

# TOGSTON PARISH COUNCIL

<https://northumberlandparishes.uk/togston>

Chairman  
June Watson

Clerk: Clair Lewis  
65 Main Street, Felton  
Northumberland, NE65 9PT  
Tel: 07809 205548

To the Members of Togston Parish Council:

7 September 2021

Dear Councillor

You are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of Togston Parish Council on Tuesday 14 September at 6:00pm for the purpose of transacting the following business.

This Meeting will be held in **Acklington Village Hall** due to the closure of Christ Church Hall.

C Lewis

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## AGENDA

### 1. Apologies for absence

To approve any apologies for absence

### 2. Public Participation

Members of the public may ask questions or make representations (limited to five minutes in total)

### 3. Disclosure of Interests

To disclose any interests in items on the Agenda and to grant any dispensations

### 4. Minutes of previous meetings

- To approve as a correct record the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Council held 13 July 2021 (Pages 3-6)
- To approve as a correct record the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Council held on 19 July 2021 (Page 7-8)

### 5. Report from Northumbria Police

To receive a report from Northumbria Police

### 6. Report from County Councillor Terry Clarke

To receive a report from County Councillor Terry Clarke

### 7. Chairman's Report

To receive a report from the Chairman

### 8. Clerk's Report

To receive a report from the Clerk on actions taken since the last meeting

### 9. Finance

- To receive financial report to 2 September 2021 (date of most recent bank balance) (Pages 9 and 10)
- To authorise payments

Payee	Head of Expenditure	Cost	VAT	Total
J Watson – reimbursement for competition prizes	Togston in Bloom	90.00	0.00	90.00
J Watson – reimbursement for competition prizes	Togston in Bloom	26.96	0.00	26.96
J Watson – printer supplies/stationery for allotment letters	Stationery	20.58	0.00	20.58
Postage (petty cash) – allotment letters	Clerk's Expenses	12.75	0.00	12.75
C Bowden – fence	Allotments – Maintenance	700.00	0.00	700.00
C Bowden – gate	Allotments – Maintenance	100.00	0.00	100.00
Wave – water bill	Allotments – Water	15.25	0.00	15.25

The Clerk's salary is due but will be submitted for approval at the next meeting due to ongoing issues with HMRC PAYE Basic Tools.

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c. To note receipts

Date	Source	Reason	Amount
10/06/21	TSB	Interest	0.04
10/07/21	TSB	Interest	0.04
10/08/21	TSB	Interest	0.03

## 10.Christmas Lights

- To agree an alternative location for the tree as the Church has closed and cannot be used for this
- If no suitable location is identified, to re-consider whether to continue with previously agreed expenditure for the tree and new lights
- If a suitable location is agreed, to agree next steps/actions

## 11.Christmas Fair

To discuss and agree arrangements for the Christmas Fair

## 12.Togston Public Footpath Number 15 – Fence and Gate

To receive update and to agree any actions

## 13.Allotments

- To receive a Report on Allotments from the Clerk (See separate Report on Allotments August 2021)
- To decide whether to join The National Allotment Society at a cost of £56 (plus VAT)
- To discuss the following issues (details set out in the Report on Allotments) and to decide the Council's policy in each case:
  - Underletting/Sharing of Allotments
  - Priority for Allotments/First Refusal
- To discuss purchasing a seat bench for Togston Parish Allotments, to be placed in front of the noticeboard

## 14.Garages

- To receive an update on the Garage review from the Clerk

## 15.Gordon Street Car Park

To consider current use of Gordon Street Car Park and to agree any necessary policies, including restrictions on use e.g. number of vehicles per household, length of stay, overnight parking, tax/insured vehicles only

## 16.Local Transport Plan Programme 2021/22

To decide top three highways and transport priority issues for submission to NCC, to be considered for inclusion in the Local Transport Plan Programme 2022/23 (Guidance from NCC aimed at Parish Councils set out at Pages 11 and 12)

## 17.Flower Planters

To discuss and agree where future meetings will be held

## 18.Section 106 Agreement relating to New Housing Development at Hadston

To discuss the New Housing Development and Section 106 Agreement and to agree any actions

## 19.Meeting Place

To discuss and agree where future meetings will be held

## 20.Date of Next Meeting

Tuesday 9 November 2021 at 6:00pm, location to be confirmed

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## ITEM 3a – DRAFT MINUTES

At the Meeting of the Parish Council held at Christ Church Hall on 13 July 2021 at 6:00pm.

