

# LONGFRAMLINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

## MINUTES OF VIRTUAL MEETING

**Meeting on:** 7<sup>th</sup> October 2020  
**Meeting at:** Zoom 820 0237 2500  
**Meeting time:** 7:00 pm  
**Present:** Cllrs: Gillian Apthorpe (GA), Allison Davis (AD), Graham Fremlin (GF) - Chair, Diane Lakey (DL), John Munro (JM), Gillian Nelless (GN), Dave Weldon (DW).  
**In attendance:** Two members of the public, Clerk

*The meeting opened at 7.04 p.m.*

- 1) **Apologies for Absence – None**
- 2) **Table Urgent Business to be discussed in 20 below –**
  - a) Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG)
  - b) Parish & Town Christmas Lights across Northumberland
  - c) Postal Service
  - d) Remembrance Day Service
  - e) Land at the rear of the Memorial Hall
- 3) **Declaration of Interests - None**
- 4) **Gifts & Hospitality – None**
- 5) **Community Police Report-** The following Police update had been received on 02/10/20: “The below information reflects the Longframlington area from 27<sup>th</sup> August 2020.

### **Crimes reported 4**

Respectfully full details cannot be given, but these relate to 2 Public order offences. One on Rothbury road relating to road rage and an incident at a commercial property.

**Graffiti – COMMUNITY CONCERN** – Thank you for reporting this. I had reported the graffiti to the highways department however from further information received I noticed tonight that some of the graffiti was still present. I will report this again and ask for this to be cleared up. Although a minor offence we take this type of behaviour very seriously due to the impact to the local community. This concern is still being looked into after further information has been received. And a damage to phone.

### **Anti- Social Behaviour – 3**

These relate to anti-social driving and door to door sellers.

Door to door sellers – Although most of these sellers are legitimate unfortunately, we do often come across those who do not have the correct permissions and licences to peddle their goods. Due to this it is helpful for us to be notified if the sellers are in the area for our information and if we are in the area we can attend and check they have the correct documentation. Often they will state they are ex-offenders and are trying to earn a decent living which is true for some however more often than not we get reports of them taking advantage of your generosity and bad sales tactics – This is usually the case if they are in an estate with a lot of elderly people living as they will seek to take advantage of their vulnerabilities. Please inform us if they visit again.

Please see below number of vehicles checked and dates in the Longframlington area. A number of warnings have been issued to drivers. We will continue to conduct checks in the area and welcome reports.

17/09/2020	Longframlington	Vehicles checked – 100+	Officer - 2867
20/08/2020	Longframlington	Vehicles checked- 40	Officer - 9395/9629

### **Other Business**

We hope everyone is staying safe and well. We appreciate the reports being received by members of the public and encourage this to continue.

**LOCAL CORONAVIRUS RESTRICTIONS** – As you will be aware there are current restrictions in our area to reduce the spread of coronavirus. Any reports received of breaches of guidelines are followed up and dealt with accordingly. Please report any breaches.

**OP CHECKPOINT** – We have been conducting proactive patrols around rural areas including your area stopping and checking vehicles suspected in poaching and rural crime.

Any incident of this nature that is reported will always be followed up. Please, if you see any suspicious vehicles or persons in the area REPORT THIS on 101 or online NORTHUMBRIA.POLICE.UK.

**FARMWATCH** – Please spread the word to any farmers/workers that we are here to support them and provide crime prevention advice. I have already visited a few farms in the area and issued new FARMWATCH signs and signed them up to the scheme – Basically this allows us to notify them of suspicious vehicles or incidents in the area.

My email address is [4965@northumbria.pnn.police.uk](mailto:4965@northumbria.pnn.police.uk) – if something is not urgent and you would like some advice please get in touch. **Thank you – Russell Stalker cso4965 Alnwick and Rual”**

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## 6) County Councillors Report – None

7) **Minutes of Previous Meeting** - The minutes of the virtual meeting held on 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2020 were reviewed, unanimously approved as a true record and signed as such.

