

AMBLE TOWN COUNCIL – May 2025

The Minutes of the AGM and Full Council meeting Thursday 15th May 2025, 6.00pm, Town Council Offices, Fourways2, 6 Dilston Terrace, Amble.

PRESENT:

C Weir (Outgoing Chair) M Joyce, I Parks, D Bewley, L McTaggart, J Richards, C Dawson, I Rackham

BUSINESS TO BE TRANSACTED

1. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME: (maximum 15 minutes)

In accordance with Section 1(d-g) of the ATC Standing Orders members of the public present may address the Council at this point on the agenda. The Council/Committee reserves the right to respond or debate the issue at a later date

Members of the public present:

Matthew Connolly

Claire Connolly

MC raised concerns with regards to the barrier at Turner Street Car Park. The barrier has been damaged for three months and has been reported on Fix My Street. NCC Cllr, Arty Hume confirmed the issue was in hand but could not confirm it would be fixed for the summer season. ATC to write to NCC to expedite its repair.

2.ELECTION OF MAYOR AND CHAIRPERSON FOR 2025/2026

To elect a Chair / Mayor

Nomination: Ian Parks

Proposer: Ivor Rackham

Resolved: Councillor Ian Parks was voted as Chair / Mayor of Amble Town Council and duly signed the declaration of office. The outgoing Chair congratulated Cllr Parks and wished the Council well.

3.ELECTION OF A DEPUTY MAYOR AND VICE CHAIRPERSON FOR 2025/2026

To elect a Deputy Mayor / Vice Chair

Nomination: David Bewley

Proposer: Michael Joyce

Counter Proposal: Luke McTaggart

A vote was held.

Resolved: Councillor David Bewley was voted as Vice Chair / Vice Mayor of Amble Town Council and duly signed the declaration of office.

4.APOLOGIES

None

5.DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Members are invited to declare disclosable pecuniary interests and other interests in

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items on the agenda, as required by the Amble Town Council Code of Conduct for Members and by the Localism Act 2011, now or as they come up in the agenda process. Members are asked to review their completed Register of Interest forms to ensure that they are accurate and up to date.

LMc declared interest in Bailiffgate Museum and Amble Christmas Lights Committee. Members were asked to declare interests as and when they appear on the agenda.

6.FINANCIAL SIGNATORIES

To authorise Councillors to be signatories on behalf of the Council, of whom a minimum of two are required to authorise all payments on behalf of Amble Town Council.

Resolved: Cllr Richards agreed to be added to the banking mandate as financial signatory. Members were reminded that another member would be required to authorise the payments via email.

7.MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEES:

- a. To elect the Chair, Vice Chair and membership of the below committees. The Terms of Reference require there be a maximum of 8, including the Chair and Vice Chair of the Council:

- i. **Amenities Committee** – meets the last Thursday of the month, on a two monthly basis commencing in May. Four meetings may be preceded by an inspection of the Cemeteries, Allotments, Play Areas to be scheduled.

Chair: Nominations: David Bewley

Proposer: Ian Parks

Secunder Jenny Richards

Vice: Nomination: Ian Parks
Proposer Michael Joyce
Secunder by Ciara Dawson
Membership: IP, DB, JR, CD, IR.

- ii. **Planning Committee** – Tuesdays of the month – dependent upon the receipt of Planning Applications.

Chair Nomination: David Bewley

Proposer Ian Parks

Secunder Ciara Dawson

Vice Nomination: Luke McTaggart

Proposer: Jenny Richards

Secunder Ciara Dawson

Membership: IP, DB, JR,CD, LMc, MJ

8.APPOINTMENT OF REPRESENTATIVES TO PARTNERSHIPS

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Meeting / Org / Group	2024/2025	Nominations 2025/2026	Proposer	Seconder
Amble Development Trust	Craig Weir	Michael Joyce* or Jenny Richards*	David Bewley Luke McTaggart	Ian Parks Ciara Dawson
Amble Youth Project	Kate Morrison	Ciara Dawson	Michael Joyce	Jenny Richards
NALC	Chris Palmer			
Town Parish Liaison Working Group	Chair / Vice Chair	Chair / Vice Chair		
Events Committee	Kate Morrison	Ciara Dawson	Luke McTaggart	Ian Parks
NTC	Kate Morrison	Ivor Rackham	Ciara Dawson	Michael Joyce
JCSC	Chair Vice Chair	Chair / Vice Chair		

***Nominees to be sent to ADT for Management Board decision**

9. TO CONSIDER THE APPOINTMENT OF AN INTERNAL AUDITOR

Resolved: David Newman agreed as Internal Auditor.

