

Longhorsley Parish Council Meeting 12th November, 2025 at 7.00pm in the Village Hall

Present Cllrs: N Douglas (Chairman)
A Peat
K Bell
P Boyle
J Parker
T Potts
S Alcock

Clerk S Doyle

17 members of the public in attendance between 19.00 to, 13 members of the public left at 20.24, 1 member of the public left at 21.20, 3 members of the public left at 22.10

CO6/1 Apologies for Absence.

CO6/2 Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 8th October, 2025 (which had been previously circulated) were approved for content with a duplication noted in paragraph 8.6ii, Clerk to remove and duly signed.

CO6/3 Declaration of Interests for items on the Agenda
None tendered.

CO6/4 Date of Next Meeting(s) – It was agreed that the dates of the next Parish Council meetings will be 10th December and 14th January.

CO6/5 County Matters – County Cllr Sanderson was not present at the meeting.

CO6/6 Update on behalf of Northumbria Police – Members received and noted the Police Report dated 7th October 2025. Recent Graffiti has been reported to the Police and they have confirmed they will investigate.

CO6/7 Finance

7.1 **Authorisation of Payments** – Members considered and approved the Authorisation of Payments list for November 2025, totalling £5,180.24

7.2 **Budget Monitoring** - Members approved the monitoring statements to the end of March, together with the account transactions for the year, petty cash documents and bank reconciliation to 31st October 2025.

7.3 **Budget 25/26**
Members received version 2 of the Budget. The Clerk informed the meeting that the revised taxbase has been received showing an increase in the number of Band D properties. Members are minded, at this time, to apply a 5% increase in the precept

to cover inflation on service heads. The Clerk will bring version 3 of the Budget to the December meeting for consideration.

CO6/8 Routine Items for Review

8.1a) **Review of Planning Decisions –**

Addition of porch to front elevation/entrance, creating inviting and closet space

13 Wilding Place Longhorsley Morpeth Northumberland NE65 8LB

Ref. No: 25/03072/FUL | Received: Mon 01 Sep 2025 | Validated: Mon 01 Sep 2025 | Status: Refused

Variation of Condition 1 (approved plans) on planning permission 20/01490/VARYCO to allow for revisions to the design and reduction in scale of 2no dwellings. Amendment of wording to pre commencement conditions to include 'excluding demolition'. (amended 01.10.2025)

Show more description

Eastgate And Westgate East Road Longhorsley Northumberland NE65 8SY

Ref. No: 25/02322/VARYCO | Received: Tue 01 Jul 2025 | Validated: Tue 01 Jul 2025 | Status: Permitted

8.1b) **Review of Planning Applications -**

Construction of porch to front elevation of property

41 Whitegates Longhorsley Northumberland NE65 8UJ

Ref. No: 25/03943/FUL | Received: Tue 04 Nov 2025 | Validated: Tue 04 Nov 2025 | Status: Registered - **No Objections**

8.1c) The following applications are to be kept on the Agenda in order to ensure that they are not forgotten - **None at this time.**

8.2 **Moor Management Committee**

- i. 1 Pony has been removed from the Moor by the owner
- ii. A Public Right of Way on the Moor appears to be blocked, this has been reported on Fixmystreet

8.3 **The Old Church Wood – report by Cllr Alcock**

- i. James Chisholm has completed his final cut of the perimeter paths for the year.
- ii. A Working Party is scheduled in January 2026.
- iii. 3 Quotes have been received for the works to the path around the perimeter. The quotes ranged from £26k to £39k. The members agreed to award the job to the

contractor who offered best value and who came recommended. Early in the New Year 2026 work is anticipated to commence. NCC will make a contribution to the project that involves improving the stepped pathway near to the bus stop at Church View. Once the work is complete the pathway will be accessible to users of Wheel Chairs and Prams and will be accessible all year round. Quotes will be confirmed nearer the time of commencement and the Parish Council will look to obtain some funding towards the cost of the project within the Church Woods area.

8.4 **Play Areas**

- i. Members considered and noted the report supplied by Mr Woods
- ii. The slide and swings at Adamson Park have been cleaned.
- iii. The brambles around the MUGA have now been removed following the recent incident of a young person being scratched during football practice. The leaves from inside the MUGA have been swept.
- iv. The tree at Archies Pond is too big for Mr Woods to deal with on his own so he will speak to a local contractor to have it removed. Cllr Boyle will liaise with Mr Woods regarding this tree.

