

Blakelaw and North Fenham Community Council



Meeting held at:
Moorland House
Blakelaw
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE5 3RY

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Chairperson of Council: John Wears
Clerk to the Council: Helen Richardson

MINUTES OF THE COMMUNITY COUNCIL MEETING

DATE HELD: Thursday 11th April 2024

TIME: 6.00 pm

Present:

Councillors: Cllrs John Wears (Chair), Jimmy Gill (Vice Chair), Deborah Wears(DW), Violet Rooke(VR) and Debbie Playford(DP)

Ann Keenan joined the meeting at 6.20pm

In Attendance:

Helen Richardson(HR) – Clerk to the Community Council
Kathy Smith – Resident and Chair of the Tuesday Trailblazers Community Group
Jean McCartney – Resident
Maureen Kelly – Resident
Northumbria Police

Prior to the commencement of the formal meeting the Chair welcomed those who had attended and introduction were made.

Members of the public shared their concerns regarding the possible re-opening of the Blakelaw Legion Club. The community council confirmed that they too would have concerns should the club be re-opened. Details of the licencing application and the deadline for any submissions (6th May 2024) were shared and people would be encouraged to submit their concerns.

35/24. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence had been received from Blakelaw Ward Councillors Marion Williams and Juna Sathian.

36/24. Declaration of Interests

- John Wears – Director of Learning 4 All and Secretary to the Tuesday Trailblazers
- Debbie Playford – Chair of Blakelaw Flats TARA
- James Gill – Bank signatory for the Tuesday Trailblazers
- Violet Rooke – Governor at Thomas Walling Primary School
- Helen Richardson (Clerk) - Bank signatory for the Tuesday Trailblazers

A member of the community council queried when declarations of interest should be made. The Clerk confirmed that it was always best to err on the side of caution and declare an interest no matter how small that interest may be, it was important that the community council were open and transparent.

37/24. Grant Applications

The Clerk advised community councillors that there had been a request for grant application forms from Newcastle City Council (YHN) wardens who were monitoring the flats. The application was to provide football sessions for youths in the area in an attempt to keep them out of the high rise flats and to reduce anti-social behaviour in the area. The Clerk advise that the community council should be cautious as anti-social behaviour should not be rewarded and that the Police should be dealing with the root of the problem and supporting residents.

The Police were in attendance and advise that the application for grant funding was for a separate group of youths and not those who were causing anti-social behaviour within the flats. The Police updated the meeting on what action was being undertaken around the issues being raised by residents from within the flats.

The Chair and Clerk thanked the Police for their update regarding this and the Clerk confirmed she would forward the application forms.

Ann Keenan joined the meeting at 6.20pm

38/24. Minutes of Previous Meetings and Matters Arising

The minutes of the meetings held on the 19th March 2024 were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chair. The Chair confirmed that most items would be covered as updates throughout the meeting.

In relation to matters arising the following was highlighted:

- EPIC had not been seen in Blakelaw for some time.
- The Chair confirmed that in relation to his role with the Tuesday Trailblazers Group his role as Secretary was NOT a paid role however the admin role was a paid role should it be required.
- The Community Pantry would visit the Tuesday Trailblazer Group on the 30th April.

39/24. Police Update

The Police were in attendance and provided an update in relation to the work they had been undertaking in the area to combat the issues that residents were highlighting in relation to anti-social behaviour, off-road motorbikes and drug related incidents.

As ever residents were being encouraged to report the issues. Residents raised concerns regarding the lack of response from the Police in that they often don't even get a call back, let alone a visit. This behaviour was creating a "what's the point" reaction from residents in the area.

JG raised the concern that there appeared to be more and more electric scooters and motorbikes in the area and noted the online system wasn't working. The Police accepted that the motorbikes were difficult to deal with and would themselves appreciate more training on how this issue could be dealt with better.

The community council also raised concerns regarding the large groups of youths that gathered in the area. It was acknowledged that these groups were not always causing a nuisance however people were often unnerved and frightened by this.