10. APPOINTMENT OF INSURER

Resolved: Zurich agreed as Town Council insurer

11. AGREEMENT REGARDING ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS/SUPPORT FEES/DONATIONS

To consider payment of annual subscriptions/ support fees/ donations- SUBSCRIPTIONS AND SUPPORT

- Northumberland Association of Local Councils
- Society of Local Council Clerks
- The Institute of Crematorium and Cemetery Management
- Local Councils update
- Local Council Review
- RoSPA – playground inspections
- Pear Technology – digital mapping support
- Team Valley Web – Hosting Fee
- Scribe Audit & Accounting
- Photocopier Lease

Resolved: Subscriptions agreed

Donations if requested, up to a maximum of £160

- Alnwick & District Sports Award
- Northumberland Touring Company

Resolved: Agreed

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Donations if requested, up to a maximum of £110.

- Great North Air Ambulance
- CAN
- Young Citizen Award

Resolved: Agreed

Donations if requested, up to a maximum of £55

- Marine Conservation Society
- Friends of Alnmouth Station
- Citizens Advice Northumberland
- Hospice Care North Northumberland
- Alnwick Playhouse Trust
- Bailiffgate Museum
- AGE UK Northumberland

Cllr McTaggart declared an interest in Bailiffgate Museum

Cllr Parks declared an interest in Hospice Care North Northumberland

Resolved: Agreed

Donations to Community Groups:

- Christmas Lights Committee up to £1500
- Events Committee up to £2000 towards one Christmas Parade road closure and Puffin Festival leaflets as determined by Members.

Cllr McTaggart declared an interest in Christmas Lights Committee

Resolved: Agreed

12.DATES AND TIMES OF MEETINGS FROM MAY 2025 TO MAY 2026

Noted

13.POLICIES & PROTOCOLS

To approve the recommendation to confirm at this annual meeting thereafter with a minimum of two yearly review/update as necessary brought to monthly meetings. Copies available in the Council Offices for review.

Cemetery

Agreed in April 2024

- Cemetery Abridged Rules
- Headstone Erection
- Headstone Leaflet 1 & 2
- Memorial Mason Handbook (print)
- Memorial Mason's Regulations
- Memorial Mason Registration Scheme
- Memorial Design
- Cemetery Fees 2024-2025
- Permission to Erect a Memorial
- Natural Burials 1 & 2

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- Memorial Inspection Notice
- Unauthorised Mementos
- Memorial Mason Certificate Request
- Memorial Testing Practices
- Independent Funerals 1 & 2
- Charter for the Bereaved
- Bereaved Handbook (print)
- West Cemetery Rules (print)

Council Administration

- Committee Terms of Reference
- Co-option Policy
- Document Retention
- Equality & Diversity
- Expenses
- Flag Policy
- Freedom of Information Policy
- General Financial Responsibilities
- Honorary Freeman
- Marking the Death of a Senior National Figure
- Powers and Duties
- Standing Orders 2025
- Garden Judging Guidelines
- Equipment Loan Policy
- Commemorative Seat and Plaque Policy
- Abusive, Persistent and Vexatious Communication
- Risk Management Strategy
- Annual Risk Assessment
- Asset Risk Assessment

Councillor

- Code of Conduct
- Dignity at Work
- Dispensation
- Privacy Notice- Internal
- Relations-
- Contact Details Agreement

Employee

- Absence Management

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- Annual Leave
- Anti- Bullying and Harassment
- Code of Conduct
- Data Protection for Staff
- Disciplinary
- Draft Contract
- Emergency Dependents Leave
- Flexible Working
- Gratuity Gift
- Grievance
- Information Technology
- Lone Working
- Maternity Leave and Pay
- Performance Improvement
- Personal Development Form
- Sickness Absence
- Social Media Guidelines
- Training and Development
- Whistleblowing

Finance

- Financial Regulations
- Grant Application
- Grants and Donations

Public

- Accident Reporting
- ATC Aims
- CCTV
- Charging
- Complaints Procedure
- General Data Protection
- General Privacy Statement
- Commemorative Seat Plaques
- Mission Statement
- Publication Scheme

Please note some may also be applicable to more than one area.

