

**NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL**

**TYNEDALE LOCAL AREA COUNCIL**

At a meeting of the **Tynedale Local Area Council** held at Hexham House, Gilesgate, Hexham, Northumberland, NE46 3NH on Tuesday, 11 October 2022 at 4.00 p.m.

**PRESENT**

Councillor T Cessford  
(Chair, in the Chair for agenda items 48-50, 54, 57-63)

A Scott  
(Vice-Chair (Planning) in the Chair, agenda items 51-53, 55-56)

**MEMBERS**

A Dale  
SH Fairless-Aitken (55-63)  
C Horncastle (48-56)  
I Hutchinson  
D Kennedy (56-63)  
N Morphet

N Oliver (55-63)  
JR Riddle (48-56)  
A Scott  
A Sharp  
G Stewart

**OFFICERS**

R Campbell  
T Crowe  
C Hall  
I Hewitt

D Hunt

A Olive  
M Patrick

E Sinnamon  
N Turnbull

Senior Planning Officer  
Solicitor  
Planning Officer  
Rural Business Growth Programme  
Manager  
Neighbourhood Services Area  
Manager  
Highways Delivery Area Manager  
Principal Highways Development  
Management Officer  
Development Service Manager  
Democratic Services Officer

**ALSO PRESENT**

9 members of the public.

Ch.'s Initials.....

#### **48. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Waddell. It was reported that Councillor Fairless Aitken gave her apologies for part one of the meeting and Councillor Oliver was delayed.

#### **49. MINUTES**

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of Tynedale Local Area Council held on 9 August 2022, as circulated, be confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

#### **50. DISCLOSURE OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS**

Councillor Scott declared a personal interest and prejudicial interest in agenda item no 22/00579/FUL and would leave the meeting whilst the application was discussed.

#### **DEVELOPMENT CONTROL**

#### **51. PROCEDURE TO BE FOLLOWED AT MEETINGS**

The Chair advised members of the procedure which would be followed at the meeting.

#### **52. DETERMINATION OF PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

The committee was requested to decide the planning applications attached to the report using the powers delegated to it. Members were reminded of the principles which should govern their consideration of the applications, the procedure for handling representations, the requirement of conditions and the need for justifiable reasons for the granting of permission or refusal of planning applications.

**RESOLVED** that the information be noted.

#### **53. 22/00303/FUL**

**Construction of 1no. dwelling with associated access, parking and landscaping  
Land North of Meadow Gate, Catton, Northumberland**

There were no questions arising from the site visit videos which had been circulated prior to the meeting.

The Planning Officer introduced the application with the aid of a powerpoint presentation and requested the following amendments to condition No.s 3 and 7:

Condition 3 – inclusion of policies and reference to the retaining wall  
“Notwithstanding the plans hereby approved, no development shall commence on site until plans, including cross sections showing the finished floor levels, garden levels and resulting ridge height of the dwelling hereby approved, from a fixed datum point, are submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

These plans should include details of any retaining walls that are required due to the proposed earthworks and change in land levels.

Thereafter, the development shall proceed only in accordance with those approved details.

Reason: To ensure these details are controlled by the Local Planning Authority in the interests of impact on the appearance of the area in accordance with Policies QOP1, QOP2, ENV1 and ENV6 of the Northumberland Local Plan the NPPF.”

Condition 7 - Updated to include reference to doors

“Notwithstanding the details submitted, all external doors including frames shall be of painted timber. All windows shall be of painted timber and shall be hung sliding sash, recessed by at least 100mm and with no trickle vents. The windows and external doors shall be retained/replaced like for like in perpetuity.

Reason: In the interest of the appearance of the area. In accordance with Policies QOP1 and ENV6 of the Northumberland Local Plan.”

