

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 16th January 2025

TIME: 6.00 pm

Present:

Councillors: Cllrs John Wears (Chair), Jimmy Gill (Vice Chair), Maureen Kelly(MK), Debbie Playford(DP) and Deborah Wears(DW)

In Attendance:

Helen Richardson(HR) – Clerk to the Community Council
Kath Smith – Resident and Chair of the Tuesday Trailblazers Community Group

01/25. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Ann Keenan, Violet Rooke, Ward Cllr Marion Williams, Ward Cllr Juna Sathian and the Police.

02/25. 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

03/25. Grant Applications

The Clerk advised that there were no grant applications to be considered. However, updated the meeting on the correspondence that the community council had been

copied in to regarding issues the football club were having around the hiring and fluctuating costs at the Leisure United hub.

04/25. Minutes of Previous Meetings and Matters Arising

The minutes of the meeting held on the 14th November 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.

Despite a request to have the SAPs meetings reintroduced to consider the antisocial behaviour in the area, it had been decided that the meetings would not take place – ASB was not at a significant enough level to be considered as part of a separate meeting.

Residents continued to raise concerns regarding the running of the Blakelaw Centre. New parcel lockers had been introduced into the carpark of the building which were a cause for concern in relation to further ASB/crime and an increase of traffic on Binswood Avenue due to the parking arrangements at the centre.

The centre's alarm had been sounding throughout the night disturbing residents however it now appeared that the centre alarm had been disabled as users of the building were being asked to lock up the building but had been unable to activate the alarm, this was a huge concern.

05/25. Police Update

Once again, the Community Council expressed their disappointment that the Police were not in attendance. PC Kuan had advised she was unavailable due to training however had forwarded our attendance request to her Sergeant and had requested he attend in her place.

06/25. Community Councillor Update

The Chair advised that the community council had received an email from Ward Cllr Sathian regarding the missing defibrillator at the Blakelaw Centre. Ward Cllr Sathian had been advised that the centres management team were contacting NEAS to find out what happens following the unit allegedly being stolen.

DP updated community councillors on the Blakelaw centre shops area. Condition surveys were being undertaken by Newcastle City Council, led by the Highways Team.

As part of the work Newcastle City Council were undertaken in relation to ensuring their housing stock was fit for purpose, letters had been sent to resident's requesting access to their properties. It had been felt by residents that the wording of the letter was "aggressive" with a number of residents advising that they would not let the City Council into their home. DP was supporting these residents and advising them that

this was a “good thing” and would help have any issues they have in their homes rectified.

07/25. Blakelaw Ward Councillors Update

Ward councillors had submitted their apologies and were not in attendance however, the community council were in regular contact with 2 out of the 3 Ward Councillors.

08/25. Sub Groups Update

Community Engagement/Environmental Group

The Chair recapped the previously held community engagement/environmental sub meeting and advised that the community council had agreed a number of events for the coming year. These included:

An Easter Eggstravganza (rearranged Christmas fair) – date to be confirmed
2 community coach trips (21st June and 13th December 2025)
Christmas Fair and Market – 22nd November 2025
VE Celebration Event – date to be confirmed

The Chair reiterated the importance of all community councillors being involved in the planning and the event on the day.

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.

09/25. Financial Matters

Bank reconciliation:

As per transactions relating to 15th November 2024 – 16th January 2025

Per Bank:	
Account 1	£500.00
Account 2	£32,172.60
Total	£32,672.60

Less: Payments:

HMRC (December 2024)	£1106.19
Helen Richardson (December 2024 Salary)	£405.11
Tesco Payment Card	£473.72
HMRC (January 2025)	£405.11
Helen Richardson (January 2025)	£1106.19
John Wears (ICT Equipment)	£35.00
Mazars LLP (External Auditor)	£252.00
London Hearts (De-Fib)	£74.59

Total £3857.91

Income

Interest

£133.29

Closing balance as at 16th January 2025 (account 1)

£500.00

Closing balance as at 16th January 2025 (account 2)

£28,447.98

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

Precept 2025/26

The community council had held a closed budget meeting to discuss the previous year's spend and to plan the coming years spend. The Clerk took the community council through the draft budget for 25/26. The Clerk advised that sadly there was no denying that costs were increasing significantly however with a small amount of underspend from the previous year the community council would **NOT** be required to raise their precept request to cover increasing costs although it was important to continue to regularly review spend.

The community council thereafter **AGREED** to request a precept of £41.5k from Newcastle City Council.

10/25. Any Other Business

There were no items of other business.

11/25. Date, time and venue of next meeting

The full community council meeting would take place on Thursday 13th February 2025 at 6pm within the community room at Moorland House.