Resolved: Policies were approved. A future working party to be considered to determine whether existing policies can be streamlined.

14. Review of arrangements (including legal agreements) with other local

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authorities, not-for-profit bodies and businesses.

Members are asked to note that contracts are in place for the following.

- Memorial Gardens Maintenance Works March – November ongoing annually subject to contract detail
- Gravedigging - Ongoing subject to contract detail
- Office Lease January 2022 – 2026
- Service Level Agreement – Northumberland County Council - Cemetery & Town Groundsworks 2022 – 2026
- CCTV Maintenance
- Community Website Hosting and Domain
- Service Level Agreement IT Provision Northumberland County Council
- Annual Service to Cemetery Shutters
- Clock Tower Lightning Conductor Test
- Clock Tower Service
- Service Level Agreement for provision of payroll services Northumberland County Council

Resolved: Contractual obligations noted.

15. BUSINESS REQUIRED BY STATUTE

15.1 To consider co-option application for Claire Connolly

Resolved: A vote was held and Members voted in support for the Co-Option of Claire Connolly. An appointment to be made with the Clerk.

15.2 To receive an update on Councillor vacancies post election.

There remains one vacancy in the East Ward.

16. MINUTES: TOWN COUNCIL

16.1: To consider the minutes of the meeting held on 10 April 2025, items 232– 251.2

Resolved: The minutes of the meeting 10 April 2025 were agreed as a true record.

17. CLERK'S REPORT:

RECOMMENDATION – That the Council notes the contents of the report and consider actions where necessary.

17.1 Clerks Report

Resolved: The Clerks report was noted.

18 CHAIRMAN'S COMMUNICATIONS and REPORT:

To receive the communications and report of the Chairman pertaining to Council Business:

18.1: Chairman

Cllr Parks alongside former Chairman Craig Weir attended the centenary event for the Amble Clock Tower and War Memorial as well as the Annual Parish Meeting and Barndale School. The former Chair also attended the RAF Boulmer event.

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18.2: Vice Chairman

As above

19. REPORTS FROM COUNTY COUNCILLORS:

19.1: To receive a report from County Councillor Arthur Hume

19.2: To receive a report from County Councillor Pauline Davidson

- Update on Amble Toilet Refurbishment
- Update on Coble Quay Walkway
- Update on Borderlands Growth Projects Funding
- Update on the zebra crossing on Percy Drive.
- The state of the road on Percy Drive
- Reduced number of books in Amble library and assurances it won't be closed over the Christmas period.
- Barndale Acklington Rd entrance update
- Rights of Way to investigate overgrown trees from Sewage works. This will need to be delayed until after nesting season.
- Update on high school including new lighting, crossings and cycleway
- Turner Street Car Park Barrier (reported to Fix My Street 3 months ago)

Arty Hume and Pauline Davidson were congratulated on their election success. It was agreed to meet with the County Councillors separately however the following updates were provided:

Toilet Refurbishment – Tender going out this week with expectation for work to commence in June / July. Councillors confirmed they would be happy to assist with contributions from Members Small Schemes once detail is known.

Coble Quay Walkway – an update has been requested. This could take up to ten days.

Highways – queries have been raised regarding the zebra crossing outside Fontburn, Percy Drive, Turner Street Car Park barrier, Fix My Street – a response should be made within ten days

JCSC – Further questions are being asked with regards to the size and facilities in the school.

Barndale / Acklington Road – a response is expected this week to also include updates on the new school build, lighting, crossing points and cycle ways

Borderlands – It was urged for Amble to be considered in future as it has consistently been overlooked for investment.

Amble Library – the lack of books was raised, and assurance is being sought regarding Christmas closure

Bede Street Club – any arrangements for this would be outside of the Town Council remit.

