

## Blakelaw and North Fenham Community Council



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

Tel: 07588154441  
E-mail: [bnfcc@outlook.com](mailto:bnfcc@outlook.com)

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

### **MINUTES OF THE COMMUNITY COUNCIL MEETING**

**DATE HELD: Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> November 2024**

**TIME: 6.00 pm**

#### **Present:**

Councillors: Cllrs John Wears (Chair), Jimmy Gill (Vice Chair), Ann Keenan(AK), Maureen Kelly(MK), Debbie Playford(DP) and Violet Rooke(VR)

#### **In Attendance:**

Helen Richardson(HR) – Clerk to the Community Council  
Kathy Smith – Resident and Chair of the Tuesday Trailblazers Community Group  
Blakelaw Ward Councillor Ms M Williams  
Blakelaw Ward Councillor Mrs J Sathian

#### **93/24. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Deborah Wears and the Police.

#### **94/24. Declaration of Interests**

- John Wears – Director of Learning 4 All and Secretary to the Tuesday Trailblazers
- Debbie Playford – Chair of Blakelaw Flats TARA and CIFT (*H&S Group via NCC*)
- Maureen Kelly – Member of the Blakelaw Flats TARA
- James Gill – Bank signatory for the Tuesday Trailblazers
- Helen Richardson (Clerk) - Bank signatory for the Tuesday Trailblazers
- Violet Rooke – Community representative for Thomas Walling School

## **95/24. Grant Applications**

The Clerk advised that there were no grant applications to be considered.

## **96/24. Minutes of Previous Meetings and Matters Arising**

The minutes of the meeting held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2024 were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

The following matters were discussed:-

The Chair advised that he had not received any update from Newcastle City Council in relation the Legion Club although it was unlikely that the lengthy list of requirements would have been met. DP advised that she had witnessed vans attending at the building and removing items.

Car parking near to the garages was becoming a problem. It appeared that a resident maybe running a business repairing, buying and selling cars. This was causing congestion. Ward Councillor Williams confirmed she was aware of this and was liaising with the Local Authority.

A request had been made to have the SAPs meetings reintroduced to consider the antisocial behaviour in the area and the increased fire setting within the dene area in Kenton/Fawdon area.

A discussion was held around comments made by a resident at the previous meeting regarding the varying different food bank offerings being ran from the Blakelaw Centre. It appeared that there was some confusion with regards to which organisation ran which session and how waste food and the money residents spent when items were purchased was being used. The community council were not able to provide further comment as they were only aware of the community pantry arrangements.

A resident raised concerns regarding the running of the Blakelaw Centre. These concerns included no lights on in the car park on an evening, the paving was uneven and causing risk, the condition of the inside and outside of the building was of concern, it was felt that the building was falling in to disrepair despite what appeared to be a significant amount of charity funding being secured, food waste and rubbish waste was left lying around inside and outside of the building, residents were still receiving fines for using the car park, the toilets had been filled with flowers/stands from the florists, the toilets by the kitchen were out of order and had been for some time, there was a hand dryer dislodged from the wall, groups were being asked to use water out of the cleaning cupboard and the bingo group were being asked to pay £90 per week for the use of the building 1 night per week.

Concerns were also raised as to whether health and safety compliance checks were being undertaken and it was noted that despite the reassurance being given by the centre manager that the defibrillator would be replaced following its alleged theft it had still not been replaced, it was worthy of note that despite being informed that the theft had been reported to the Police, they had no record of this. This was of real concern given the significantly high usage the community councils defibrillator experienced.

All parties agreed that it appeared that despite concerns being raised regarding the building and the running of it, this was falling on deaf ears and Newcastle City Council appeared to be disinterested in the concerns raised.

### **97/24. Police Update**

Once again, the Community Council expressed their disappointment that the Police were not in attendance. The Police had communicated their non-attendance and advised that any concerns should be reported to the Police.

### **98/24. Community Councillor Update**

The Chair advised that the recent newsletter had been printed and distributed with the focus being winter support. The distribution appeared to have gone well with no reports of residents not receiving their newsletter copy. The Chair asked community councillors to consider what they would like the focus of the next newsletter to be.