Present: Cllrs A Cairns, K Farwell, M Farwell, F Moore, A Urwin and J Watson (Chairman)

### 17/21 Apologies for Absence

None received.

### 18/21 Disclosure of Interests

None received.

### 19/21 Minutes of previous Meetings

- a. The Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council held on 18 May 2021 were approved as a true record.
- b. The Minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting held on 28 June 2021 were approved as a true record, subject to a correction to Minute 16/21 to show that Cllr Urwin's wife is an allotment tenant, not Cllr Urwin himself.

### 20/21 Report from Northumbria Police

The Parish Council agreed to bring this item forward to allow PC Andrea Teasdale (8603) to leave the Meeting following her report. PC Teasdale gave a full and detailed report about policing in Togston and the surrounding area, and the following main points were noted:

- a. PC Teasdale and her team receive a lot of word-of-mouth reports directly about incidents or concerns. Unfortunately, to be able to act on these and to build up a full picture of the issues, these incidents and concerns need to be reported officially. There are several ways to do this:
  - By telephoning the 101 non-emergency number
  - By using the reporting form on the Northumbria Police website
  - By calling Crimestoppers

It is possible to make an anonymous report without providing your details by calling Crimestoppers.

If enough reports are received this can build up a picture of the issue which allows the police to request more resources to police the area. Without these reports, the police cannot put more officers or resources into the area. It is really important that any concerns are reported to the police using the methods above. You can report small things, for example dirty syringes in public places or the smell of cannabis, as evidence of drug use, and this will all help build up information.

- b. It is also possible to report concerns to the Housing Associations. Again, reporting issues helps build up a picture. If reports are made to both the police and the housing association then a joint investigation can take place.
- c. The police are unable to take much action to deal with empty houses. If these are becoming a problem they can be reported to Northumberland County Council Environmental Health. This team is able to issue fines and to make an order against the landlord.
- d. Residents should be vigilant as there is a known drug addict in the area who is going through bins and trying door handles. Please ensure your properties are secured and telephone the police if you see any suspicious activity.

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- e. The police can use private CCTV footage as evidence of crime. If you do notice something on your dashcam or doorbell or other private camera footage, this can be passed to the police.
- f. The police are aware of individuals from out of the parish walking in to meet at houses in the parish. This is being monitored and dealt with.

## 21/21 Co-option to Vacancy

Three applications for the vacancy were received, one of which was withdrawn prior to the meeting. The Parish Council was given the opportunity to propose and second each of the two candidates. Only one candidate, Susan Jeffrey, was proposed and seconded by councillors. The other candidate was proposed but not seconded.

**RESOLVED** to co-opt Susan Jeffrey to the vacancy. Cllr Jeffrey will be asked to sign a declaration of acceptance of office and to complete the Declaration of Interest Forms in advance of the next meeting.

## 22/21 Chairman's Report

Cllr Watson provided her report.

- a. Cllr Watson and the Clerk have been to the bank and completed the forms to change the bank mandate and correspondence address. The Clerk is awaiting confirmation from the bank.
- b. Cllr Watson and the Clerk have had two handover meetings to go through the files and papers from the former Clerk.
- c. The Parish Council resolved at its last meeting to put in place a Service Level Agreement with Northumbria County Council for grass and hedge cutting and strimming and weed killing of the common areas at the Togston Parish Allotments. The work is due to start as soon as possible. Cllr Watson and the Clerk will chase the NCC team to get this started as soon as possible.
- d. The Parish Council attended training provided by the Northumberland Association of Local Councils on 28 June. Cllr Watson has also attended Chairman training on 15 July with the same provider, which she has paid for herself.
- e. Cllr Watson has obtained a price for a new noticeboard from a local joiner. The noticeboard at the allotments is in good working condition so this quote is not needed at present but can be kept on file.
- f. Cllr Watson has written to Broomhill First School to introduce herself and to ask whether the school would be interested in taking an allotment.

## 23/21 Report from County Cllr Terry Clarke

A report was received from County Cllr Clarke which set out the content of recent correspondence received by him relating to Togston and his responses. The Clerk will provide the dates of the next meeting and ask for him to attend.