### Housekeeping Issues

#### 8) Matters Arising out of Minutes

- a) Road Improvements. Work on A697 to go ahead as scheduled. GF had a meeting with the project manager. Work would start on w/b 12<sup>th</sup> October when a convoy system will be in operation during surface removal. The road will be closed during w/b 19<sup>th</sup> October but local access will be available. NCC to provide a job specification which will indicate which parts of the road will be worked on specific days. This information to be circulated via Facebook. **Action GF/AD/GA**  
Traffic calming measures on Rothbury Rd – Highways are awaiting information from one more internal dept before the measures can be installed. Awaiting news of how the surface drainage problems are to be addressed.
- b) Village Christmas tree and lights. The Christmas tree company in Felton appeared no longer keen to supply the tree. Agreed to source from usual supplier. GF/DW to organise selection, purchase, cutting down & erecting. **Action: GF/DW**
- c) Covid-19 Related Issues. Government and NALC guidelines continued to recommend on-line meetings. Volunteer scheme continues to be suspended but would be re-instigated if required.
- d) Local Electricity Bill. Letter had been sent to Anne-Marie Trevelyan MP and an acknowledgement received.
- e) Local Transport Plan 2021/22. LPC priorities had been submitted
- f) Feedback on issues arising from a request for information. Information requested had been provided. No formal responses had been received.

9) **Meetings to Attend / Attended** Neighbourhood Steering Group meetings scheduled for 5<sup>th</sup> October and 2<sup>nd</sup> November

#### 10) Finance

a) Receipts in the months of September. Approved.

03/09/2020	NCC ref 4660219	Precept 2nd half	Giro	12000.00
03/09/2020	LPC recharge to Cemetery	JBC Precept (second half)	Journal	-1262.00
03/07/2020	Barclays Business A/C	Ac No. 30586455 Interest		0.84
			<b>Total</b>	<b>10738.84</b>

b) Clerk's salary, expenses, PAYE & NI and approval of Other Payments. Approved.

07/10/2020	Garth Rhodes reimbursement	Zoom subscription	14.39
07/10/2020	Playdale	Balance Replacement swing timbers etc	3058.73
14/09/2020	British Gas	Electricity Sports court	10.10
07/10/2020	Garth Rhodes reimbursement	Stamps 12x1 <sup>st</sup> class, 12x2 <sup>nd</sup> class	16.92
07/10/2020	L/fram Mem Hall	Storage of PC documents	100.00
07/10/2020	NCC	Extra Grass Cuts	449.03
07/10/2020	John Munro reimbursement	1 large Roundup	39.00
07/10/2020	Gavin Christie	Grounds Maintenance (Sep)	279.00
07/10/2020	Gavin Christie	Grass cutting Maint. (to cemetery)	-84.00
07/10/2020	G Rhodes	Salary & Expenses (Sep 2020)	375.86
07/10/2020	LPC	Recharge Clerk's wages to cemetery (Sep)	-40.73
07/10/2020	HMRC	PAYE Sep 2020	93.00
		<b>Total</b>	<b>4311.30</b>

c) Requests for donations. The members approved a donation of £100 to GNAAS. **Action: Clerk**

d) Bank Reconciliation to 7<sup>th</sup> October 2020. Approved

Balance per bank statements			£
at 25 <sup>th</sup> September 2020	Community account	70676.34	
	Business Saver	6104.02	76780.36
Less unrepresented cheques			
	Cemetery	0.00	
	Parish Council	06/03/2020	Alnwick Playhouse
		07/10/2020	Garth Rhodes reimbursement
		07/10/2020	Playdale
		07/10/2020	Garth Rhodes reimbursement
			16.92

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	07/10/2020	L/fram Mem Hall	100.00	
	07/10/2020	NCC	449.03	
	07/10/2020	John Munro reimbursement	39.00	
	07/10/2020	Gavin Christie	279.00	
	07/10/2020	G Rhodes	375.86	
	07/10/2020	HMRC	93.00	4475.93
Uncredited Deposits - Cemetery	01/10/20	B/burn & H/hurst PC	238.00	
Parish Council			0.00	238.00
Balance per cash book				72542.43
	PC			60109.33
	Cemetery			12433.10
				72542.43

e) Interim Audit had been arranged for 20<sup>th</sup> October 2020

**Action: Clerk**

**11) Village Activities.** It was agreed to use advertisements on the PC Facebook page and local shops to encourage residents to decorate their own windows/ gardens for Halloween, so that families could walk the streets to enjoy the occasion without the traditional 'trick or treat' house calls.

