



To: All Members of Newbiggin by-the-Sea Town Council

76 Front Street Newbiggin  
by-the-Sea  
Northumberland NE64 6QD  
Tel: 01670 851833  
13 November 2020

In accordance with Paragraphs 7 & 10(2) (b) of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 and The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020, I hereby summon you to attend a Meeting of **Newbiggin by the Sea Town Council** to be held online on **Wednesday 18 November 2020** at 7pm.

**The link to join the meeting is available on the Town Council website. The password can be requested until 6pm on the day of the meeting.**

#### AGENDA

1. **Apologies for absence**  
To approve any apologies for absence
2. **Minutes of the previous meeting held on 15 July 2020.**  
To agree as a true and correct record the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Town Council held 15<sup>th</sup> July 2020.
3. **Minutes of the Finance Committee held on 12 August 2020.**  
To receive for information the minutes of the Finance Committee Meeting held 12 August 2020
4. **Minutes of the Finance Committee held on 28 October 2020.**  
To receive for information the minutes of the Finance Committee Meeting held 28 October 2020
5. **Minutes of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group held 14<sup>th</sup> July 2020**  
To receive for information the minutes of the Newbiggin Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group meeting held 14<sup>th</sup> July 2020
6. **Minutes of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group held 8<sup>th</sup> September 2020**  
To receive for information the minutes of the Newbiggin Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group meeting held 8<sup>th</sup> September 2020
7. **DISCLOSURE OF MEMBERS INTERESTS** Members are invited to disclose any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests or other personal interests they may have in any of the items of business on the agenda in accordance with the Code of Conduct.

8. **Conclusion of Annual Audit 2019/20**

- i) To note the External Auditor Report and Certificate

9. **Public Conveniences near Cresswell Arms/Church Point Car Park**

To consider whether to formally request an asset transfer from the County Council

10. **Notice of Motion**

CLLr Burns to move:

- i) That in view of the ongoing difficulties for local families the Town Council make a further donation of £1,000 to the Wansbeck Valley Foodbank for use in supporting eligible Newbiggin families, and
- ii) Subject to national arrangements over the Christmas holiday period for those entitled to free school meals, or arrangements made by Northumberland County Council, the Town Council make a further donation from the Grants Budget to the Grace Darling School to facilitate meals for Newbiggin children during that period

**PART II**


It is expected that matters included in this part of the Agenda will be dealt with in private. Any Reports referred to are enclosed for members and officers only and marked 'Not for Publication'

11. **Exclusion of Press and Public**

That in accordance with the provisions of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items on the Agenda as they involve the likely disclosure of confidential information relating to personnel.

12. **Training Request**

To consider a training request



Dennis Earl Town Clerk

**NEWBIGGIN-BY-THE-SEA TOWN COUNCIL**  
**Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Town Council held on Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> July**  
**2020 at 7.00pm via Zoom**

**PRESENT:** Councillors: A Thompson (Chairman) (part)  
M Boon L Burns  
M Cholerton M Peden

Officers: D Earl – Town Clerk  
E Brown – Deputy Town Clerk

**IN ATTENDANCE:** 5 members of the public

It was noted that the Chairman was having technical difficulties and it was uncertain at this point whether he would be joining the meeting so Cllr Burns as Vice Chair was requested to take the Chair.

The Chair welcomed all to the meeting.

**C001/20. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** Cllr Thompson – technical difficulties.

**C002/20. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 22<sup>nd</sup> APRIL 2020**

**RESOLVED unanimously that** the minutes of the meeting held 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2020 were agreed as an accurate record and would be signed later by Cllr Burns as Chair of the meeting.

At 19.03 Cllr Thompson entered the meeting and assumed the Chair.

**C003/20. MINUTES OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE HELD ON 20<sup>th</sup> MAY 2020 –**

**RESOLVED unanimously that** the minutes be received for information.

**C004/20. DECLARATION OF MEMBERS INTERESTS**

Cllr Burns and Cllr Peden both declared a personal interest and non-pecuniary interests in C008/20 as representatives of Newbiggin Community Ventures and Newbiggin Development Trust respectively as these organisations were working partners in several projects.

**C005/20 INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT 2019/20**

The Annual Internal Audit Report has been received and informs the Town Council that satisfactory financial arrangements are in place. It also supports the Annual Return to the External Auditor to be considered later in the agenda.

The Internal Auditor has reviewed all of the activities referred to in his report which was attached at Appendix 1 for members' information. Only one comment has been made recommending a review of the level of Fidelity Guarantee which is currently set at £250,000. Owing to the carry forward of allocated balances at the year end this figure can be exceeded when the Precept instalment is received in the bank, so it is suggested that the cover be increased to £500,000.

**RESOLVED unanimously that** the Internal Audit report be agreed and the Fidelity Guarantee

Increased to £500,000.