## 24/21 Policies and Procedures

**RESOLVED** to adopt the following policies:

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- a. Standing Orders
- b. Code of Conduct
- c. Co-option Policy

## 25/21 Finance

- a. The financial report to 10 June (the date of the last bank statements) was received.
- b. **RESOLVED** to authorise the following payments:

Supplier	Head of Expenditure	Cost	VAT	Total	Reference
NALC	Training	£75.00	£0.00	£75.00	

- c. The following payments were noted:

Date	Head of Expenditure	Reason	Amount
10/5/21	Bank	Interest	£0.04

- d. As mentioned in the Chairman's Report, the Clerk is awaiting confirmation from the bank that the mandate and correspondence address have been changed.
- e. **RESOLVED** to ratify the addition of Cllr Watson as an additional signatory.

## 26/21 North End Close – Issues with Rats

Cllr Urwin has received several reports of a rat problem at North End Close. It is possible that this has been caused by the removal of the orchard at the very top end of North End Close. The Parish Council understands that some residents have taken matters into their own hands using industrial products straight onto the garden. This is clearly a health and safety concern for people and animals. Any dead rats need to be disposed of professionally as they are a potential hazard to wildlife if they have eaten poison, the corpses may be a source of Viles disease, and incorrect disposal could breach environmental law.

Affected residents should write to the housing association (Riverside) and should report the issue to Environmental Health at Northumberland County Council. Environmental Health can take action but this will be charged to residents.

Residents should remove sources of food, including bird or pet food. If this must be kept on the premises it should be in metal storage containers. They should remove sources of water and shelter as far as possible.

**RESOLVED** to write to Riverside Housing Association to raise the issue and to ask for their support to deal with the problem.

## 27/21 Best Allotment and Garden Contest

The Parish Council discussed arrangements for the Best Allotment and Garden Contest.

- a. **RESOLVED** Geoff Elliot and Bill will judge the competition on the last Saturday in July. Prizes will be delivered to winners. The Clerk will put up a notice of the date of the competition and will also put up a notice of the winners after the event.
- b. **RESOLVED** to give £20 National Garden Scheme Gift Card first prize and £10 National Garden Scheme Gift Card second prize in the following categories, with a bottle of wine for all first and second prize winners:
  - Flower Garden
  - Allotment Plot
  - Container Garden

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- c. **RESOLVED** Cllr Cairns to arrange engraving of the winners' trophies.

## 28/21 Christmas Lights

The Parish Council discussed arrangements for the Christmas Lights.

### **RESOLVED:**

- a. The Clerk will check any insurance requirements.
- b. To approve expenditure up to £175 for the Christmas tree.
- c. To purchase two new sets of refurbished icicle lights at an approximate cost of £160/set and three new sets of refurbished lights for the Christmas tree at an approximate cost of £40/set. Clerk to ask County Cllr Terry Clarke, the Round Table and the Freemasons for a contribution, with an aim of raising £1,000 for a new set of icicle lights.
- d. Clerk to contact Warkworth and Amble Round table with the date of the switch on.
- e. Clerk to notify the Gazette and the Ambler nearer the time.
- f. Clerk to notify vicar and school in September.

## 29/21 Christmas Lights

Arrangements for the Christmas Fair to be discussed at the next Meeting.

## 30/21 Planning

The Parish Council discussed cars obstructing the Queen Street Public Right of Way (Footpath).

**RESOLVED** to serve a notice on the occupant, copied to the landlord, requesting removal of the vehicles within two weeks, failing which further action to be taken.

The Chairman closed the Meeting at 8:00pm.

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## ITEM 3b – DRAFT MINUTES

At the Meeting of the Parish Council held at Christ Church Hall on 19 July 2021 at 6:00pm.

Present: Cllrs A Cairns, K Farwell, M Farwell, S Jeffrey, F Moore, A Urwin and J Watson (Chairman)

### 31/21 Apologies for Absence

None received.

### 32/21 Disclosure of Interests

Cllrs Cairns, K Farwell, M Farwell, Jeffrey and Moore declared an interest in all items on the agenda as they are allotment tenants. Cllr Urwin declared an interest as his wife is an allotment tenant. Written requests for a dispensation have previously been submitted by all except Cllr Jeffrey and accepted. Cllr Jeffrey was granted a dispensation.

### 33/21 Public Participation

None.