John Haigh spoke in objection to the application and raised the following issues:

- The application would have been dealt with under delegated powers had a formal complaint not been made by Mr and Mrs Pierce about the management of the application which was then reassessed.
- The committee were requested to respect the opinions of the parish council, Catton residents and experts in the fields of conservation and the environment and reject the application.
- The AONB had previously documented that the meadow was inappropriate for development and that it formed an important part of the character of Catton Village.
- Permitting the development would contravene Section 85 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000.
- The Council was not paying due regard to the AONB designation. The Countryside Charity (CPRE) objection stated that the proposed plans fail an acceptability test.
- The applicant’s consultant claimed the new dwelling would be similar to that previously approved which was untrue as it did not comply with previous conditions on the following 2 points:
  - 1) The ridge of the new building would be no higher than the ridge of Meadowgate. The report stated that the new ridge would be 1.4 m

higher but measurements from the Wider Street Elevation plan show it to be 2.1 m higher.

2) The ground level was only to be lowered by 2.4 m and not the 3.5 m previously required.

- They objected strongly that conditions applied by the former Senior Planning Officer, who had later become the applicant's consultant, had not been adhered to and queried how the inconsistency could be allowed.
- Most of the objections complained about the height of the proposal being obtrusive and out of keeping. Local residents were dismayed by its scale and siting.
- The development adversely impacted on the character and appearance of the settlement in contravention of clause (e) 1, 3 and 4 of STP1 and queried whether it should be regarded as a sustainable development.
- They were concerned that a dominant building on the elevated meadow to the south of the recently opened Crown Inn would compromise views from the pub's garden and impact on amenity values and viability of the business. Reference was made to the strategic aim of the newly adopted Northumberland Local Plan to 'conserve and enhance Northumberland's natural and built environments ensuring that they continue to be experienced and valued by residents and visitors and protected from inappropriate development'. They were of the opinion that this development was inappropriate.
- The report had not included or addressed concerns of the publican who had complained about lack of communication from the planning department.
- The development had an adverse impact on the amenity of existing neighbours and businesses in contravention of sections 2 (a) and (b) of the Allendale Neighbourhood Development Plan.
- The objectors and CPRE disputed that the principle of development on the site had been established. Of 4 applications, only one reached determination, which had lapsed due to lack of interest.
- Although the site was sensitive and in a prominent location at the entrance of the village, the Planning and Conservation Officer had not advised on the proposal despite involvement on another site. This had been queried and had not been answered.
- Members were asked to reject the application as it:
  - Was too high and obtrusive and did not comply with previous constraints applied by Planning.
  - Ignored advice and objections raised by the national environmental bodies.
  - Ignored the requirements of the AONB.
  - Ignored the strategic objectives of the recently adopted Northumberland Local Plan.

In response to questions from Members of the Committee, the following information was provided:-

- The proposed development was now located 5 meters further away from the neighbouring property with a separate access also being located further to the north. It had a similar footprint as the application that had previously been approved for a 2 storey, 4 bedroom house with double

garage. The previous application originally proposed sharing the existing access. Highways had no objections to the separate access subject to conditions.

- There would not be a significant impact on the amenity of the neighbours from the increased ridge height as the proposed building was located further away, 30 metres from Meadowgate. As the site and wider areas was situated on a hill, properties to the north would be situated slightly higher than those to the south. A condition regarding landscaping had been included so the details could be approved.
- The height of the proposed building was higher due to changes in the design. Condition 3 required approval of plans for finished floor levels, garden levels and the resulting ridge height. Condition 2 required the property be built in accordance with approved plans i.e. that the building be sunk and not on existing ground levels.
- Properties on the other side of the road were in a similar position being located higher than adjacent properties to the south.
- The North Pennines AONB had not objected to the application but required that it did not impact on the character of the settlement by complying with the Building Design Guide.
- Sliding sash windows had been specified by the applicants. The AONB Building Design Guide required the materials to be timber and of a traditional style. Details of the proposed windows had been specified within Condition No. 7 which could be amended to remove the reference to sash windows, perhaps 'sliding sash appearance'.
- It was not normal practice to specify whether windows were single, double or triple glazed as long as they were traditional in appearance.
- The reference to 'in perpetuity' was to be construed as for the lifetime of the building.

Councillor Stewart proposed acceptance of the of the officer's recommendation to approve the application with the officers amendment's to Condition No.s 3 as read out in committee and condition no.7 removing the reference to sash windows from the latter. The wording of amended condition No. 7 with regard to the materials and mechanisms used within the windows to be delegated to Planning Officers. This was seconded by Councillor Hutchinson.