#### **C006/20 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2019/20**

A draft statement was attached at Appendix 2 for members' consideration. The Annual Governance Statement is incorporated into the Annual Return and completed ahead of consideration of the audit and accounting statements. Once considered and approved by the Council it will be signed by the Chairman and the Town Clerk for submission to the external auditors.

**RESOLVED unanimously that members approve the Annual Governance Statement.**

#### **C007/20 ANNUAL ACCOUNTS ACCOUNTING STATEMENTS 2019/20**

Attached at Appendix 3 for members' consideration was the Final Accounts for the financial year 2019/2020 which include actual expenditure against budget heads. The Asset Register has been updated and circulated to Members. The Accounting Statements set out in Appendix 4 must be endorsed by the Town Council and signed by the Chairperson and the Responsible Financial Officer for submission to the External Auditor.

**RESOLVED unanimously that members confirm the accounts in the light of the Internal Audit Report and approve the accounting statements.**

#### **C008/20 PROJECT ALLOCATIONS**

Attached as Appendix 5 for members' consideration was the Project Allocations 2020-2022. Finance to move projects on while also support and attracting the section 106 contributions towards the projects.

**RESOLVED unanimously that members agreed to the project allocations**

#### **C009/20. VEHICLE ACTIVATED SPEED SIGNS**

There are currently three Vehicle Activated Speed (VAS) signs located with the Parish.

- North Seaton Road – at junction to Spital Burn
- Gibson Street – at New Ship
- Woodhorn Road –at STB Autos

At present only one VAS is operational, this is the one located at North Seaton Road and this has been licensed to Newbiggin by the Sea Town Council. This is operated via solar panel and repairs were last conducted in 2017.

The non-operational VAS on Woodhorn Road also has solar panel connectivity. The VAS on Gibson Street does not. These two units have not been operational for at least three years. A parish council has the power to contribute towards the cost of traffic calming works (including sign) to be carried out by the highway authority to the benefit of the council area. It has been suggested that the Town Council investigate changing the VAS to Speed Indicator

Device (SID) signs.

It is not possible to switch to SID display within the 450mm dimensions of the existing units and they cannot be reworked to give the information required.

SID is only available in the 600mm sized at a cost of £3254 each (excluding VAT and installation charges).

An alternative lower cost option is the DF11 SID with the solar powered unit costing £2645 (excluding VAT and installation charges)

**RESOLVED unanimously that:**

- i) The Town Council request NCC remove the non-operational unit on Gibson Street at no cost to the Town Council. This is due to the proximity to the traffic lights on Dixons Corner, the pedestrian crossing on Gibson Street and the Speed camera on Front Street, it is believed that this unit is surplus to requirements.
- ii) The Town Council immediately replace the units on Woodhorn Road and North Seaton Road with the DF11 SID.

**C009/20. DEDICATION POLICY**

No policy existed for the provision maintenance and removal of dedication benches and trees. The dedication application form also required updating due to increases in purchase costs. Attached as Appendix 6 for members' consideration was the Dedication Policy for Seats, Trees and Planters.

The stone planter at Central Parkway had been planted up by NCC with a seasonal display of an NHS badge to represent thanks from the community for all key workers during the Covid-19 pandemic. The Members had considered options to install a more permanent tribute on behalf of the community.

Following the publication of the agenda the Deputy Clerk had been made aware of a community fundraising effort taking place to fund a dedication tree for the same purposes. No contact had been made with the Town Council by the organisers of this fund raising. It was suggested this would be a good opportunity for the community and Council to work together to create a small tribute garden within the dedication area.

**RESOLVED unanimously that:**

- i) the policy on the dedication of trees and benches within the parish be approved.
- ii) the Council plant 2 x dedication trees with tree guards and plaques.

'In thanks of all key workers during the Covid -19 pandemic' and

'In memory/dedication of also who suffered during the Covid-19 pandemic'.

Welcoming any contributions from the community to enhance the scheme.

**PART II**

**C010/20 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

**RESOLVED that** in accordance with the provisions of the Public Bodies (Admission to

Meetings) Act 1960 the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items on the Agenda as they involve the likely disclosure of confidential and exempt information relating to financial and embargoed information.

#### **C011/20 NEWBIGGIN ECONOMIC PLAN**

The Economic Plan was circulated as an exempt document. It was acknowledged that the document emphasised the partnership working of organisations within the town and the need for economic development and regeneration.