**Action: AD/GA**

**12) Allotments**

a) Management No Issues

b) Maintenance. The posts of the fence adjacent to Plots 1-4 have been reported as needing attention/replacement. One plot had been sprayed to kill the weeds as the tenant was currently shielding. And another plot may also need to be treated.

**Action JM**

**13) King George V Playing Field** including:

a) Sports Court & Playground. A letter had been received and previously circulated to members from Anne Lowrie along with signatures collected as a petition asking for the reopening of the Sports Court. GF first of all addressed the issues raised:

- i) Why was the play area and exercise equipment allowed to remain open? Because it was not possible to close this off but the PC had adhered to the Covid-19 (C-19) regulations on its opening.
- ii) Football at all levels was allowed. This only applied to relevant sports body registered clubs. Team sports must follow government and sports body regulations and must be formally organised and areas and equipment must be routinely sanitised. Also, a register of attendees must be kept for 21 days. Recreational forms of exercise must follow the Rule of Six.
- iii) Longhorsley & Swarland courts open with no cases of Coronavirus. This would appear to be hearsay evidence which was not proven.
- iv) Insurance would be invalidated had been challenged. This was a grey area. There were instances where organisations had been told if they had not complied with government C-19 regulations then their insurance would be invalid.
- v) Winter nights were looming at this would be the only place where people could play outdoors. Agreed.

The issue was then opened up for discussion. There was a wide variety of views expressed and information provided including:

- The closure of the sports court was having an impact on the mental and physical wellbeing of our young people
- It may be possible to open the court only for organised sport. This would need to meet condition 13 a) ii above.
- Children were operating in groups and bubbles at school, why not on the court. The issue was different as there was more likely that the virus could be transmitted through droplet dispersal.
- It was not possible for the PC to supervise the court; however, clear and accurate rules could be posted. If the rules were broken then the court could be closed.
- Whilst the playing field had been available for play and exercise over the summer, there was no doubt that the sports court was a more appropriate facility during the dark winter nights.
- Evidence showed that young people were ignoring the Rule of Six. There were a number of places where groups of up to six could meet outdoors around the village.
- In last seven days it had been reported that there were 42 cases per 100,000 in Shilbottle Ward of C-19; Longhorsley Ward over 100 per 100,000 and Alnwick Ward 120 per 100,000. Longframlington was very lucky that numbers of cases were so low; 3 recently known of which only 1 current.
- Opening the sports court is unlikely to increase risk.
- The issue was about the PC taking responsibility to adhere to guidelines and regulations and mitigate risk in the best way we can.
- Organised sport could not take place as it would be extremely difficult for the PC to supervise and meet the regulations.
- If the sports court was to reopen, the closing time of 9.00 p.m. would remain in force.

The meeting then moved to a vote'. AD proposed, seconded by GA that the Sports court be re-opened with clear signage as to the government and local regulations and a clear indication that if the rules were broken the court would be closed immediately. The motion was carried by the Chairman's casting vote. It was agreed that:

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- the court re-open on Monday 12<sup>th</sup> October to give sufficient time to produce notices and to inform people through Facebook.
- Any abuse of the rules would be discussed by councillors via email and a decision on further action to be made using delegated powers.
- The court would be closed nightly at 9.00 p.m. **Action: GF**

b) Replacement timbers to swings and ropes for mini suspension bridge on balance trail. These repairs had been completed and invoice for the work received. It was agreed that the chippings around the swings needed replacement. **Action: GF**

## 14) Planning

a) To note any planning issues since previous meeting.