Whilst there was some sympathy for some of the issues raised by the objectors, the principle of development on the site had previously been established. As this application was for a similar design Members could not find a reason to refuse the application.

Upon being put to the vote, the motion was unanimously agreed.

**RESOLVED** that the application be **GRANTED** permission for the reasons and with the conditions as outlined in the report and subject to the amended Condition No.s 3 as read out in committee by officers and condition no 7 removing the reference to sash windows from the latter. The wording of amended condition No. 7 with regard to the materials and mechanisms used within the windows to be delegated to Planning Officers.

“3. Notwithstanding the plans hereby approved, no development shall commence on site until plans, including cross sections showing the finished floor levels, garden levels and resulting ridge height of the dwelling hereby approved, from a fixed datum point, are submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

These plans should include details of any retaining walls that are required due to the proposed earthworks and change in land levels.

Thereafter, the development shall proceed only in accordance with those approved details.

Reason: To ensure these details are controlled by the Local Planning Authority in the interests of impact on the appearance of the area in accordance with Policies QOP1, QOP2, ENV1 and ENV6 of the Northumberland Local Plan the NPPF.”

“7. Notwithstanding the details submitted, all external doors including frames shall be of painted timber. All windows shall be of painted timber and shall be hung sliding sash, recessed by at least 100mm and with no trickle vents. The windows and external doors shall be retained/replaced like for like in perpetuity.

Reason: In the interest of the appearance of the area. In accordance with Policies QOP1 and ENV6 of the Northumberland Local Plan.”

*Councillor Scott left the meeting whilst the following application was discussed. Councillor Cessford sat as Chair.*

**54. 22/00579/FUL**

**Conversion of existing barn to 1 dwelling  
Land to East of Edgewell House Farm House, Edgewell House Road,  
Prudhoe, Northumberland, NE42 5PD**

There were no questions arising from the site visit videos which had been circulated prior to the meeting.

The Senior Planning Officer introduced the application with the aid of a powerpoint presentation and confirmed that there were no updates.

Mr. C. Ross spoke on behalf of the owners of the Old Granary who would suffer the most if the development were allowed. They objected to the application in the strongest terms on the grounds of highway safety and residential amenity and raised the following points:

- Existing arrangements were historical and not open for consideration.
- An application for a new development should be assessed against all policy requirements. Policy TRA 2 required development to have effective and safe access and egress to the existing transport network.

- The Highways Team had confirmed that the existing access and visibility splay were sub-standard but had not objected. This would result in more cars, bikes and vehicles using the sub-standard access with sub-standard visibility creating more opportunities for near misses, similar to recent events with cars going into the hedge opposite.
- This was a 60 mph road which required a visibility splay of 215 metres. Based on current plans, only 12-13 metres of visibility was achievable and therefore over 200 metres short of what was required. A visibility splay of 215 metres could not be achieved and therefore the development failed to provide an effective and safe access and egress required by Policy TRA 2 and should be refused on Highways grounds, a valid material planning reason.
- Currently the Old Granary house and garden was not overlooked and was a private family space. If the adjacent building was developed, they would be overlooked in the living room, bedroom and outside space with 6 new windows not there before. This would destroy the privacy of the Old Granary contrary to the following policies:
  - Policy HOU8 which required a development to enhance its setting.
  - Policy QOP1 which required no unacceptable harm to amenity.
  - QOP2 which required appropriate levels of privacy.
- The development should be refused on loss of privacy and overlooking, valid material planning reasons.
- They requested that the application be refused and that the Old Granary should be visited so the site was understood from both sides.

Mrs Hannah Underwood, the applicant, spoke in support of the application. She highlighted the following:-

- They hoped to bring new life to a disused building whilst retaining its character.
- The previous refusals and dismissed appeal on the site related to a single factor, the disputed previous use of the building. Those applications/appeal had been made under a prior notification procedure and not a full planning application.
- The technical aspects of highway safety, ecology, land contamination, coal mining and drainage had been carefully assessed with no objections raised by the professional consultees.
- The principle of development, design of the conversion, residential amenity of neighbours, sustainability of the site and Green Belt matters had been assessed by the planning officer. They had also been taken into account by the Planning Inspector on the recent appeal who had not found any reason to refuse the previous prior notification application or appeal on those grounds. The current proposal was no different to that previously assessed.
- Their first consideration had been the protection of the amenity enjoyed by the neighbours and also future residents of the barn, once converted.
- Separation distances between the barn and neighbouring dwellings ranged from 21-40 metres.
- As demonstrated on the site visit, the land sloped in a south – north direction, with the barn located on higher ground than the neighbouring properties. However, due to the separation distances, single storey nature

of the barn, modest nature of the proposed windows and existing boundary treatments, the conversion would not have an overbearing presence or adverse impact on privacy or outlook.