**RESOLVED unanimously that the Town Council endorse the Economic Plan.**

#### **C012/20 GRANT APPLICATION**

A large grant application has been received from Newbiggin Maritime Centre requesting the amount of £3,500 as contribution towards a year of free exhibitions, events and activities open to all residents of Newbiggin by the Sea. Providing the opportunity for residents to attend concerts and theatre productions at discounted prices. To host the public defibrillator, purchase replacement pads and hold annual training and to support the displays of local interest groups, charities and groups at no cost. And to support the centre being a member of the Local Loo Scheme. During Covid-19 Lockdown Newbiggin Maritime Centre, as a not for profit subsidiary of Newbiggin Heritage Partnership, has had to cancel many planned events, has had zero income and no financial support at the time of submitting this large grant application.

Newbiggin Maritime Centre are planning a comprehensive programme of events and new Initiatives from August 2020 to September 2021 for the benefit of residents and to increase visitor footfall into the town but state that with their depleted finances they will be unable to deliver without support.

A grant application was not submitted for support during the financial year 2019/20 although a large grant of £3500 was paid by the Town Council in February 2019 for the events of 2019/20.

Newbiggin Maritime Centre had submitted a copy of their most recent bank statement to support their application. They have not submitted a copy of their safeguarding policy nor their governing document although these were provided at the time of submitting their application for funding in 2019.

Due to Coronavirus restrictions, the Maritime Centre would reimburse any grant funds unspent as a result of the cancelation of events.

**RESOLVED unanimously that:**

- i) a grant of £1000 be agreed to fund events scheduled to take place between August 2020 to March 2021 of which the total costs were shown, as provided with the application, to be £3540.
- ii) it be delegated to the Officers to devise a plan for the partial release of funds throughout

the remainder of the current financial year subject to coronavirus restrictions being lifted and events proceeding as planned.

It was noted that the Town Council support of the Maritime Centre was not included in previous promotional materials for their events and they be reminded of the conditions of grant.

The meeting closed at 20.08

Signed by Chairman..... Date.....

**NEWBIGGIN-BY-THE-SEA TOWN COUNCIL**

**Minutes of a Meeting of the Finance Committee held on Wednesday 12 August 2020 at 7.00 pm at via Zoom.**

**PRESENT:**

Councillors: A Thompson (Chairperson)  
M Boon, L Burns, M Cholerton and M Peden.

Officer: D Earl – Town Clerk, E Brown – Deputy Town Clerk

Also present: Public: 2

**FC06/20 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

None.

**FC07/20 MINUTES**

**RESOLVED that:** the minutes of the previous meeting held on 20 May 2020 be approved as a true record and signed by the Chairperson out of meeting.

**FC08/20 DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS**

No new interests were declared.

**FC09/20 PAYMENTS FIRST QUARTER**

Members considered the updated schedule of payments in full to 30<sup>th</sup> June 2020 which had been circulated and published on the website.

**RESOLVED that:** the report be received.

**FC10/20 REPORT ON BUDGET RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS AND BANK RECONCILIATION**

The bank reconciliation was balanced to 30<sup>th</sup> June 2020 and had been circulated.  
The report and expenditure for the 2020/21 budget to 30<sup>th</sup> June 2020 had been circulated.

**RESOLVED that:** the reports be received and approved.

Signed by the Chairperson: ..... Date:.....

**NEWBIGGIN-BY-THE-SEA TOWN COUNCIL**

**Minutes of a Meeting of the Finance Committee held on Wednesday 28 October 2020 at 7.00 pm at via Zoom.**

**PRESENT:**

Councillors: A Thompson (Chairperson)  
M Boon, L Burns, M Cholerton and M Peden.

Officer: D Earl – Town Clerk, E Brown – Deputy Town Clerk

Also present: Public: 0

**FC11/20 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

None.

**FC12/20 MINUTES**

**RESOLVED that:** the minutes of the previous meeting held on 12 August 2020 were approved as a true record and would be signed by the Chairperson out of meeting.

**FC13/20 DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS**

No new interests were declared.

**FC14/20 PAYMENTS SECOND QUARTER**

Members considered the updated schedule of payments in full to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2020 which had been circulated and published on the website.

**RESOLVED that:** the report be received.

**FC15/20 REPORT ON BUDGET RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS AND BANK RECONCILIATION**

The bank reconciliation was balanced to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2020 and had been circulated.  
The report and expenditure for the 2020/21 budget to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2020 had been circulated.

**RESOLVED that:** the reports be received and approved.

The meeting closed at 7.08pm

Signed by the Chairperson: ..... Date:.....

