was being given to how to boost the water pressure on Holy Island as the cisterns struggled to refill fast enough. There were similar concerns about toilets at Craster and Seahouses
- it was clarified that a traffic island off the A1 towards North and South Charlton was the responsibility of the County Council rather than Highways England, and needed deweeding
- strong concern was expressed from Alnwick Town Council about the condition of the toilets on Greenwell Lane. An inspection would be arranged; members were also reminded that a condition survey has recently been undertaken
- a request was made to clear the path going west from Alnwick west of quarry corners after the Shepherds Rest public house
- some Japanese Knotweed needed to be removed on the Longhorsley side of the river across from Felton.

Technical Services Update:

- members were advised it had been a busy summer for road resurfacing. The resource was shared across the county; after recent work particularly in the west and Castle Morpeth areas, a number of schemes would be delivered in the

north area shortly. Some north area projects included at the A1068 and Church Street in Amble, Hipsburn and Acklington

- 10 of 12 Surface Dressing schemes had been delivered to date in the north area with two being deferred at Elsdon and Flotterton due to conflicts with Northumbrian Water
- all the planned micro asphalt schemes had been undertaken, at East Ord, Seahouses, Tweedmouth and Amble
- a number of drainage and signage work had been undertaken
- a new code of practice was now in place for highway maintenance
- more inspection routes would now be walked and this should result in more footway defects being identified but this in turn presents a resource and budgets issue.

Members then raised a number of issues of which the key points were:

- officers were thanked for the work to Weavers' Way in Alnwick being completed within three or four days of being reported
- gratitude was expressed for the work to rebuild a wall at Cawledge View in Alnwick within two weeks of being damaged, following initial clarification about its adoption status
- resurfacing on the old A1 road out to Alnwick to South Charlton was very good
- the resurfacing in Belford was welcomed
- the refurbishment of the listed bridge at Felton was excellent
- thanks expressed for work to Preston Tower Road at Doxford which would soon be carried out.

Members also asked for a number of issues to be followed up, of which the key points, including any responses from officers, were as follows:

- a number of Tour of Britain signs were still in place around the Alnwick and Warkworth areas - officers would follow up with the tour's operator and ask for them to be removed
- the road diversion signs at the level crossing at Warkworth were misleading; the closure was only in place between 10.00pm - 6.00am each day, but the signs did not refer to the times of operation; more information was required
- clarification was sought about clearing/cleaning road signs; members were advised that this was within highways inspectors' remits to check, but was likely to be lower on their priorities and there was not a specific routine to clean them. If members had concerns about the condition of particular road signs, they should report them to officers for attention
- work was required in North Sunderland at North Street opposite Taylor Street
- a damaged lit sign on the roundabout at Main Street, Seahouses was still not repaired. Concern was expressed that this had been raised a number of times with the street lighting team; Councillor Castle, as chair, would contact the street lighting team to ask for it to be fixed as soon as possible
- a lighting column near the Ship Inn/Chapel Road in North Sunderland had been knocked over some time ago. This should also be raised with Street Lighting.
- surface dressing work for the B6341 between Thropton to Flotterton was included in the programme for the current year but had to be deferred until the next year due to conflicts with NWL works
- patching would be undertaken at Hepple in three weeks' time
- reference was made to the drain clearance work at Alnmouth and how to undertake it around parked cars; what discussions took place with local

town/parish councils for such work? Members were advised that signs were put up and letter drops undertaken. Town/parish councils could help with getting these messages out

- the path between Bamburgh to Seahouses was very well used but concerns had been raised about who was responsible for maintaining the surface, and keeping the vegetation cut back. Concerns were expressed that such details and consultation had not been undertaken with the Highways Delivery Area Manager and the Area Neighbourhood Services Manager in advance of the scheme beginning. Councillor Renner-Thompson would follow this up with the highways design team. Meetings might also be needed with the contractor
- work to fix subsidence on the A1068 would begin in October 2019. This would be carried out by operatives for the Castle Morpeth area, as it had been over that boundary when planned
- resurfacing work to Tosson Road was in the plan for the next year
- £50,000 had been spent on repairs to Carterside Road
- in connection to a request for road marking work at Marygate in Berwick, the inspector would be asked to check the lists of work due
- Principal Programme Officer Neil Snwodon would be asked to provide an update about when the agreed double yellow lines would be implemented at Castle Terrace in Berwick
- some drains were blocked on The Peth on the road up to the listed bridge at Felton
- work to remove rubble on the unofficial layby on the A1 on the north side to Felton was in the work programme
- strong concerns were expressed about visibility and road safety concerns in connection to the new planned leisure centre for Berwick; the roundabout was considered dangerous as it was on a slope. Although the current crossing was due to be upgraded, this needed attention as it posed an accident risk. These concerns would be raised with Principal Highways Development Management Officer Chris Thompson and Principal Programme Officer Neil Snowdon's team
- potholes on the second road towards Stamford needed fixing, the road was used by many Christon Bank residents
- potholes needed fixing at Swinhoe Bends. The Chair reminded everybody that it was important to use the online pothole reporting service.

Officers were thanked for their work and updates and it was:

RESOLVED that the information be noted and issues raised by members needing resolution be followed up after the meeting.

INFORMATION ITEMS

67. MEMBERS' LOCAL IMPROVEMENT SCHEMES 2017/19 - PROGRESS REPORT

Members received a progress update on Members' Local Improvement Schemes for 2017/19 as at 1 September 2019. (Report attached to the official minutes as Appendix A.)

The Chair intended to raise concerns at the Local Area Council Chairs' Briefing meeting on 24 September about the scheme's bureaucracy, including stipulations on

Chair's Initials.....

requiring three quotes for schemes and why this had to involve members. He had also raised this with the Cabinet Secretary.

Concerns were also expressed about the minimum spend requirements for schemes, as this was not considered to deliver value for money. This concern would also be raised at the Local Area Council Chairs' Briefing meeting.

RESOLVED that the information be noted.

68. BERWICK REGENERATION COMMISSION

This was a standing item on the agenda; no updates were available.

69. LOCAL AREA COUNCIL WORK PROGRAMME

Members received the latest version of the Local Area Council's work programme (attached to the official minutes as Appendix B).

Reference was made to the request made for regular updates to Local Area Council meetings about dog fouling statistics. An update about this would be presented to the Local Area Council Chairs' Briefing meeting on 24 September.

RESOLVED that the work programme be noted.

70. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME RESPONSES

A copy of the questions asked at a previous meeting of the Local Area Council and the responses from the Head of Technical Services were circulated (copy attached to the official minutes as Appendix C.)

The Chair reminded those present that if questions could not be answered at a Local Area Council meeting, a written response would always be provided afterwards.

RESOLVED that the information be noted.

71. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was noted that the next meeting would be held on Thursday, 17 October 2019 at St James's Church Centre, Pottergate, Alnwick.

CHAIR _____

DATE _____