- Permitted development rights for additional openings or extensions to the barn had been removed which would control any future alterations/extensions to ensure that any impact be assessed. A condition also required that boundary treatments be enhanced.
- Bringing an unused building back into use with enhanced hedge planting on the boundaries could only be of visual benefit to the immediate area.
- The proposals, if accepted, would prevent any future non-residential uses of the building and site which would improve the neighbours amenity in the long term.
- They had actively sought to address the objections made to their proposals. There were no outstanding technical objections to the scheme which was compliant with local and national policies.
- Planning and other officers had considered objections on amenity and highways safety to have been overcome and that the proposal would not bring about any harm or detriment to amenity or safety.
- The committee were requested to accept the officer's recommendation.

In response to questions from Members of the Committee the following information was provided:-

- Arrangements were made for site visits in accordance with the Council's protocol. Whilst at the site visit, members may have wished to assess the impact of the proposal on the neighbouring property, however, this would not have been possible if permission to enter the land had not been obtained. It was not normal practice to invite neighbours to a site visit, only the applicant/agent and representatives from the town or parish council. A decision could be made from the roadside and photographs included in the presentation. Members comments regarding the usefulness of viewing a site from an adjacent property had been noted.
- The proposals for the development were not expected to have a significant adverse impact on the privacy of future occupiers of the unit or the residents of the neighbouring dwellings given the separation distances, the single storey nature of the building and proposals for additional boundary planting.
- Policy QOP5 required the prioritisation of the use of locally sourced, recycled and energy efficient building materials with details being required to be approved in advance by Condition No. 4. This could include roof materials, if an amendment was requested by Members.
- The visibility splay would be sub-standard for the construction of a new dwelling and would constitute a reason for refusal. However, the access was already in use and currently served 2 dwellings with associated vehicle movements. The proposals would not result in additional movements on the highway network and there were no material changes in how it would be used. There were also no recorded incidents at that location in the previous 30 year period.
- There would be no increase in the height of the building, it was a relatively straightforward conversion with no additional accommodation in the roof space.

Councillor Hutchison proposed acceptance of the officer's recommendation to approve the application. This was seconded by Councillor Horncastle. A suggestion that the conditions be amended to specify use of recycled materials for the roof and aluminium doors was declined.

Members were satisfied that the proposals would bring a redundant building back into use. They were of the view that the height of the surrounding hedge, removal of permitted development rights to prevent additional openings and assessment by highways was satisfactory.

Upon being put to the vote the results were as follows: -

**FOR: 7; AGAINST: 0; ABSTENTION: 1.**

**RESOLVED** that the application be **GRANTED** permission for the reasons and with the conditions as outlined in the report.

*Councillor Scott returned to the meeting and resumed her position as Chair. Councilors Fairless-Aitken and Oliver also entered the meeting.*

**55. 21/04595/LBC  
Listed Building Consent for Change of colour on front of building  
(retrospective)  
Brew Bar, Market Square, Haltwhistle, Northumberland NE49 0BL**

There were no questions arising from the site visit videos which had been circulated prior to the meeting.

The Senior Planning Officer introduced the application with the aid of a powerpoint presentation. She reported that nine representations in support of the application had been received since the committee report had been finalised. These had been circulated to Members electronically prior to the meeting and were also available to view on the Council's Public Access website. A summary of the comments was provided as follows:

- Support for the grey colour of the building.
- The grey colour blended in well with other buildings and its surroundings.
- The grey colour complimented the historic environment in which the building sits.
- The cost of changing the colour back could jeopardise the business which operated from the building.
- The grey colour would be an easier colour to maintain as it would look fresher for longer than the previous colour.
- The building was well-presented and the business a well-kept establishment.
- There were other businesses within the market place and wider locality which were not well-maintained.
- The Brew Bar had a positive impact on the town and contributed to the vibrancy of the market place.