## **NEWBIGGIN BY THE SEA NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN STEERING GROUP**

The meeting of the Newbiggin Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group held via Zoom on Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> July 2020 at 14.00

### **Present:**

Alan Thompson – Chair of Newbiggin by the Sea Town Council  
Lynn Burns – Vice Chair of Newbiggin by the Sea Town Council  
Jim Lang - County Councillor Newbiggin West & North Seaton  
Ami Wootton – Newbiggin Traders Association  
Hilton Dawson – Newbiggin Development Trust  
Jacqueline Prouse – Newbiggin Community Ventures  
Jo-Anne Garrick – Neighbourhood Planning Consultant

### **Officers:**

Dennis Earl – Town Clerk, Newbiggin by the Sea Town Council  
Elaine Brown – Deputy Town Clerk, Newbiggin by the Sea Town Council  
Sarah Brannigan – Planning Officer, Northumberland County Council

### **1.Apologies:**

Liz Simpson – County Councillor Newbiggin Central & East

All in attendance introduced themselves for the benefit of the new Steering Group members.

**2. Neighbourhood Planning Training Session** – The Neighbourhood Planning Consultant had prepared a presentation/ training aid for the purposes of the Steering Group focusing on:

- Part one - The Background to Neighbourhood Planning, and
- Part Two - The Preparation of the Newbiggin Plan.

A copy of the presentation is attached for information.

The Planning Consultant talked through Part one of the presentation then invited questions from the Group.

*How long should it take to reach referendum and are projects within the community prevented from going ahead with the ongoing process of the plan?*

The Consultant explained the time frame was dependant on the scope of the plan and how complex it was to be. Noting that some have been passed in 2 years and some have taken 4 years. She noted that projects should not be put on hold as a result of the plan. This was reiterated by the Planning Officer who informed that referendums had been postponed until at earliest May 2021 due to Coronavirus so the limitations around current government guidelines should be factored in.

It was noted that it is the Town Council ambition to deliver the plan as soon as possible and a good start had been made with positive consultation results from last year.

*The Community Actions was queried, how does this translate when they are not enforceable in planning law?*

this was separate to the planning policies and would be included as an annex. Community Actions could include issues that became apparent during the consultation, the community may have an expectation that some matters raised should be addressed within the plan i.e.

the Town Council working with the County Council/another organisation would look to deliver x, y, z etc.

*Could community actions as an annex be beneficial effect under the consideration of S106/planning gain agreements?*

The Consultant clarified that they are often beneficial with funding applications as these are matters that are supported by the community through the adoption of the plan. While there is no requirement for developers to look at the community actions, they may look at them and it certainly not a bad move to include them as an annex.

*Housing site allocations are identified in the Wansbeck Local Plan and emerging Local Plan will those sites remain for housing while we work on the Neighbourhood Plan?*

A neighbourhood Plan could not remove strategic sites identified within the existing plan, but they could be used to identify further sites. The Steering Group could also undertake a call for sites to come up for further sites to be included in the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment.

*As Newbiggin has one of the most deprived wards in Northumberland, can that influence how the neighbourhood plan can be drafted in terms of projects to create regeneration?*

It is a key consideration as part of the plan process, but it needs to be backed up by evidence and wanting to grow the community is a relevant planning policy. In terms of land use, you cannot force developers to build on land, but the plan can be used to show that the community is open for development, industry and is therefore used to attract inwards investment.

*Can the Neighbourhood Plan be used as a document to sell Newbiggin by the Sea for future investment i.e. a positive document?*

National Guidance states that the Plan should be a positive document. It is hoped that the skills, employment, retaining families in the town is all positively covered within the plan.

The Planning Officer suggested the Wooler Plan was a good example of a positive plan in terms of planning for housing, employment, community use etc. This is available on the County Council website.

The Planning Consultant talked through Part two of the presentation on which she had produced some sample visions, objectives, draft planning policy and draft community action themes based on the background information on the Newbiggin Neighbourhood Plan to date. The presentation considered the next steps to be taken. She then invited questions from the Group.

The Town Clerk agreed with the key areas being a starting point to expand and build upon, suggesting that a consultation detailing how the policies are developing may be required to take place in the autumn.

*Would a copy of the presentation be circulated to the Steering Group Members?*

Yes, this would be circulated with the notes of the Steering Group meeting.

*Themes not yet mentioned but considered of importance to highlight are health and wellbeing the rail link/the need for Newbiggin to be linked in as close as possible to the new link. Can this be included in the plan?*

The consultant confirmed this was all relevant and the potential to capitalise on the link connections was key to the plan. The rail link would also have a positive benefit to regeneration and investment.

Translating health and wellbeing in terms of planning policy would relate to open spaces, cycling and walking routes would be very relevant but it was suggested we discuss to what extent NCC policy covers health and wellbeing and this could be built into the plan as a thread.

The Economic Plan which was being created by Newbiggin Community Ventures would be shared with the Consultant as it was intended to sit side by side with the Neighbourhood Plan.

Regeneration would be the key consideration for the community and the plan would be drafted to describe how the area will look if the policies are successful.

### **3.Next Steps**

Feedback was required on the draft vision, objectives and themes and community actions. Feedback should be provided to the Deputy Town Clerk. Feedback would be requested by mid-August. The Steering Group may need to meet again to discuss the feedback from Steering Group Members prior to this information being shared with the Consultant and the next meeting the Consultant would attend.