Ref No	Description	NCC Status	Parish Council Position
20/00469/FUL	<b>Land North East of Springfield Low Town Farm</b> - Erection of 2 holiday cottages	<b>PERMITTED</b>	See minutes from previous meeting for PC responses
20/00923/FUL	<b>Land South of The Paddock</b> –Erection of four houses	<b>Awaiting Decision</b>	See minutes from previous meeting for PC responses
20/02082/VARYCO	<b>Poultry Farm Atheys Moor</b>	<b>Registered</b>	See minutes from previous meeting for PC responses
20/02098/VARYCO	<b>Land West of Meadow Lodge</b>	<b>Registered</b>	See minutes from previous meeting for PC responses
20/02482/FUL	<b>Land North of Fairfields</b>	<b>Registered</b>	<p>Longframlington Parish council OBJECT to this application for the reasons listed below.</p> <p>The developer already has permission either 58 or 47 homes on phases 1 and 2 of this site, the site has had building permission for over four years yet there has still not been a brick laid, this appears to be just an attempt to bank the land for another 29 homes before the Northumberland local plan (NLP) and the Longframlington Neighbourhood plan (LNP) can gain approval.</p> <p>Both the NLP and LNP show this site as outside of the village boundaries. The LNP Vision and Objectives consultation specifically asked if the Village Boundaries should be maintained and protected; 94% of respondents agreed with this. (See VO Charts.pdf attached).</p> <p>The NLP states that the housing requirement in the LNP area over the life of the plan is 47, while this is not a maximum figure currently the actual number of houses with planning permission or already developed within the plan period is 241 which is 512%, a figure that we feel demonstrates that further sites are not only unnecessary but would also represent gross overdevelopment and massing of housing in the LNP area. There are also sites within the Village boundaries which could provide a further 30 plus houses if the need arises.</p> <p>There is no demonstrable need for further housing as there are over 100 existing houses and plots available. The village infrastructure is already at breaking point. The Doctor's surgery is at full capacity and could not even provide enough appointments for this year's Flu injections, so residents have had to travel to Rothbury surgery or use the services of Pharmacists around the area.</p> <p>The junction to this development with the A697 is within 100mtrs of another difficult junction and within 150mtrs of a speed warning and recording sign. This has identified that 56% of vehicles entering the village are speeding, when already within the 30mph speed</p>

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Ref No	Description	NCC Status	Parish Council Position
			limit; the highest speed being over 70mph (a full breakdown of vehicles speeds can be provided). Most households have a minimum of 2 vehicles which are likely to generate and extra 116 plus journeys per day onto this dangerous road.

20/02082/VARYCO Poultry Farm Atheys Moor. The applicant's representatives had posted on the NCC website which suggested that the PC had not consulted with residents and therefore our comments should be ignored. They were clearly unaware of the roles and procedures of parish councils within the planning process. It had been reported to a councillor that the applicant had made direct communication with objectors. The councillor was advised that these people should report this to the NCC Planning Department.

20/02098/VARYCO Land West of Meadow Lodge. Within the Landscape report on this application it stated that the Northumberland Local Plan now carried planning weight and should be considered when deciding this application. Presumably the Plan will be considered with all new and currently undecided planning applications.