40/24. Community Councillor Update

The Chair welcomed updates from community councillors in relation to the casework that they had been dealing with. The following was highlighted:

- Reporting of fly tipping continued to increase.
- YHN's transition back in to Newcastle City Council had begun and a number of information sessions had been set up for residents.
- The issues with regards to parking around the schools in the area continued to be a problem. The Police had undertaken a walk around but this had taken place in the school holidays when the problem wasn't evident although there now appeared to be a joined up approach with the City Council and the Police. Parking on Gishford Way continued to create problems for residents who were having to deal with people who attended the Blakelaw Centre not wanting to park in the that car park due to the parking enforcement restrictions that had been introduced but instead were parking in Gishford Way.

41/24. Community Councillor Recruitment

The Clerk provided an update in relation to the recruitment of community councillors. She confirmed that she had written to the Elections Team at Newcastle City Council and requested that they support the community council with the process around issuing the relevant Notices to recruit.

Unfortunately, due to the up and coming local elections the recruitment of additional councillors would be delayed due to the election rules around that process.

42/24. Blakelaw Ward Councillors Update

There were no Blakelaw Ward Councillors in attendance and apologies had been submitted. The Chair confirmed that the community council were in regular contact with the Ward Councillors.

43/24. Sub Groups Update

Community Engagement/Environmental Group

The community council were provided with an update in relation to the arrangements that had been put in place for the community coach trip, summer fair and Christmas fair. Councillors were reminded of the need to support these events.

The newsletter was underway and would be distributed in the very near future.

Staffing

The Chair and Clerk continued to meet regularly to discuss a variety of matters. A formal meeting was due to take place in the near future.

44/24. Financial Matters

Bank reconciliation:

As per transactions relating to 20th March 2024 – 31st March 2024

| | |
|--------------|-------------------|
| Per Bank: | |
| Account 1 | £500.00 |
| Account 2 | £16,006.58 |
| Total | £16,506.58 |

Less: Payments:

| | |
|--|------------------|
| HMRC (March 2024) | £393.87 |
| H Richardson (March 2024 Salary) | £1069.29 |
| Tesco Payment Card (Payment Card) | £500.00 |
| Judith McLellen (The Bread Machine(TT)) | £68.75 |
| English Martyr's Church (Tuesday Trailblazers) | £192.00 |
| English Martyr's Church (Tuesday Trailblazers) | £96.00 |
| Blakelaw Flats TARA (Room Hire) | £62.50 |
| Judith McLellen (The Bread Machine(TT)) | £50.00 |
| Tuesday Trailblazers (Grant Funding) | £1181.44 |
| Judith McLellen (The Bread Machine(TT)) | £60.00 |
| Total | £3,673.85 |

Income

| | |
|---|------------|
| Interest | £65.56 |
| Newcastle City Council (Grant Funding) | £1000.00 |
| Closing balance as at 31 st March 2024 (account 2) | £13,398.29 |
| Closing balance as at 31 st March 2024 (account 1) | £500.00 |

Recommendation: Members are asked to note this report and approve the above payments.

Bank reconciliation:

As per transactions relating to 1st April 2024 – 11th April 2024

| | |
|--------------|-------------------|
| Per Bank: | |
| Account 1 | £500.00 |
| Account 2 | £13,398.29 |
| Total | £13,898.29 |

Less: Payments:

| | |
|-------------------------------|-----------------|
| Kieth's Coaches (Whitby Trip) | £1500.00 |
| CI Accountancy | £294.00 |
| Total | £1797.00 |

Income

| | |
|---|------------|
| Optimum Payment Card Refund | £70.76 |
| Closing balance as at 11 th April 2024 (account 2) | £11,675.05 |
| Closing balance as at 11 th April 2024 (account 1) | £500.00 |

Recommendation: Members are asked to note this report and approve the above payments.

45/24. Any Other Business

The Chair on behalf of the Tuesday Trailblazers Group thanked the community council for the recent granting of their funding application. This had allowed the group to make preparations for the future.

The Clerk reminded councillors that the next meeting of the council was the annual meeting and consideration would need to be given to the election of the Chair and Vice-Chair.

46/24. Date, time and venue of next meeting

The date and time of the next community council meeting was confirmed as the 9th May 2024 at 6pm within the community room at Moorland House.