- The business offered something different and unique in Haltwhistle and was popular with both tourists and local residents.
- There was currently a variety of facades and colours within the surrounding street scene.

Councillor Michael Ridley spoke on behalf of Haltwhistle Town Council. He highlighted the following:

- As elected members they were the voice of the people on the street.
- The response from the people of Haltwhistle to the external changes of the Brew Bar building had been very positive as it had brightened up the Market Square.
- People going to church have made comments about the calming colour and asked if the east side of the building was also to be painted.
- The Town Council has no objection to the colour or the application.
- Tourists and the people of Haltwhistle loved it.
- Whilst it had been commented that the paint did not let the building breathe, the paint being waterproof would extend the life of the building as water had previously soaked in.

Mr Sam Jackson, the applicant, spoke in support of the application. He made the following comments:-

- They had decided to paint the exterior of the building during the first national lockdown when the business had been closed and the future was uncertain.
- They had obtained the permission of the landlady but at that time had been unaware that listed building consent was also required.
- The colour had been carefully chosen to compliment the traditional stonework of the building, and tied in well with neighbouring slate roofs, the cobbled road around the marketplace, wrought iron gates of the church and the church itself.
- The grey colour also reflected the buildings industrial heritage as an old blacksmiths shop, more so than the previous colour.
- Prior to his tenancy, the building had been previously repainted but not with lime wash paint.
- The public response to the appearance of the Brew Bar on its reopening had been fantastic.
- They had created a much needed ambiance in the marketplace supported by food trucks, special events and al fresco seating which in conjunction with the visual appearance of the building gave the town a vibrancy it had lacked for many years. It had become an institution to a wide demographic of local residents and was also popular with tourists which was of benefit to Haltwhistle.
- There was no overall colour scheme for business or buildings on the high street or marketplace but a worrying increase in dilapidated ones, a sign of hard times for small businesses.
- Any action would have a detrimental effect on the Brew Bar and town and jeopardise one of the towns recent success stories.

- The aforementioned reasons outweighed the less than substantial harm caused by the painting of the Brew Bar. The building should be left as it was so the marketplace could continue to be as vibrant and welcoming as it was now.

In response to questions from Members of the Committee the following information was provided:-

- It was the professional opinion of the Built Heritage and Design Officer when she had undertaken a site visit that a plastic based paint had been used.
- A limewash paint would enable the building to breathe.
- The use of a plastic based paint was harmful to the historic fabric of the building as it created an impermeable barrier which did not allow moisture to travel and would allow the building to deteriorate over time.
- It was confirmed that enforcement action was being pursued at several other premises in the town for similar reasons.
- The removal of the plastic based paint was not a matter which the committee needed to be concerned about. The issue under consideration was the harm caused to the Grade II listed building and the failure to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the Haltwhistle Conservation Area.
- It was not appropriate to compare the use of silicone when treating damp in properties. Different methods were recommended to preserve stone buildings. Use of limewash was the most successful method of preserving a traditional building in the long term.
- The listing describes the marketplace elevation as white although it was not necessary that it remained white as there were variations of colour in the nearby street scene. Other buildings in the marketplace and Conservation Area were white or cream. A light coloured natural limewash would be appropriate for the traditional character of the area.
- Officers were unable to confirm the reason for the investigation and enforcement action.
- They did not have the resources to have consultee officers at every meeting and the officers availability had not been a reason not to bring the matter to the meeting.
- The Conservation Area Character Appraisal set out the description of the Grade II listed building. The question was whether the use of the plastic based grey paint preserved a designated heritage asset. The colour was not natural with a modern appearance which altered the traditional appearance of the building.
- Use of a plastic paint was vapor impermeable and would eventually peel off like plastic whereas limewash was gritty and permeable.

Councillor Dale proposed acceptance of the recommendation to refuse Listed Building Consent. This was seconded by Councillor Scott.