### 34/21 Service Level Agreement

Cllr Watson provided an update on the Grass Cutting and Landscaping Service Level Agreement. The first cut has been carried out but not to an acceptable standard. Cllr Watson has contacted the service leader at Northumberland County Council who agreed and expressed his disappointment. Operatives will be sent out tomorrow to remedy the work and will be there all day.

### 35/21 Register of Allotments

- a. The Clerk has prepared a Register of Allotments from the information on file, but there are some gaps, in particular with regards to contact details for tenants and allotment numbers. The Parish Council reviewed the Register and provided some of the missing information. The Clerk will update the Register with this.
- b. It was agreed it is essential to have a plan or map of the allotments. Cllr Jeffrey has previously made one and will supply this to the Parish Council as a starting point.
- c. It was agreed that it would be good to have proper numbered plaques for each allotment. Cllr M Farwell may be able to make these over the winter.

### 36/21 Allotment Policy – Subletting

The Parish Council discussed the issue of subletting of allotments. It was agreed that the person carrying out the cultivation of the allotment should be named on the Parish Council allotment tenancy agreement. It is very important that allotment rules and regulations are adhered to and that the Parish Council has an up to date record of who is cultivating each allotment for transparency and insurance.

## RESOLVED:

- a. The Clerk will write to all tenants, explain that the Parish Council is updating its records and is generally reviewing use of the allotments, any needed repairs and looking to improve the facilities for everyone. The Clerk will ask for current contact details, whether the plot is used for keeping chickens and if so, how many, and whether the tenant has any issues to report.

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- b. The Clerk will write a second letter to those known or suspected to be subletting the allotment to someone else. This breaches their tenancy agreement and notice of termination will be given. The tenancy of the allotment will be offered to the person cultivating it in the first instance.
- c. The Clerk will put the allotment rules up on the Togston Parish Allotments noticeboard as well as contact details for reporting issues.

## 37/21 Water Tap

Cllr Jeffrey volunteered to take responsibility for turning the water tap off in the winter and for taking meter readings.

## 38/21 Rats

The Parish Council discussed steps which can be taken to discourage rates. It is good practice to cover water butts and compost bins. Chicken feed should be kept in metal lidded containers. The Clerk will put up a notice setting out good practice on the Togston Parish Allotments.

## 39/21 Cockerels

Cllr Jeffrey has been asked whether an allotment tenant can keep a cockerel on his plot. She informed him that this was not permitted. The Parish Council confirmed this.

## 40/21 Emergency Repairs

**RESOLVED** to delegate authority to the Clerk to obtain quotes for and to get emergency repairs carried out.

## 41/21 Broken Gate

There is a broken gate and post which needs repairs.

**RESOLVED** Cllr Watson will ask for a quote from the person who carries out similar work for Amble Town Council and will email this round.

## 43/21 Grass and Hedge Cutting Equipment

The Parish Council owns a lawnmower, strimmer and hedge cutter, used previously to maintain the common areas. Although tenants have previous been allowed to use this equipment, the Parish Council has no legal power to do this. There are also health and safety implications and this would not be covered by Parish Council insurance.

**RESOLVED** to offer the equipment for sale. The Clerk will put up a notice on the Togston Parish Allotments noticeboard asking for best offers by a specified date. A group of tenants could put in a joint offer if they wish.

The Chairman closed the Meeting at 7:43pm.

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ITEM 9a

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Financial Position at 2 September 2021			
		Budget	Total
Balances at 1 April 2021			
TSB Club Charity and Trust Account			6,137.77
TSB Business Instant Access Account			827.43
Petty Cash			98.58
<b>BALANCE b/f at 1 April 2021</b>			<b>7,063.78</b>
<b>RECEIPTS</b>			
Precept		4,000.00	2,000.00
Rents		1,571.00	
Allotments			897.50
Garages and Parking			660.00
Wayleave		250.00	249.14
VAT Refunds		100.00	-
Interest received		-	0.19
		<b>5,921.00</b>	<b>3,806.83</b>
<b>PAYMENTS</b>			
Clerk's Salary		2,950.00	749.46
Clerk's Expenses		50.00	67.39
Stationery		-	25.75
Insurance		750.00	708.76
Allotments			
Water Charges		350.00	-
Rock Salt		100.00	-
Grass Cutting		200.00	222.07
Hedge Cutting		200.00	-
Maintenance		-	800.00
Togston in Bloom		150.00	90.00
Plants		150.00	63.00
Miscellaneous (Petty Cash)		200.00	2.29
Subscriptions/Training		170.00	259.98
Donations		150.00	-
Room Hire		50.00	30.00
Audit Fees		90.00	117.00
Website		75.00	75.00
Christmas Lights		-	-
Recoverable VAT		-	5.61
		<b>5,635.00</b>	<b>3,216.31</b>
<b>BALANCE c/f</b>			<b>7,654.30</b>
<b>BANK RECONCILIATION</b>			
Balances at 2 September 2021			
TSB Club Charity and Trust Account			6,885.02
TSB Business Instant Access Account (at 23 May 2021)			827.54
Petty Cash			16.74
Less			
Uncleared payments		-	75.00
			<b>7,654.30</b>

