

Blakelaw and North Fenham Community Council



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

Tel: 07588154441
E-mail: bnfcc@outlook.com

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

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL COMMUNITY COUNCIL MEETING

DATE HELD: Thursday 9th May 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) and Ann Keenan(AK)

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
Blakelaw Ward Councillor Juna Sathian

47/24. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence had been received from Blakelaw Ward Councillor Marion Williams.

48/24. 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

49/24. Election of Chair (2024/25)

The Clerk confirmed that there had been 1 nomination for John Wears to continue in the role of Chair. It was agreed that the current Chair would continue in the role for 2024 – 2025.

50/24. Election of Vice Chair (2024/25)

The Clerk confirmed that there had been 1 nomination for James Gill to continue in the role of Vice-Chair. It was therefore agreed that Jimmy Gill would be elected in to the role of Vice -Chair for 2024 - 2025.

51/24. Outgoing Chairs Report (2023/24)

Agenda items 5 and 6 were taken together and the Chair took the Community Council through his report.

“This Annual Report is prepared by Community Councillor John Wears, Chairperson, Blakelaw and North Fenham Community Council. The Annual Report is intended to provide information on the work of the Council during the period of May 2023 - May 2024.

Firstly, I would like to thank everyone involved with the day to day running of the Community Council, My fellow Councillors and our Council Clerk. We have welcomed two new Comcillors to the team this year and hope to get more in the coming year.

The Community Council Full Committee meetings this year were held in the community room, Moorland House Blakelaw. The Community Council sub-committees have been a mixture of face to face and online via Zoom

It has been a challenging year for the Community Council, the cost of services and products that we source and provide remain to be on the increase. The Committee continually seek best value for money for our community and this year we applied for external grant funding to support the work of the Council. We were pleased to receive small grants from Your Homes Newcastle and the local Police and Crime Commissioners office.

The Committee have continually monitored and reviewed our budget plans closely this year, however even with a number of cost cutting and streamlining measures we have unfortunately had to slightly increase our Precept. We are hopeful in doing so we can provide the same level of service to our local community in the coming year. Will continue to offer Information advice and guidance, social activities, financial support for local services and community grant funding.

Sub Committees

*It was agreed that **Community Engagement** and **Environment Group** would continue to be one Committee and all Councillors would be invited to attend.*

The Committee has been responsible for the planning of events, keeping residents regularly updated regarding the ongoing work of the Community Council.

The group heads up all the Council's communications including the Council's website, social media platforms, newsletters, publications, and events.

The work with Newcastle University re planting bulbs and new planters across the area unfortunately did not progress, we are hoping the working group can be reestablished in the future.

Staffing Committee: *The group has met via zoom and face to face. Weekly one to one online meetings/telephone calls with the Chair and the Clerk have been in place throughout the year.*

Community Projects & Activities

Tuesday Trailblazers group:

When the Community Council initiated the 'Tuesday group project' We hoped it would a safe place for residents to meet learn new crafts and have a bit of lunch however the group has become so much more to local people.

The group has become extremely successful and in February 2024 they become their own constituted group with an elected committee. The group is promoting community inclusion via fortnightly social gatherings, craft sessions, educational talks and trips.

The group is extremely thankful to the Community Council for initially setting up the group and the support they have given to Committee since February.

Summer and Christmas Fairs:

Following the success of our Christmas fair last year we have held both Summer and Christmas Fairs and Markets which have been a great success again, it included a visit from characters such Spider Man, Stitch, Disney princesses, Santa and his elves, free games, activities and candy floss, mulled wines and mince pies. We had 20 local traders showcasing their fantastic hand made products.

Community Coach Trips:

We held trips in the spring, summer and winter, in May we headed to Whitby, Scarborough in August and York Christmas Market in December. The feedback again has been great and we are looking forward to the planned coach trips over the coming months. Thank you to all the volunteers involved that make these events such a success.

Youth project:

We financed youth provision over the summer period but unfortunately it did not recruit as we hoped, we are hoping to get some feedback from the provider and look at what can be organised going forward.

Funding Local Community Activities:

Through the Community Council grants process we have financially supported the following local groups/organisation:

1. *Blakelaw Juniors Football Club - £1541.50*
2. *Blakelaw Juniors Football Club - 1282.38*
3. *Thomas Walling - Xmas Tree*
4. *Hilton Primary - Xmas Tree*
5. *Blakelaw Flats TARA - £400*
6. *Tuesday Trailblazers - £1181.44*

Our Commitment to Tackle Anti-Social Behaviour - Working with Police and Local Ward Councillors

Anti-social behaviour continues to be an issue across the whole area of Blakelaw and North Fenham. We continue to encourage residents to report incidents of anti-social behaviour. We do this by sharing articles in our newsletter, on our social media sites and when receiving complaints.