Several members, whilst agreeing that the appearance of the building was not unattractive, they were concerned about the long term impact that the use of the plastic based paint would have on the structure. Others were worried about the damage possibly caused by removal of the paint and unhappy that

the Built Heritage and Design Officer was not in attendance so they could ask further questions and receive her guidance on technical matters.

Some members supported the recommendation that had been made by the officer given the listed building status and did not want the Council's conservation policy undermined.

It was then proposed by Councillor Riddle that the application should be deferred as he did not think a decision should be made that evening. This was seconded by Councillor Sharp.

The Solicitor reminded the committee that the substantive motion needed to be dealt with prior to consideration of subsequent motions.

Councillor Dale agreed to withdraw her motion that the Listed Building Consent be refused and instead proposed that the application be deferred. Councillor Scott agreed and seconded deferral.

Upon being put to the vote, the motion was unanimously agreed.

**RESOLVED** that the application be **DEFERRED** for further advice and information from the Built Heritage and Design Officer.

## **56. PLANNING APPEALS UPDATE**

The report provided information on the progress of planning appeals.

**RESOLVED** that the information be noted.

*Councillor Horncastle left the meeting.*

*The meeting adjourned at 5.53 p.m. until 6.10 p.m.*

## **LOCAL AREA COUNCIL BUSINESS**

### **57. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

Wendy Breach on behalf of the Active Travel Tynedale team submitted the following question in advance of the meeting:

"Northumberland County Council has a number of policies aimed at mitigating climate crisis, improving health, decreasing air pollution and encouraging active travel. One specific policy is laid out on the School Transport web page:

"Northumberland County Council is committed to promoting the environmental benefits of active, sustainable travel, which includes reducing pollution for cleaner air around our schools."

A further commitment on the same web page with regard to active travel to and from schools concerns the creation of School Streets:

"We will work with the Highways team at Northumberland County Council so we can investigate Traffic Regulation Orders. This is to prohibit cars from entering specific streets at certain times of the day. Closing the street outside of your school will ensure that the air will be less polluted, as well as making the area safer for children."

With more than 500 School Streets in London, an ever increasing number in Tyne and Wear, 4 already established in Northumberland, and legislation now rolled out across England for ANPR, why has it been an uphill battle to get a School Street considered for the new QEHS/HMS in Hexham? The attendance at these schools (plus St Jo's RC Middle School on the other side of Allendale Road) is greater than 2100 students. Of this number ~1,000 students walk, ~ 800 come by school coach and ~300 parents drive their children to school.

In spite of an NCC assessment that stated driver behaviour would not change with the proposed highways signage and double and single-yellow lines on Whetstone Bridge Road, nor would school-in and -out times become safer, NCC Highways has completed a scheme which is patently ineffective, and teachers are still required on the road to ensure student safety at school in and out times.

Why will NCC Highways and School Transport NOT consider a School Street, and why has there yet been no Road Safety Audit? Why all these delays? Active Travel Tynedale has heard no end of excuses."

The following response from the Infrastructure Manager was read out:

"The implemented parking restrictions on Whetstone Bridge Road and Tynedale Terrace are an integral element of the discharge of conditions associated with the approved planning application 19/03998/CCD | Redevelopment of Queen Elizabeth High School and required as conditions for the development of the schools. The parking restrictions proposed address a range of road safety matters associated with the ingress and egress from all entrances to the school and future operation of the school. The Council prepared and advertised the Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) associated with the approved planning application and conditions discharge and reviewed individual objections to the parking restrictions within the TRO, in particular the double yellow lines around the entrance to Tynedale Terrace and extending along Whetstone Bridge Road towards Allendale Road and the inclusion of single yellow lines on the North end of Whetstone Bridge Road between the school entrance and Alexandra Crescent. The Council's Highways Improvement Team consider that the original road safety concerns considered as part of the initial design process associated with the development of the new high school remain valid and the proposed parking restrictions appropriate.

The Highways Improvement Team do acknowledge the concerns raised by residents on the impact to parking and the wider community on their support for "School Streets" and have committed to review the parking restrictions 12

months after their implementation when the impact of the new development and the changes to the highway layout can be fully assessed.