### **4.Other Updates**

A Housing Needs Assessment as a technical package provided by AECOM via Locality was being undertaken for Newbiggin.

Grant funding of £3,600 had been obtained from an initial bid to Locality.

Public consultation on draft vision, themes and community actions was hoped to take place in Autumn – innovative ways to engage with the community would be considered.

### **5. Date of next meeting.**

The next meeting was scheduled to take place on Tuesday 8th September at 2pm.to consider what would be taken to the public in terms of further consultation.

Notes of the meeting of the Newbiggin by the Sea Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group held 2pm on 8<sup>th</sup> September 2020 via Zoom.

**Present:**

Alan Thompson – Chair of Newbiggin by the Sea Town Council  
Lynn Burns – Vice Chair of Newbiggin by the Sea Town Council  
Jim Lang - County Councillor Newbiggin West & North Seaton  
Ami Wootton – Newbiggin Traders Association  
Hilton Dawson – Newbiggin Development Trust  
Jo-Anne Garrick – Neighbourhood Planning Consultant

**Officers:**

Dennis Earl – Town Clerk, Newbiggin by the Sea Town Council  
Elaine Brown – Deputy Town Clerk, Newbiggin by the Sea Town Council  
Sarah Brannigan – Planning Officer, Northumberland County Council

**1. Apologies:**

Liz Simpson – County Councillor Newbiggin Central & East  
David English – Northumberland County Council  
Jaqueline Prouse – Newbiggin Community Ventures  
Jeff Boyd – Bernicia

**2. Minutes of the Previous meeting held 14<sup>th</sup> July 2020**

The minutes were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting.

**3. Feedback from Steering Group on draft vision, objectives, themes, and community actions**

The feedback was enclosed with the agenda papers. It was agreed that the draft would be amended based on the comments and feedback received.

The designation of Newbiggin as an area of deprivation was discussed and the need for the town to be united in its ambitions. Promoting the case of Newbiggin being the 13<sup>th</sup> town (in planning terms) was discussed, the Neighbourhood Plan cannot change what is in the Local Plan but it is a development plan, therefore the neighbourhood plan can state our plans for Newbiggin being classed as a town in planning terms.

**4. Draft Engagement Document**

The draft was noted as an excellent and comprehensive document covering wide range of issues in terms to getting to the next stage of consultation with the community, it was hoped to get something the consultation out as soon as possible..

Prematurity of housing allocations and settlement boundary was discussed along with community actions which are not planning issues with the idea that they could be consulted on later in the year.

It was suggested that the wording around settlement boundaries and housing land be amended as the omitting of these questions may raise queries with the community and developers as to why they were omitted.

It was agreed to omit the housing and settlement boundary for now and carry out a further consultation towards the end of the year after the Housing Needs Assessment has been obtained.

The Wildlife corridor was queried regarding its extents from the aspirations of the neighbourhood plan and the proposed designations within the Local Plan. This would be investigated.

## **5. Funding Update**

We have been informed by Northumberland County Council Planning Department of some changes to the government grant regime for neighbourhood planning which were announced recently. There is a push to support neighbourhood planning in more deprived areas, so the government has just announced it is providing additional grant support to town and parish councils. For more deprived areas, this amount has been increased to £18,000 rather than the normal £10,000 available.

They have looked at the eligibility criteria and the Index of Multiple Deprivation in relation to all parishes in Northumberland and have found that Newbiggin-by-the-Sea qualifies for this additional support.

The offer of additional grant is also backed up by some direct support from consultants engaged through the government's neighbourhood planning support programme.

To date a grant of £3,600 has been successfully obtained which funds Neighbourhood Planning Consultancy Fees.

A further grant application has been submitted to Neighbourhood Planning Programme, funded by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government and we have been successful in obtaining £3,310 to cover the cost of an autumn engagement (print and distribution of engagement document, venue hire for engagement events, publicity of engagement events and engagement activities)

## **6. Update on Housing Needs Assessment (HNA)**

The Planning Officer informed that AECOM had not yet contacted NCC.

The Deputy Clerk informed that an inception meeting was held between AECOM and the Town Council Officers on 11<sup>th</sup> August and there was a time frame of approx. 10-12 weeks for the draft to be returned, it was expected in late October/early November. AECOM would be looking at the quantity, type, size, tenure, and number of housing. A further update from AECOM would be requested.

## **7. Natural Environmental Designations**

NCC must consider if the Neighbourhood Plan will have effect on the environment and how significant the effects may be, so NCC need to carry out screening to look at effects and mitigate them.

