

Blakelaw and North Fenham Community Council



Meeting held at:
The Community Room
Moorland House, Moulton Place
Blakelaw, Newcastle upon Tyne
NE5 3RY
Tel: 07588154441
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Chairperson of Council: John Wears
Clerk to the Council: Helen Richardson

MINUTES OF THE COMMUNITY COUNCIL MEETING

DATE HELD: Thursday 10 May 2018

TIME: 6.00 pm (following AGM)

Present:

Councillors: Cllrs Ann Keenan(AK), Violet Rook(VR), James Gill(JG), John Wears(JW), Ron Clarke(RC), Doreen Jardine(DJ) and Lorraine Birkett(LB)

In Attendance:

Helen Richardson(HR) – Clerk to the Community Council (minutes)
Cllr Oskar Avery – Blakelaw Ward Councillor
Margaret Kilpatrick – Resident
Debbie Playford – Resident

60/18. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Community Councillors Karen Ferry, Irene Teasdale, Ann Fullen and Rowena Spencer.

Apologies were also received from Newcastle City Councillors Nora Casey and Linda Hobson.

61/18. Declaration of Interests

Ann Keenan – Volunteer at Newcastle Community Asset Trust and volunteer at the Credit Union
Violet Rook – Governor at Thomas Walling School and Governor with the North East Ambulance Service
James Gill – Board Member of Newcastle Community Asset Trust
Ron Clarke – Board Member of Newcastle Community Asset Trust, 165 TARA and Trading Arm of Newcastle Community Asset Trust
Doreen Jardine – 165 TARA Newcastle Community Asset Trust

62/18. Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on the 12 April 2018 were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

63/18. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising but there was a spelling mistake on page 3 which will be corrected by the Clerk prior to posting on the Newcastle City Council website.

64/18. Police Update

The Police were not in attendance. OA commented that there had been a significant Police presence in the area so he thought there must be an incident happening.

JW confirmed that there had been a good Police presence over the Bank Holiday weekend. A resident confirmed that she had had to call the Police out due to problems there had been with youths and bins.

OA commented that he had had a good response from the Police recently as he had contacted them regarding a male who had driven his car on to the middle of the Blakelaw Park. OA commented that incidents needed to be reported to ensure that a greater resource would be allocated.

A resident had had a number of problems with youths. One youth had claimed that the resident had hit him, the resident had called the Police there and then. OA stated that the main problem with the youths was that they believed that the Police couldn't touch them.

AK stated that she had had to report a number of incidents at the Blakelaw Centre. The ladies who attended the centre were frightened. JW queried who was responsible for the security of the centre. AK confirmed that she locked up when she was there but none of the Community Council even those who sat on the Board didn't seem to know who's responsibility security was. JW commented that concerns should be raised. The Community Council raised a general concerns that no-one knew what was happening in the centre and that it felt that the centre was becoming unkempt. JW confirmed that he would contact Glenn Pendleton, the Manager of the Centre and ask for an update in relation to what NCAT was involved in in the area.

65/18. Attendance at Meetings

JW expressed the need for Community Councillors to attend as many meetings as they could throughout the year. JW confirmed that there was an expectation that Community Councillors would be visible in the community.

Community Councillors expressed concerns by the attendance of current Community Councillors and it was agreed that the Chair would contact them to discuss their attendance.

OA confirmed that they had a very similar expectation whilst in office for the City Council. The Chair asked that this matter was placed on the agenda for the next meeting together with a review of the Code of Conduct.

The Chair asked that this item was placed on to the June agenda.

66/18. Review of Internal Auditor Report & Annual Governance & Accountability Return 2017/2018

Review of Internal Audit Report 2017/2018

The Clerk took the Community Council through the report of the Internal Auditor. The Internal Auditor had highlighted 2 matters arising. The first being the latest insurance certificate was omitted from the paperwork and the second being no VAT reclaimed in the last 5 years.

The Clerk confirmed that the first point had been rectified and a copy of the current insurance certificate had been sent over to the Internal Auditor, this had just been an error and we had the relevant documentation.

In relation to the second point regarding no reclaiming of VAT the Clerk confirmed that she had been struggling with this as the instructions were very clear and that when she spoke with the HMRC they weren't always the most helpful however the Clerk confirmed that she would endeavour to complete a return for the 2017/18 tax year.

Annual Governance & Accountability Return 2017/2018

The Clerk took the Community Council through the below documentation:

- Annual Governance Statement
- Draft Annual Accounts for 2017/2018
- Accounting Statement and Explanation of Variances

The Community Council had a discussion around the account balance and their disappointment that they had had not as much take up for grant funding scheme as they had expected which had left a significant underspend. However, this would not be wasted as the underspend would be used to support the community defibrillators the community council were supporting.