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## ITEM 9a Continued

Fund	Balance c/f at 1 April 2021	Grants and donations	Other income	Allocation of budget	Expenditure	Current Balance
Allotments			897.50	850.00	1,022.07	725.43
Garages and Parking			660.00		-	660.00
Christmas Lights	827.43			-	-	827.43
<b>Total Earmarked Reserves</b>	<b>827.43</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,557.50</b>	<b>850.00</b>	<b>1,022.07</b>	<b>2,212.86</b>
<b>General Reserves</b>	<b>6,137.77</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>6,137.77</b>
<b>Working Balance</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>2,249.33</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>2,194.24</b>	<b>55.09</b>
						<b>8,405.72</b>

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ITEM 16

## **Northumberland Local Transport Plan (LTP) Programme**

### **Parish Council notes for Guidance**

#### **Criteria for LTP Schemes**

##### **Integrated Transport**

The LTP programme has been developed following a comprehensive review of the needs for the maintenance of the highway asset, identified road safety issues and potential improvement of the highway and transport network.

In addition, requests for improvements and maintenance received from the local community over time are recorded in the Directory of Requests database and considered for inclusion in the programme on an annual basis. County Council Members and Town and Parish Councils are provided with details of the requests that have been made within their own areas throughout the year and they are asked to identify key priorities for consideration in the programme for completeness.

The requests are scored by officers in Technical Services and the draft priorities are presented to Council Members in the autumn for their comment before the final draft programme is presented to the Local Area Councils for final comment early in the calendar year, prior to the final approval in March. The process is transparent, however, as the demand for schemes significantly outweighs the funding available it is impossible to approve all of the requests that we receive in the annual programme.

- Requests are assessed against the following criteria:

##### *Contribution to National Transport Goals:*

- a) Support Economic Growth
- b) Reduce Carbon Emissions
- c) Promote Equality of Opportunity
- d) Contribute to Better Safety, Security and Health
- e) Improve Quality of Life and a Healthy Natural Environment

##### *Other Criteria:*

- f) Part of a package of measures
- g) Community Priority
- h) Attracts External Funding or Synergy with other projects

##### Scoring

- 2 = contributes to the criteria
- 1 = makes some contribution
- 0 = no contribution

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- Safety Schemes are assessed according to the number and severity of personal injury accidents.
- Issues concerning traffic regulation (e.g. parking restrictions) are also considered as part of this annual review, rather than on an ad hoc basis throughout the year. This enables county wide priorities to be established.
- When submitting priorities, please give as much information as possible, including the location and the reason for the priority, i.e. what is the issue that needs to be addressed? (e.g. pedestrian safety, speeding traffic). In each case it is the “issue” that is scored, not any proposed solution.

## **Roads, Bridges & Public Rights of Way Maintenance**

- The road, footway and bridge maintenance programme is developed largely from condition surveys. Foot/cycleway maintenance is prioritised where a lot of reactive maintenance work has been carried out and/or complaints from the public have been received.
- Public rights of way schemes are identified by the Countryside Access Team following consultation with path users. Works focus on meeting the Council's statutory duty by repairing flood damage or river erosion and improving the surface and drainage of damaged and well used paths in popular walking/riding areas.

## **Note**

The LTP programme is capital funding. It cannot be used for revenue funded schemes, such as public transport services or pothole repairs. Requests for new or improved bus or rail services will therefore be forwarded to the Public Transport Team who liaise with operators, (public transport infrastructure, e.g. raised kerbs at bus stops, is eligible for LTP funding).