A detailed look at environmental sites is likely to be required as we are attempting to allocate sites for development. NCC will start the process of investigating effects when they have the draft plan and work in tandem with the Neighbourhood Planning Group looking at mitigation. NCC will also look at habitat sites. The Planning Officer would share a note after the meeting which simplifies the process.

Copies of the Northumberland Coastal Ramsar site, SSSI, Northumbria Coast Special Protection, priority habitat and local wildlife sites showing that Newbiggin is rich in natural designations were enclosed for the information of Steering Group Members with the intention that all have think about these and any other sites that may require designation.

#### **8. Local Green Spaces and Protected Open Space Methodology**

Neighbourhood plans can look at protecting areas that are important to the community. While the Local Plan designates protected open space but does not identify areas of local green space which can offer stronger protection to the site. Designation criteria includes emphasising the important of sites due to historic or environmental.

The group should start thinking about sites that are important and could be included as local green spaces.

#### **9. Date and time of next meeting**

A meeting would be arranged in late October/ early November following the Autumn consultation and the return of the draft Housing Needs Assessment.

The meeting closed at 3.11pm

## **NEWBIGGIN BY THE SEA NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN STEERING GROUP**

The inaugural meeting of the Newbiggin Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group at the Town Council Office, 76 Front Street, Newbiggin on Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> September 2018 at 14.00

### **Present:**

Malcolm Peden – Chair of Newbiggin by the Sea Town Council  
Alan Thompson – Vice Chair of Newbiggin by the Sea Town Council  
Jeff Boyd – Bernicia Homes  
Eddie Peat – Director Haworth Estates; North East & Corporate Development  
Stuart Todd – Newbiggin Development Trust

Liz Simpson – County Councillor Newbiggin Central & East  
Jim Lang - County Councillor Newbiggin West & North Seaton  
Lynn Burns Newbiggin Community Venture

### **Officers:**

David English – Northumberland County Council Planning Manager  
Dennis Earl – Town Clerk, Newbiggin by the Sea Town Council  
Elaine Brown – Deputy Town Clerk, Newbiggin by the Sea Town Council

**Apologies** – Fiona Rowley – Newbiggin Traders Association; Ken Dunbar - Arch

The Town Clerk explained that all in attendance were representatives of significant bodies of interest regarding land, regeneration and employment in the Parish as well as the community of Newbiggin by the Sea. All introduced themselves. It was explained that the Ward County Councillors and Lynn Burns representing community interest and regeneration would be recommended to be appointed to the Steering Group by the Town Council.

Mr. English suggested the first item of business cover governance issues requesting the Steering Group publish details of membership, Terms of Reference and a community engagement strategy. He also provided some background information on Neighbourhood Planning for the benefit of all present, noting that there is no time limit on creating a Neighbourhood Plan but it is likely to take in excess of 2 years. Newbiggin had already taken the first step by designating the parish boundary to be the Neighbourhood Plan area.

The Terms of Reference of the Steering Group and effectively its remit was to make recommendations on process; consultation; examination of all elements to the Town Council. The Town Council had a Community Engagement Strategy in place and it was intended to publicise all matters relating to the Plan and process through the new web site.

The Plan when adopted would become part of the planning policy process and had to focus on land use/designation for planning purposes. Detailed matters of promotion of the town and delivery of development would be addressed elsewhere.

After discussion of the initial principles of the approach to Neighbourhood Planning, that were not site specific but raised the general planning principles to be addressed, the following were agreed:

- Principles of Separation of Settlements;
- Wildlife Corridor/linear open space along western boundary;

- Travel link – Woodhorn Bridge Roundabout – access to town and link for A189 spine road to Tyneside and A1 north and south;
- Regeneration of the town through endorsing employment & providing appropriate infrastructure and start-up units;
- Tourism – visitor growth to assist commercial sustainability & provide increased attractions;
- Housing Growth and improving choice to retain and attract families.

The Group considered commencing community engagement on the agreed principles from Autumn, noting that consideration should be given to how questions are posed when necessary.

It was agreed that the Town Council would take ownership of the principles. There was considerable overlap in these principles with all the elements of the existing extant Wansbeck Plan which would be considered over the period of the Neighbourhood Plan development. The principles and policies to be developed would all impact on the future regeneration and sustainability of the town and the Neighbourhood Plan would need to demonstrate that aspirations are deliverable.

In the recent Northumberland Local Plan Consultation more challenges have been faced with settlement boundaries halting progress. The Town Council had requested that the settlement boundary be reviewed so that the local community could consider that matter and progress within the context of creating a Neighbourhood Plan for the Parish without being constrained by the County Plan which was expected to be confirmed and in place by March 2020.

A future date would be set once approval to the way forward had been received from the Town Council.