As per previous discussion the Clerk explained that the new external auditors were PKF Littlejohn LLP. They had provided new document templates and were encouraging Parish Councils to submit their returns online. The Clerk confirmed that we needed to ensure that the correct dates for the public to exercise their rights to view the accounts were published correctly and on the Newcastle City Council website as we did not have our own website.

Following general discussion the Community Council agreed all of the above documentation and the Chair signed the Annual Governance Statement.

67/18. Grant Application

Community Councillor Jimmy Gill declared an interest in this item as a family member attends the group applying for the grant.

The Clerk took the Community Council through the grant application form from the Blakelaw Pensioners Association. The Community Council are very keen to continue their support to this group as their activities promote health and wellbeing within the older community.

Following a very brief discussion the application for grant funding was agreed for the full £800 requested.

68/18. Update from Blakelaw Ward Councillors

OA updated the Community Council on the current budget discussions the City Council were currently having. He confirmed that they were going in to the third year of a 3 year budget and that this year would be the hardest year. OA confirmed that one of the biggest concerns were those around the constant increase around children and adults social care. OA confirmed that the City Council had used some of it's savings but it still had a reserve. Options at creating revenue were being looked in to and parts of the Civic Centre were being leased to other partners in a bid to bring in around £4 million in revenue.

OA commented that he wasn't sure at the moment how this would impact upon the area but it had been agreed that more bins were to be provided in the area.

AK expressed her concern at the large increase in relation to the use of a brown garden waste bin. OA commented that the City Council were having to look at all of their options and the cost of disposing of waste was going up therefore it needed to be reflected somewhere.

The Chair also congratulated the new City Councillors on their re-election to office.

69/18. Sub Committee Memberships

The Chair wished re-establish the 3 sub groups that the Community Council were involved in. The Chair asked for volunteers to sit on each sub group and stated that he would like everyone to be involved. The Chair proposed that he would send a schedule of dates to hold the meetings and would look to hold the new "drop in" sessions at the same time.

In relations to the Environment Sub Group, concerns had been raised in the past about the gardening equipment that had been donated by the Community Council to NCAT. JG updated the Community Council in that the person who had been looking after the garden was no longer involved due to a number of reason and that it was hoped that Hilton School were to start using the area. The Chair confirmed that he would speak with NCAT regarding this. VR queried whether a gardeners club could be formed.

Following this discussion the groups were agreed as below:

Employment Group – Jimmy Gill(Chair), John Wears, Ann Keenan, Lorraine Birkett and Ann Fullen.

As this is a closed group should anyone wish to have further details they should contact Jimmy Gill or John Wears

Communications Group – Violet Rook, Jimmy Gill, Ron Clarke and John Wears

Environmental Group – Violet Rook, Jimmy Gill, Ann Keenan and John Wears

It was agreed that those Community Councillors not in attendance tonight would be emailed and asked which Sub Groups they wished to sit on.

70/18. To Receive Correspondence and Communications

The Clerk confirmed that she had sent out a number of different items of correspondence that should be passed on to those that may be interested in attending. The Clerk wished to draw Community Councillors attention to GDPR and the information sent out around this. The Clerk had been undertaking a large amount of training regarding this and was also attending a training session that weekend with NALC and another Community Councillor for further information which would be shared at the next meeting.

71/18. To Consider Planning Applications

There were no planning applications to consider. The Council were still not receiving updated from planning.

A resident queried whether a gym was being built on Blakelaw Park. OA confirmed that he had not heard this but would look in to it.

72/18. Financial Matters

Bank reconciliation:

As per transactions relating to 12 April 2018 – 10 May 2018

Per Bank:

Account 1	£500.00
Account 2	£26,099.80
Total	£26,599.80

Less: Payments:

Newcastle United Foundation(100526)	£2000.00
Blakelaw Flats TARA(Trip)(100527)	£870.00
Blakelaw Flats TARA(Royal Wedding Party)(100528)	£250.00
Helen Richardson – Salary May 2018(100529)	£444.00
Helen Richardson – Laptop Cover(100529)	£5.00
HMRC – May 2018(100530)	£88.80
Peter Basnett – Internal Auditor(100531)	£180.00
Total	£3,837.80

Closing balance as at 10 May 2018 (account 2)	£22,262.00
Closing balance as at 10 May 2018 (account 1)	£500.00

73/18. Date and time of the next meeting

The date and time of the next meeting is 14 June 2018 at 6pm in the Community Room, Moorland House, Moulton Place.