We have attended local meeting and local authority working groups which allows us to work in partnership with other organisations to tackle this ongoing issue. It has been great to be able to work more closely with our local policing team again over the past 12 months. It is worrying that we have been informed that a number of community support officer posts will be reduced across The Northumbria Police Force. We will collaborate with Police and Police staff to minimise the impact to our area.

We will continue to do all that we can within our powers to make Blakelaw and North Fenham a nicer and safer place to live.

Planning Applications

Throughout the year, the Council receives planning applications for consultation. The Community Council is committed to avoiding inappropriate developments and is asked by the City Council Planning Committee to express its views on each application and also any comments passed to it by the residents. This we do in an advisory capacity only, as the final decision in each case rests with the relevant Planning Authority.

Representing our Residents

Community Councillors continue to represent the residents of Blakelaw and North Fenham and have attended many groups and meetings including: Newcastle City Council, Joint Parish Council meetings, Consultation meetings, Your Homes Newcastle, Leisure united, Standards committee, Local schools, Further and Higher Education providers, Transportation groups, Northumberland association of local councils and Local charities.

Finance Report to be tabled at the Annual General Meeting

Thursday 09th May 2024, Committee room Moorland House, Blakelaw

Moving Forward – Priorities for 2024-2025

Youth provision

- *This year we have allocated funding to provide youth provision in the area, this was not as successful as we had hoped. We hope you continue to support local groups to offer such provision in the coming year.*

Community Trips:

- *We have trips planned for May, August and December.*

Community Events

- *We have provisionally booked English Martyrs Church Hall and grounds for a summer fun day and Christmas Fayre.*

University Partnership

- *This year we are hoping to reinitiate the work with Newcastle University to build on the initial plans to improve the area with an environmental project.*

Community Space

- *We have limited community buildings and space within the community council boundaries, this is becoming more problematic when try to organise community activity and provision. We have worked with English Martyrs Church and use the Church Hall for events. We are also looking at the possibility of obtaining our own space/building. This will be a long-term project and will be explored further in the coming months/years.*

I will continue to work hard to represent the residents of Blakelaw and North Fenham. It has been somewhat challenging over the past 12 months and the Committee has worked hard to best serve local residents. I will always put the interests of the residents of Blakelaw and North Fenham first.

I have been fortunate to serve our local community as Chair of the Community Council for the past twelve months. Thank you to evryone that has supported me and the work of the Community Council.”

52/24. Incoming Chairs Report (2024/25)

As per the above.

53/24. Minutes from the Previous AGM and Matters Arising (11th May 2023)

The minutes of the AGM meeting held on the 11th May 2023 were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

By way of an update, it was noted that the DVLA had been in the area clamping cars, the parking enforcement car belonging to Newcastle City Council had been in the area and it was noted that a scam whereby gangs were using the licence plates and addresses of innocent people to add points that they had received to strangers driving licences had been active in the Newcastle area.

54/24. Community Councillors Update

Community councillors provided an update in relation to the work they had been undertaking, the key points are listed below:

- The Chair provided an update in relation the licensing application that had been submitted to support the re-opening of the Legion Club. Residents had

raised concerns about publicly objecting to the application due to potential repercussions.

- Incidents of fly tipping continued to be reported. Although it had been noted that concerns had been raised that it was residents that were the flytippers.
- There had been a reduction in the amount of ASB the flats had been experiencing following a public meeting with the Police and YHN.
- The Saturday morning litter picking group organised by Blakelaw Ward Councillor Juna Sathian were doing a great job in the area.
- The Kenton area had been allocated a Warden and it was hoped that Blakelaw could be allocated a Warden too.
- The Environmental Group were to undertake piece of work around waste disposal and bins.

55/24. Sub Groups Update

Community Engagement/Environmental Group

The Chair proposed that the Community Engagement and Environmental Group continued to be one committee with all community councillors being invited

Staffing

In relation to the staffing sub group, the Chair and Vice Chair agreed that they would remain on the sub group and an email should be sent to those community councillors who weren't in attendance to ask if they wished to join. Community Councillor Keenan requested to remain a member of the staffing group. This was agreed by the Community Council.

56/24. Financial Matters

Bank reconciliation:

As per transactions relating to 12th April 2024 – 9th May 2024

Per Bank:	
Account 1	£500.00
Account 2	£11,675.05

Total	£12,175.05
--------------	-------------------

Less: Payments:

HMRC (April 2024)	£387.28
Helen Richardson (April 2024 Salary)	£1075.88
Fast Track Leaflet Distribution	£753.50
Tesco Pre-Payment Upload	£306.00
NPS	£556.00
HMRC (May 2024)	£387.48
Helen Richardson (May 2024 Salary)	£1075.68

Total £4541.82

Income

Whitby Bus Tickets (as at 08/05/24)	£105.00
Closing balance as at 9 th May 2024 (account 2)	£7238.23
Closing balance as at 9 th May 2024 (account 1)	£500.00

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

57/24. Date, time and venue of next meeting

The date and time of the next community council meeting was confirmed as the 13th June 2024 at 6pm within the community room at Moorland House.