17/03662/FUL: Land East of Longframlington Gardens (Cuthberts View): GF reported that he had written a series of emails to Rob Murfin, Head of Planning and Vivienne Cartmel, Principal Planning Officer at the NCC Local Planning Authority (LPA) regarding our concerns about the outcome to this planning application, asking for clarification as to why the revoking of this application had been rescinded and why no consultation or advice had been given to either the PC or other interested parties (at least one of which had previously instigated stage one and two complaints) that this application was now to be allowed. He had also requested that all work on site be suspended until the further complaints to the LPA (which may ultimately end up with the ombudsman) were fully resolved. In their reply, NCC had stated that since serving the Revocation Order due to a further error it had been necessary to obtain an updated valuation report to establish an independent valuation of the site with planning permission for two houses (instead of the two holiday lets as in the original application), to ascertain the value of any compensation which may be payable to the land owner. The updated valuation was a significant increase compared to the original valuation. As a result, the LPA had carried out a further assessment and a decision not to pursue the earlier decision to revoke planning permission had been agreed and the revocation order had been withdrawn. NCC accepted that the decision to grant permission for the application was flawed and that planning permission should never have been granted. However, it was not in the public interest to revoke the planning permission given the high level of compensation likely to be payable. LPC members believed that the whole process of this application had been badly mis-managed. It was highly unlikely that because of the issues of financial liability and substantial compensation upon the public purse that the Ombudsmen would overturn this decision. For the PC to take this further would also incur significant costs. The mistakes of the LPA included:

- The original decision to approve based upon the LPA incorrectly interpreting prior planning decisions.
- Incorrectly approving two houses, not two holiday lets.
- Ignoring and not taking into account the original PC objections
- Lack of proper communication with consultees.
- NCC 'sweeping under the carpet' their mistakes.

Members were keen to know how these erroneous decisions had come about and what remedial action and sanctions the LPA was taking to ensure such mistakes did not reoccur. This was one of a number of serious blunders on the part of the LPA regarding Longframlington; if this situation was replicated across the county then this amounted to a very serious catalogue of errors. It was agreed that members examine all the relevant documentation on this matter and provide GF with their comments and concerns, in order for him to make a formal response to the Head of Planning, along with an invitation to Rob Murfin to attend a future PC meeting to discuss this matter and provide answers to our concerns.

**Action: All/GF**

**15) Cemetery/JBC issues:**

a) Finance

i) Receipts since last meeting. Approved

03/09/2020	LPC recharge to Cemetery	JBC Precept (second half)	1262.00
01/10/20	B/burn & H/hurst PC	JBC budget element	238.00
		<b>Total</b>	<b>1500.00</b>

ii) Charge for Clerk and Other Payments

07/09/2020		Anglian Water Business	Water bill 01/06 - 31/08	14.21
07/10/2020		Gavin Christie	Grass cutting & maintenance	84.00
07/10/2020		LPC	Recharge Clerk's wages (Sep)	40.73

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iii) Bank information to 7<sup>th</sup> October 2020 = 12433.10

iv) Income & Expenditure 2020/21 to 7<sup>th</sup> October 2020:

<b>Income</b>		
Precept	3000.00	
Other Income	181.00	
VAT	1944.00	
<b>Total Cemetery Income</b>		<b>5125.00</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>		
<b>Plaques</b>	<b>51.00</b>	
Maintenance	1100.67	
Rates	27.12	
Capital Purchases	0.00	
Admin Expenses	186.35	
<b>Total Cemetery Expenditure</b>		<b>1365.14</b>
<b>Net Income less Expenditure</b>		<b>3759.86</b>

- b) Burials/Ashes internments. Winifred Skelly Funeral Plot 192a buried 14/09/2020. Exclusive right of burial.
- c) Memorial applications. None
- d) Cemetery extension. Work on hold until the dissolution of the JBC is complete. Clerk to draw up a formal dissolution document for approval at the next meeting and submit this to the Finance Section of NCC. **Action: Clerk**

## 16) Action Plan – October 2020

- a) General Service review and assessment - Ensure asset register is up to date with transfers and purchases. **Action: GF/Clerk**
- b) Review community engagement – Members agreed that the Facebook page was working well and a good way to get information out to the community. It was agreed that Facebook could be used to disseminate information on wider issues and one way to do this was to put a link to the Minutes on the Longframlington PC webpage. It was agreed to publish the Minutes of PC meetings within two weeks of the meeting instead of the current mandatory 30 days. **Action: Clerk/AD/GA**
- c) Check on provision and conditions of grit bins; bus shelters; waste bins. Members were asked to check own areas and report back at the next meeting (including street lighting and condition of footpath at top of Rimside View). **Action: All**
- d) Grit Bins – Arrange for the two Longframlington Grit bins at Cairn View and Harecross park to be topped up. **Action: Clerk**