### Section 3 – External Auditor Report and Certificate 2019/20

In respect of

NEWBIGGIN BY THE SEA PARISH COUNCIL – NL0103

#### 1 Respective responsibilities of the body and the auditor

This authority is responsible for ensuring that its financial management is adequate and effective and that it has a sound system of internal control. The authority prepares an Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with *Proper Practices* which:

- summarises the accounting records for the year ended 31 March 2020; and
- confirms and provides assurance on those matters that are relevant to our duties and responsibilities as external auditors.

Our responsibility is to review Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with guidance issued by the National Audit Office (NAO) on behalf of the Comptroller and Auditor General (see note below). Our work **does not** constitute an audit carried out in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK & Ireland) and **does not** provide the same level of assurance that such an audit would do.

#### 2 External auditor report 2019/20

Except for the matters reported below, on the basis of our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR), in our opinion the information in Sections 1 and 2 of the AGAR is in accordance with *Proper Practices* and no other matters have come to our attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met.

The smaller authority has not addressed the 'except for' matters raised by the external auditor when qualifying the prior year annual return. The Box 8 figure for 2018/19 should read £232,220 and has not been restated to that figure this year. As a result, Section 1, Assertion 7 has been incorrectly completed as they have not addressed the above matter for this year and therefore should have answered 'No'.

Other matters not affecting our opinion which we draw to the attention of the authority:

None.

#### 3 External auditor certificate 2019/20

We certify that we have completed our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, and discharged our responsibilities under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, for the year ended 31 March 2020.

External Auditor Name

PKF LITTLEJOHN LLP

External Auditor Signature

*PKF Littlejohn LLP*

Date

30/10/2020

\* Note: the NAO issued guidance applicable to external auditors' work on limited assurance reviews for 2019/20 in Auditor Guidance Note AGN/02. The AGN is available from the NAO website ([www.nao.org.uk](http://www.nao.org.uk))

# Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement 2019/20

We acknowledge as the members of:

NEWBIGGIN BY THE SEA TOWN COUNCIL

our responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control, including arrangements for the preparation of the Accounting Statements. We confirm, to the best of our knowledge and belief, with respect to the Accounting Statements for the year ended 31 March 2020, that:

	Agreed			'Yes' means that this authority:
	Yes	No		
1. We have put in place arrangements for effective financial management during the year, and for the preparation of the accounting statements.	YES			prepared its accounting statements in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
2. We maintained an adequate system of internal control including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.	YES			made proper arrangements and accepted responsibility for safeguarding the public money and resources in its charge.
3. We took all reasonable steps to assure ourselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and Proper Practices that could have a significant financial effect on the ability of this authority to conduct its business or manage its finances.	YES			has only done what it has the legal power to do and has complied with Proper Practices in doing so.
4. We provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors' rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.	YES			during the year gave all persons interested the opportunity to inspect and ask questions about this authority's accounts.
5. We carried out an assessment of the risks facing this authority and took appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required.	YES			considered and documented the financial and other risks it faces and dealt with them properly.
6. We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the accounting records and control systems.	YES			arranged for a competent person, independent of the financial controls and procedures, to give an objective view on whether internal controls meet the needs of this smaller authority.
7. We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit.	YES			responded to matters brought to its attention by internal and external audit.
8. We considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year-end, have a financial impact on this authority and, where appropriate, have included them in the accounting statements.	YES			disclosed everything it should have about its business activity during the year including events taking place after the year end if relevant.
9. (For local councils only) Trust funds including charitable. In our capacity as the sole managing trustee we discharged our accountability responsibilities for the fund(s)/assets, including financial reporting and, if required, independent examination or audit.	Yes	No	N/A	has met all of its responsibilities where, as a body corporate, it is a sole managing trustee of a local trust or trusts.
			✓	

\*Please provide explanations to the external auditor on a separate sheet for each 'No' response and describe how the authority will address the weaknesses identified. These sheets must be published with the Annual Governance Statement.

This Annual Governance Statement was approved at a meeting of the authority on:

15/07/20

and recorded as minute reference:

CO/06/20/21

Signed by the Chairman and Clerk of the meeting where approval was given:

Chairman



Clerk



Other information required by the Transparency Codes (not part of Annual Governance Statement)