A number of varying proposals have been raised and considered during the development process including “School Streets”, however, it was considered inappropriate to amend any proposals that form an integral part of the approved planning permission when they are appropriate for the road safety concerns identified and there is no evidence that they would not address these concerns over time.

Road safety audits (RSA’s) were carried out during the development of proposals for the new school with a Stage 1 audit completed in Sep 2020, a stage 2 audit completed in Jan 2021. The site visit element of the Stage 3 RSA was completed in September 2022 and the report of the audit is currently being prepared and any issues identified as requiring immediate action will be raised for consideration with the scheme designers. The stage 3 RSA could not be undertaken until the changes to the highway and school bus parking had been completed and the schools returned from the summer holiday. In addition to the RSA process the Highways Improvement Team have been in contact with the school to understand their current views on how the highway is operating in relation to school journeys.

The Highways Improvement Team are fully aware of the “School Streets” approach and have already implemented a number of schemes across the County including Hareside Primary School, Cramlington, Josephine Butler Academy, Ashington and New Delaval Primary School, Blyth with Seaton Sluice Middle School and Seghill First School being considered this year. These are being delivered within a wider “Safer Routes to School” programme.

As part of the review of the parking restrictions noted above, the team will also consider the outcome of the RSA reports and the views of the schools in relation to any further change and will consider the benefits of any “School Streets” approach at that time if appropriate.

Ms Breach asked if there could please be more urgent action as a follow-up question.

The Chair reported that questions raised at a meeting of Hexham Town Council held the previous evening would be forwarded to the officers to obtain a response.

## **58. PETITIONS**

This item was to:

### **a) Receive any new petitions:**

It was reported that the following new petition had been opened for signatures on the Council’s website:

Request to impose a speed limit on a section of the C234 between Warden Bridge and Fourstones.

**b) Consider reports on petitions previously received:**

A report on the following petition had been requested for the meeting on 10 January 2023:

Wentworth Car Park & Hexham Alemouth Road Car Park, Hexham.

**c) To consider updates on petitions previously considered:**

An update on the B6305 Allendale Road, Hexham Petition was to be provided at the next meeting on 15 November 2022.

## **59. LOCAL SERVICES UPDATE**

Members received the following updates from the Area Managers from Neighbourhood Services and Technical Services:

**Technical Services:**

- 98.7% of actionable defects had been repaired in line with the Council's policy. 4,101 actionable defects had been recorded between July and August 2022. Highway inspections were up to date and carried out in accordance with the Council's statutory duty.
- Footway slurry sealing works had been completed for the season with preparatory works commencing in new locations ahead of completion in 2023.
- The gully tanker continued its routine cleansing programme with a dedicated drainage gang and JCB renewing gully pots, cross drains and ditching in known problem areas. Drainage investigation and repair was due to commence on the A695 at Riding Mill before moving to Acomb.
- LTP surfacing works had been completed in a number of areas with work scheduled next at West Woodburn.
- 6 out of 13 sites in Tynedale had been completed to date as part of the LTP investment program in U & C roads.
- Surface dressing work had been completed at all 12 sites within the Tynedale area. Surface dressing work across the county was overseen by the Tynedale team with 43.96 miles of carriageways covered.
- A summary of completed safety scheme were outlined with a number of projects programmed in the next few months.
- The winter services season was due to commence on 31 October with 105 members of staff. Staff and rotas were in place with arrangements for dealing with snowfall and prolonged periods of extreme wintry weather remaining unchanged. A copy of the winter resilient document was due to be circulated to all members. Salt supplies had been restocked and 1600 grit bins were in the process of being checked and replenished. Further refills could be arranged by via provision of serial numbers to the contact centre.

The Highways Delivery Area Manager provided clarification or agreed to investigate issues for Councillors Cessford, Dale, Fairless-Aitken, Kennedy, Morphet and Scott.