The Clerk referred community councillors to a pre-circulated email from a charity called "Legends on a Bench". The Clerk explained how the charity supported those people who were in need of support around their mental health and wellbeing. They had approached the community council with regards to supporting a "bench" in the Blakelaw area. The clerk advised that the cost of the "bench" would be £1780 but this included yearly maintenance and charity support plaques, the bench would be lit on an evening so those needing support could sit and still see the information they may need.

Community councillors held a discussion around the location of the bench and how beneficial support like this would be to the area. Community councillors were asked to consider further the location of the "bench" and it would be discussed further at a future meeting. Consideration would need to be given to the location and the possibility of having to make a request for permission to locate the "bench" to the Local Authority.

Ward Councillor Sathian raised with the community council the possibility of a project in partnership with Northumbria University. It would be focused around social geography and the Blakelaw area. Ward Councillor Sathian will provide an update as and when she has one. This conversation led to the community council, Ward Councillors and residents holding a general conversation around planning, the Local Plan, CIL funding and the community council introducing a Neighbourhood Plan.

### **99/24. Blakelaw Ward Councillors Update**

Ward Councillor Williams updated the community council with the news that she had now resigned as a Labour Group member. She would now act as an Independent member supporting the residents of Blakelaw. Councillor Williams expressed her appreciation to Council officers who had continued to support her despite the recent unsettling times.

Both Ward Councillors provided an update in relation to their ongoing workloads and how they had been supporting residents within Blakelaw and the wider area.

## 100/24. Sub Groups Update

### Community Engagement/Environmental Group

The Chair and Clerk provided the meeting with an update following the recent community engagement and environmental group meeting as well as an update in relation to the preparations for the up and coming Christmas fair which would see the biggest and best event to date.

All community councillors had been allocated roles on the day with traders and children's entertainment secured and confirmed.

### Staffing

The Chair and Clerk continued to meet regularly to discuss a variety of matters. The staffing committee had met and any community councillor who wished to receive an update should contact the Chair directly.

## 101/24. Financial Matters

### Bank reconciliation:

As per transactions relating to 4<sup>th</sup> October 2024 – 14<sup>th</sup> November 2024

Per Bank:	
Account 1	£500.00
Account 2	£37,791.71
<b>Total</b>	<b>£38,291.71</b>

### Less: Payments:

HMRC (October 2024)	£1075.68
Helen Richardson (October 2024 Salary)	£387.48
Blakelaw Flats TARA (Room Hire)	£87.00
Blakelaw Flats Tara (Grant)	£500.00
Tesco Payment Card	£301.69
HMRC (November 2024 <i>to include LGPS</i> )	£528.85
Helen Richardson (November 2024 Salary <i>to include LGPS</i> )	£1319.41
ICO (DD)	£35.00
Fast Track Distribution	£799.00
NPS	£585.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>£5,619.11</b>

Closing balance as at 14 <sup>th</sup> November 2024 (account 1)	£500.00
Closing balance as at 14 <sup>th</sup> November 2024 (account 2)	£32,172.60

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

The Clerk advised following a Facebook post advising residents that there would be no Christmas community coach trip, a resident had “posted” that the community council continued to have a significant amount of funds. The resident was responded to and invited to join the community council at their next meeting to discuss the budget and how it was spent – the resident had declined this offer.

The Clerk did advise that whilst the community council had always tried to keep the cost of the bus trip tickets down, it was evident from comments made that residents would be open to an increase to ensure the trip went ahead. This should be discussed further at the budget meeting.

#### **102/24. Any Other Business**

A community councillor raised concerns on behalf of a resident regarding a neighbouring property on Linfield Crescent. Rubbish in the gardens of this property was now spilling over in to their garden. There was also a rundown caravan placed in the garden which appeared to be rotting away. Despite numerous complaints to the Local Authority this problem continued. Ward Councillors confirmed that they would follow this issue up.

Ward Councillor Sathian asked if the community council would share with Leisure United information around the children’s entertainment and stall holders they used for their events. Their Christmas fair was coming up and not only had they been required to change the date they had found finding stall holders etc difficult to find. The community council agreed to support Leisure United and share information.

#### **103/24. Date, time and venue of next meeting**

The budget meeting would be held on Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> January 2025, this was a closed meeting whereby the community council would discuss the following years events and precept requirements for 2025/26.

The full community council meeting would take place on Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> January 2025 at 6pm within the community room at Moorland House.