Authority web address

www.newbiggintowncouncil.gov.uk

## Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2019/20 for

NEWBIGGIN BY THE SEA TOWN COUNCIL

	Year ending		Notes and guidance
	31 March 2019 £	31 March 2020 £	
1. Balances brought forward	185,660	234,017	Please round all figures to nearest £1. Do not leave any boxes blank and report £0 or Nil balances. All figures must agree to underlying financial records. Total balances and reserves at the beginning of the year as recorded in the financial records. Value must agree to Box 7 of previous year.
2. (+) Precept or Rates and Levies	228,365	254,981	Total amount of precept (or for IDBs rates and levies) received or receivable in the year. Exclude any grants received.
3. (+) Total other receipts	53,767	19,567	Total income or receipts as recorded in the cashbook less the precept or rates/levies received (line 2). Include any grants received.
4. (-) Staff costs	66,892	70,719	Total expenditure or payments made to and on behalf of all employees. Include gross salaries and wages, employers NI contributions, employers pension contributions, gratuities and severance payments.
5. (-) Loan interest/capital repayments	0	0	Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on the authority's borrowings (if any).
6. (-) All other payments	166,883	232,370	Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cashbook less staff costs (line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (line 5).
7. (=) Balances carried forward	234,017	205,417	Total balances and reserves at the end of the year. Must equal (1+2+3) - (4+5+6).
8. Total value of cash and short term investments	235,527	206,675	The sum of all current and deposit bank accounts, cash holdings and short term investments held as at 31 March – To agree with bank reconciliation.
9. Total fixed assets plus long term investments and assets	287,485	317,546	The value of all the property the authority owns – it is made up of all its fixed assets and long term investments as at 31 March.
10. Total borrowings	0	0	The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including PWLB).
11. (For Local Councils Only) Disclosure note re Trust funds (including charitable)	Yes	No	The Council, as a body corporate, acts as sole trustee for and is responsible for managing Trust funds or assets.
		✓	N.B. The figures in the accounting statements above do not include any Trust transactions.

I certify that for the year ended 31 March 2020 the Accounting Statements in this Annual Governance and Accountability Return have been prepared on either a receipts and payments or income and expenditure basis following the guidance in Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities – a Practitioners' Guide to Proper Practices and present fairly the financial position of this authority.

Signed by Responsible Financial Officer before being presented to the authority for approval

*A. Ray*

Date

08/07/20

I confirm that these Accounting Statements were approved by this authority on this date:

15/07/20

as recorded in minute reference:

60/07/20/21

Signed by Chairman of the meeting where the Accounting Statements were approved

*Alan Longman*

**COUNCIL 18 November 2020**

**1. Conclusion of Annual Audit**

- 1.1 PKF Littlejohn LLP the appointed external auditors have now reported completion of its review of the Town Councils Annual Governance and Accountability Return for the financial year 2019/20 as agreed in July this year. The submitted Annual Governance Statement and Accounting Statements 2019/20 are attached at appendix 1.
- 1.2 The External Auditor Report and Certificate 2019/20 duly signed is attached at appendix 2 and I would draw your attention to the section 2 exception which is the same matter addressed last year concerning the statement and restatement of the Box 8 value of cash for the year ending 31 March 2019 from £235,527 to £232,220.
- 1.3 While this has no material effect on the accounts I omitted to change the amount for the previous year on the submission agreed in July and therefore technically the assertion 7 was incorrect in section 1. This is easily corrected on both documents which will then be published along with the Notice of Conclusion of Audit and placed on the web site.

RECOMMENDED that the Town Council:

- i) Note the External Auditor Report and Certificate;
- ii) agree the amendments to Box 8 and assertion 7;
- iii) publish the amended documents along with the Notice of Conclusion of Audit and the Report and Certificate for 2019/20.

**2 Public Conveniences near Cresswell Arms/Church Point Car Park**

- 2.1 A communication has been received from Northumberland County Council Neighbourhood Services advising of its intention to proceed with demolition and remove the disused structure at the end of the month. Within that timescale they have asked that the Town Council consider whether to formally request an asset transfer.
- 2.2 Members have made reference to the increase in visitor numbers in recent times and the need to provide further accessible facilities for the disabled. In order to make an informed decision Members have requested updated information in relation to the possible refurbishment of the toilet block.
- 2.3 In the event of an asset transfer all responsibility and liability would transfer to the Town Council including cost of demolition of the building should that be necessary.
- 2.4 There is unlikely to be any suitable alternative site for public toilet provision and planning permission would be required and possibly contested.

2.5 In January 2019 the minimum cost of the refurbishment plan was £71,000 but a new contract tender exercise may be necessary. County Highways would need to establish what works, e.g. dropped kerbs; raised paving, would be required in the highway to facilitate wheelchair access or disabled parking.

2.6 Ongoing annual revenue costs would start in 2021/22 at £4,200 for opening; cleansing and closing plus utility costs for standard service. Later opening costs would be £2,870 pa.

2.7 The 2020/21 Budget contains no provision for this project and balances are currently allocated to other schemes. To introduce this project in the current financial year would require a revision of the agreed 3 year Project Plan allocations for this year and next year, mostly to regeneration projects at Milburn Park/South Bay which are being developed with the County Council and partners, so some schemes would have to be delayed.

2.8 The Council is requested to consider the above information and decide whether to pursue an asset transfer from the County Council and proceed with a refurbishment scheme.