### **Neighbourhood Services:**

- Appointments had recently been made to fill vacant Team Leader posts in the NEAT and Refuse teams.
- Grass cutting had been suspended in some areas over the summer following long spells of warm and dry weather to enable the grass to recover. Resource had been diverted to cutting back and weed spraying activities. Grass cutting was expected to cease in the next few weeks with the minimum number of cuts being achieved.
- The normal street sweeping schedules were ongoing with focus changing to leaf hot spots within the next month or so. Members were encouraged to report issues, although officers had to balance competing demands. They were aware of problems areas previously reported. Priority areas included areas with significant pedestrian numbers including streets around schools, sheltered housing and steep slopes.
- The winter annual maintenance schedules for the annual maintenance for the cutting back of shrubs, hedging and edging were in the process of being prepared. Identification of any additional areas requiring attention should be notified by email.
- Grounds staff working an annualised hours contract would move to winter hours from 20 October (28 hours per week).
- Verge cutting had extended into August due to a machinery breakdown.
- Residual, Recycling and Garden waste collection services were operating well, other than a few minor vehicle breakdowns. The HGV driver staffing difficulties reported at previous meetings were now resolved. Existing rounds were under review following housing growth and increased take up of the garden waste service. Boundaries had been moved and routes reconfigured to make them equitable. Extra resources were also required to meet demand for bulky waste collections, emptying of bottle recycling facilities and collection of higher than normal tonnages for domestic waste. Missed collection alerts should be received by local councillors.
- The kerbside food waste collection trail was delayed due to problems with the supply of the specialist vehicle. It was now due to commence in November 2022.

Several members expressed their gratitude to the officers and their teams for completed projects within their wards, swift responses to issues reported and support provided in advance of the Northumberland in Bloom competition.

**RESOLVED** that the updates be noted.

*Councillor Riddle left the meeting at 6.50 p.m.*

## **60. NORTH OF TYNE RURAL BUSINESS GROWTH SERVICE**

Ivan Hewitt, Rural Business Growth Programme Manager, Economy & Regeneration Service, was in attendance to give a presentation about the Rural Business Growth Service (RBGS). (A copy of the presentation is enclosed with the signed minutes).

The service was delivered by Advance Northumberland on behalf of Northumberland County Council and worked with micro, small and medium sized enterprises, located in the rural areas of Northumberland, Newcastle and North Tyneside. A £7.9 million programme of investment was available, part funded from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) as part of the European Structural and Investment Funds Growth Programme 2014-2020 and the North of Tyne Combined Authority.

The aim of the RGBS was to grow the rural economy in North of Tyne, with the key outcome being the creation of growth and jobs. The service provided a single point of contact and access to one-to-one specialist advice to help businesses secure funding and financial support. Grants to enable businesses to grow, expand production, and diversify were available from £10,000 upwards to a maximum intervention rate of 40%.

Businesses in the following sectors that were eligible for grant assistance and support with the application process included:

- Food and drink production
- Manufacturing
- Knowledge intensive businesses
- Culture, creative and tourism - excluding retail and accommodation
- Energy products and services
- Environmental products and services

Advice and support were available for organisations, including community centres and village halls, not currently eligible for grant funding under the above criteria. The current fund was available until June 2023.

Copies of leaflets promoting the service were circulated. The next business surgery and networking event was due to be held on 13 October 2022 in Berwick with further events to be arranged.

The Chair thanked the Rural Business Growth Programme Manager for sharing information about the service. A copy of the presentation would be circulated electronically with the officers' contact details.

**RESOLVED** that the information be noted.

## **61. MEMBERS LOCAL IMPROVEMENT SCHEMES – PROGRESS REPORT**

The Local Area Council received a progress update on Members' Local Improvement Schemes as at 1 September 2022. (A copy of the report is enclosed with the minutes.)

**RESOLVED** that the report be noted.

**62. LOCAL AREA COUNCIL WORK PROGRAMME**

A list of agreed items for future Local Area Council meetings was circulated.  
(A copy is enclosed with the minutes.)

Members were invited to email any requests to the Chair and / or Democratic Services Officer between meetings.

Members enquired as follows:

- If information on the delivery of local services in the Tynedale area could be shared to explain which services did what. The Chair confirmed that the matter would be referred to the next meeting of the Local Area Chairs.
- If an update was available on the Peth Head speed survey.

**RESOLVED** that the work programme be noted.

**63. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting (planning only) would be held on Tuesday 15 November 2022 at 4.00 p.m.

**CHAIR** \_\_\_\_\_

**DATE** \_\_\_\_\_