8.5 **Allotments**

- i. Cllr Boyle has been working on an updated tenancy agreement, he proposed changing the dates to fall in line with the financial year rather than calendar year. Members agreed. The 2nd proposed change is to the rent, it has been £10 per annum since 2000. Cllr Boyle is proposing £20 per annum either as one increase or as a step up, £15 then £20. Members agreed to a stepped increase of £15 rising to £20 over a 5 year period, with water charges on top. The 3rd tap still needs to be installed but access makes it difficult for contractors to get any equipment down to the area.
- ii. There is a vacant allotment so the clerk will write to the first person on the waiting list offering them the allotment number 3.
- iii. A brief summary of the history of allotment 13 was read out by Cllr. Boyle. This summary was prepared so that it could be understood why the decision was reached to serve an eviction notice to the tenant of allotment 13. The primary users of the allotment are the Explorers group.
Following feedback from parishioners, mainly parents of children who attend the Explorers group, Cllr Boyle made a proposal to the Parish Council that an offer of two proposals be made to the tenancy holder as a resolution and way forward.
 - a. **Option 1** - Retain the whole allotment known as allotment 13 and agree to comply with 3 month reviews of the site and keep the site maintained as per the tenancy agreement. **Option 2** - Retain 50% of the allotment known as allotment 13 and agree to comply with 3 month reviews of the site and keep the site maintained as per the tenancy agreement. It was agreed by members that the best solution for the whole village needed to be found.
 - b. It was also agreed that the tenancy holder will be given until the end of November to inform the Parish Council whether one of these options was accepted or if they wanted to terminate the tenancy agreement.

8.6 Village Maintenance Issues

- i. The Muga Lights were found to be out of order recently. A fuse had tripped and it was reset. There will be a need for an upgrade to these lights at some point in the future. There had been a quote some time ago and the price was excessive.

8pm - 8.24pm Adjournment for Parishioners

Allotment 13

1. Victoria Farley, whose child attends the Explorers thanked the Councillors for their explanation and offer of options to go forward. She noted the comments that had been made with regards to the unkept nature of the allotment and the safety issues of nails sticking from a pallet. She also acknowledged the previous history as given by Cllr Boyle. Victoria stated that making the allotment smaller would not work with the numbers of children who attend the setting. She mentioned that the allotment's untidy nature is a benefit to the children, they like to be able to get messy in the mud kitchen as this is something that some don't do at home. Cllr Douglas agreed we have common interests in not wanting the allotment to be left unsightly.
2. Alan Hedley asked the Parish Council if legal advice had been taken prior to serving an eviction notice. It was confirmed by the members that legal advice was not needed. There is a disagreement that the land the Parish Council refer to as allotment 13 was given to the then playgroup years ago. Mr Hedley made reference regarding the shape of allotment 13 following on from the discussion that land was given to the playgroup. When asked he offered no documentary evidence to show that this land had been gifted in the past.
3. Rob Murdoch is allotment holder 11 and he fully supports the Parish Councils decision to serve a termination. He stated how allotment 13 was an embarrassment. He made reference to the fact that the Longhorsley Explorer team had not been seen at the allotment for several months this year. He witnessed only a handful of times the group being present during the wonderful summer we had.
4. An Explorer employee Joanne stated that it was due to staff shortage from illness that had resulted in the team not being able to take the children to the allotment. Asked if this meant that the group also had insufficient staff to run the playgroup, she replied that temporary staff had been taken on to manage this.
5. Fiona Leighton the allotment tenant and Explorer director confirmed it was a staff shortage that had resulted in irregular visits to the allotment. She also stated that agreement had been given for the Explorers to leave their items in the Communal Summer House. She also stated that due to the flooring of the allotment not being suitable weeds grew very quickly. Cllr Boyle agreed that the children could leave their coats/wellies in the Summer House while they were at the allotment but not to be stored indefinitely as it hinders access to other items stored inside that the other allotment holders use. Members asked Fiona why, after she previously proposed parents helping to keep the allotment tidy, a parent rota had not been created to assist with the allotment during the times that staff could not attend.
6. Emma Archer spoke on behalf of herself and Glen Rutherford. She thanked the explorers team for all their hard work that enabled parents to be able to work whilst the children were being looked after. She stated that parents were not aware of the unkempt condition of the allotment but now that they are they will make time and assist with the work required. Emma spoke from a child's point of view and wanted

the Parish Council to understand the magical element of a messy area for Children to play in

7. Mick Wake wanted to say that all allotment holders should work together and help each other when times are hard and when holders can't get to their own allotment space. The Parish Council told Mick that this had happened regularly in the past and allotment holders had often tidied allotment 13 in the past.

South Road Development

8. Jan Bryce had a concern regarding the South Road development and that the developer was a part of the County Council. She felt there may be a conflict of interest. Jan highlighted the lack of signage on the road, the parking issues that are being faced by residents of Church View and the parking on the main road and the bus stop. Jan would like to know what the mandatory requirements are for keeping the roads clean during the development. Cllr Boyle will speak with the site manager regarding the road cleaning and signage. The site team has already been spoken to with regards to the parking.