**Main Issues** – These issues are allocated a longer time for discussion.

**17) Neighbourhood Plan.** Permission had now been granted for consultations to be undertaken on-line. It had been agreed with the consultant that there was now sufficient data from the first consultation for the consultant to begin the draft plan. NCC would now carry out a strategic assessment. It was hoped both would be completed by January. This would then end the Phase 1 consultation. NCC would then undertake their own 6-week consultation and then all the evidence would go to an external examiner for scrutiny. It should be possible to go to a referendum May/June 2021. The Plan would be presented in two parts. The first to deal with issues that have a direct planning association. The second would go into a Community Action Annex and include general things raised during the consultation stage e.g. Tree preservation orders (TPOs), wildlife areas, local history etc.

**18) Extra Grass Cuts October 2020 – March 2021.** NCC had quoted the extra grass cuts at the same price as last time. It was agreed to accept this quote by delegated powers (GF/JM/Clerk).

## 19) Any Urgent Business

- a) Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) The Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) Accessibility Regulations 2018 require public sector bodies, including local councils, to ensure reasonable adjustments are made to websites so they are accessible to people with various disabilities. From 23 September 2020 all local council websites had to comply with these regulations. They are required to include an accessibility statement on their website setting out to what extent they meet the requirements and what alternative arrangements are available. Good practice would also see councils including a plan to narrow the accessibility gap over time. Few councils at present had complied with these new regulations. Whilst in the main, it was expected that current websites would comply, NorthumberlandALC were looking at producing further guidance aimed not only at those council who use their portal, but also councils who use other providers. From what they were being told, parish councils had no need to engage expensive consultants to look at this issue. It was agreed, if the further guidance was available, to include this within the review of internal policies & procedures, as part of the November Action Plan. **Action: Clerk**
- b) Parish & Town Christmas Lights across Northumberland. On December 11th 2020, Bedlington based, Leading Link would be running an online event named “Remotely Christmas” designed to be streamed online into schools, care homes and private houses with a number of interactive workshops taking place throughout the day. The event was aimed to link the far corners of Northumberland together in one place to spread some much-needed Christmas cheer. As many people who would normally enjoy the switching on of an areas Christmas Lights would miss out this year, one of the segments was “Lights Up Northumberland”. They intended to travel around the area at night and take video footage of Christmas Lights

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in order to produce a montage piece showing the lights across the region. They asked that LPC be involved and would like details on when our lights would be switched on. All in Favour. GF to inform Clerk of dates, when available, for him to pass on to Leading Link. **Action: GF/Clerk**

It was agreed that the PC could take a similar approach using Facebook to post resident's Christmas window/homes/gardens lighting displays. **Action: AD/GA**

- c) Postal Service. It had been reported that areas within Longframlington were not receiving a full six-day postal coverage. Agreed that the PC write to the Post Office with our concerns. JM to gather hard evidence of instances when post has not been delivered. **Action: JM**
- d) Remembrance Day Service. Rev James Harvey had approached GF with a proposal for Remembrance Day: To hold two services each of which could offer places to 30/40 people whilst keeping social distancing and meeting all Government regulations. The first would be held in the morning at St Mary's Church and the second in the afternoon at the Memorial Hall. There would be no singing and a delegation of 6 people would lay the wreath. JM to consult with Hall Committee and report back for further action. **Action: JM/GF**
- e) Land at the rear of the Memorial Hall. JM reported that the owner of a small section of land at the rear of the hall which had been loaned to the Memorial Hall and fenced within the Memorial Hall grounds had indicated that he was intending to recover this area of land within the near future.

**20) Date of Next Meeting** – Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> November at 7.00 p.m. on-line.

*Meeting closed at 9.00 p.m.*

**Garth Rhodes – Parish Clerk, 5 Wardle Terrace, Longframlington, Northumberland NE65 8AB. E-mail**