Police Presence

9. Jan also asked how we could contact a local police officer. No replacement has been recruited since the last local police officer left. The general public are not allowed into the offices that the Police occupy in Morpeth. The Clerk will follow up with the Rural Crime Police team who had previously offered to be present at some of the Warm Space sessions.

Parishioners slot closed at 8.24

8.7 Website

- i. A parishioner kindly highlighted an error on the website with the number of allotments showing 12, the clerk explained that we are in the process of changing to a new website provider as the NALC one was no longer supported and will change this to reflect the actual number of 13 on the new website.
- ii. Cllr Alcock has offered support in the rebuild of the new website along with the clerk and Cllr Parker. The Clerk will ask the question of NALC as to whether there has to be uniformity across all Parish councils for websites as there currently is.

8.8 Longhorsley Tree

The Clerk was asked to write articles covering the recent graffiti and the reporting of any future graffiti, the Beacon lighting on News Years Eve, a reminder that Fix My Street can be used to report blocked public rights of way and a special mention to Jan and Sheena who are stepping down from the production of the tree.

8.9 Donation Requests: - none received.

8.10 Village Hall Committee – Cllr Peat gave the following update from the Village Hall AGM held on Wednesday 15th October.

- It was reported the Village Hall Committee had a good collaboration with the Parish Council who are proceeding with the purchase of the freehold of the land and the next step will be to set up a new build sub-committee.

- The Treasurer presented the current balance of £22,730.
- All existing elected committee members and group representatives stood down so a new committee could be elected.

CO6/9 Items Carried Forward

9.1 Housing Developments and Planning Matters in the Village

The Development is proceeding to schedule. Regular visits are undertaken by Parish Councillors. The recent parking issues will be discussed with the site manager.

9.2 Neighbourhood Plan – Cllr. Parker is making good progress with work on-going and hopes to share with the Council in due course.

9.3 Village Green

a) NCC Scheme & Management

i. On-Going

b) Common Land

- A telephone meeting has taken place regarding issues. Written details and plans are to be sent to the Solicitor and client due diligence needs to take place.
- Fete - The Fete Committee have requested to use the Common as a location for next year's event due to allow everything to be in 1 location. The Parish Council have confirmed they are happy to allow this option for the purpose of Community enjoyment.
- CCTV works are still in planning, the trench needs to be dug. The clerk will confirm with a contractor as to whether he can still quote for this part of the work. Atom alarms will need to be involved in upgrading the system and an electrician will be required.
- Cllr Boyle has been in touch with Windmill Farm with regards to a Christmas tree. He asked for the same price as last year. Members agreed that the tree should be bought so it can be delivered or collected in time to be put up.

9.4 Welcome Letters – the Clerk issued letters to 8 and 10 Reivers Gate.

CO6/10 Other Agenda Items

10.1 Parishioner Emails

- Members agreed that the Clerk should register with Bonhams and place a maximum bid of £500 for the Emily Davison artefact.
- Cllr Boyle will arrange with Kevin Woods to remove the 2 large shrubs and they will visit the home of the parishioner to discuss the removal of the tree leaning against her fence.
- The Clerk will confirm with the County Council how long the quote for the expansion of the Cemetery entrance off the A697 is valid for. Members voted on the works going ahead due to the costs involved, 5 members voted for whilst 2 members voted against.

- d. Concern was expressed regarding the kind of comments and information being placed on social media, often anonymously. Cllr Douglas reiterated that the Parish council Policy remains that we do not engage with people through social media and made the following statement for inclusion in the minutes and the Longhorsley Tree.
Social media is a very powerful tool which allows us to communicate quickly to a mass audience and when used responsibly it can be an asset to society. The other side of this is the use of social media to spread disinformation which can result in statements which constitute harassment, incitement of hate or even liable. We would ask all in our community to think about your use of social media, consider how it will be received and what could result from this before posting. It is also the case that people making anonymous posts can be identified, if the content of those posts are not legally compliant. The Longhorsley Facebook page is a public space with nearly 3.7k members A large number of these members do not live in, or have any affiliation to the Parish with some being located in other countries. Those posting on this site should be mindful of including personal information and consider the consequences of this information being subsequently misused.
- e. Kevin Woods has been made aware of the tree roots in Adamson park and he will deal with them to make safe.

CO6/11 Other Items for Information –
11.1

- CO6/12 Any Other Business (arising too late for inclusion on the agenda) –**
12.1
- i. Flooding at Whitegates to be put on the agenda for December meeting.
 - ii. Poppies were put on the lampposts for Remembrance Day, a count will take place of the lampposts in the village so that more poppies can be displayed next year.
 - iii. A meeting with a member of the team of local MP Joe Morris regarding recent issues at the Allotments was held, it was confirmed that as a Parish Council we had been very lenient with all of the issues faced and the options presented to the allotment holder. Cllr Douglas will invite Joe Morris to attend a meeting with the Parish council when he is recess.

The meeting closed at 10.10pm