Cllr Joyce gave an update on the drains on Leazes Street and arrangements for road closures would need to be made by NCC before the work can be carried out.

Clerk to arrange another meeting.

County Councillors assured Members that they are working to benefit of Amble.

20. To receive an update from the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

MC gave a brief background for new Members. The Neighbourhood Plan was started in December 2023, working towards making a plan for Amble to get the kind of development we need in Amble and avoid the things we don't want.

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The Steering Group are looking at 46 Green Space sites to put them into a format and collect the data needed on each one. They have commissioned a Housing Needs Assessment from AECOM which is due at the end of May and will inform their work on the housing elements of the plan.

MC sought agreement from the Town Council to continue working on the plan. There are grants available, but these are not guaranteed. A Council representative is required however if there are no volunteers a bridging coordinator will still need to be decided. Cllr McTaggart agreed to fulfilling this role provided clarity was sought on whether it could be deemed a conflict of interest. Cllr Dawson expressed an interest in joining as an individual.

21. REPORTS FROM COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES & REPORTS OF MEETINGS ATTENDED BY MEMBERS AS PRIVATE INDIVIDUALS:

21.1 To receive the report of Councillors who represent ATC on outside bodies (Cllr Reports)

Thanks were given to all members who attended to assist with the rose planting in the Memorial Gardens.

Cllr Bewley attended the Estate Walkabout and Parish Meeting.

Cllrs Richards, Dawson and Parks met on site at Amble West to discuss complaint received.

22. FINANCIAL REPORT:

22.1 To consider voucher numbers 1 – 4 for payment and receipt vouchers 1 – 11

Additional payments were authorised, voucher numbers 1-24.

Resolved: Payments and receipts were approved.

22.2 Bank Reconciliation

Resolved: The bank reconciliation was noted

22.3 YTD figures

Resolved: The Year to Date figures were noted.

22.4 Grant requests

- Amble Links First School

Further clarification was requested.

It was queried whether Amble could adopt a similar grants policy to that of Alnwick Town Council and whether Amble could adopt a proforma for grant recipients to complete. Clerk to investigate.

22.5 To approve Financial Regulations, Statement of Internal Control and Financial Risk Assessment Appendix A

Resolved: The Financial Regulations, Statement of Internal Control and Financial Risk Assessment were approved.

22.6 To note the Asset Register

Resolved: The Asset Register was noted.

22.7 To note the outcome of the Internal Audit

Resolved: There were no issues to report. The Internal Audit was noted.

22.8 Annual Governance and Accountability Return for 2024-2025

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- To consider and agree any actions arising from the report of the internal auditor
- To approve the Annual Governance Statement
- To approve the draft annual accounts for 2024-2025
- To approve the Accounting Statement
- To approve the Explanation of Variances and additional Information requested for the Intermediate Audit

Members considered the content of the AGAR and the supporting information.

Resolved: Town Council accepted the AGAR which is to be signed off by the Chair.

23.AMENITIES MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE:

23.1 To discuss solution for mis-use of bins near West Allotments

NCC have reported misuse of the bins next to the allotments on Percy Drive and Meadowburn. This includes using the bins for machinery items, wood with nails, sharp items, petrol cannisters and glass.

Resolved: Clerk to discuss with AAHS.

23.2 To agree to renew planter agreement with the Amble Inn and agree representative to negotiate

The Amble Inn have a Corporate Social Responsibility Team which may be able to help with this and other Town Projects.

Resolved: Cllr Bewley to make contact with The Amble Inn. Clerk to seek contact details of social responsibility team.

23.3 To discuss options for Gloster Park bus shelter including removal of existing shelter:

a) to have 1 full end panel at approach end and 1 half end panel at departure end (Total cost £5531.00) or

b) 2 half end panels (Total cost £5378.00) (Traffic management costs (£500) and permit (£375) cost not included)

Resolved: Bus Shelter installation with no sides was agreed.

23.4 To discuss re-issue of Exclusive Right of Burial in absence of formal paperwork

Resolved: A reissue of the paperwork was agreed subject to the completion and signing of a Statutory Declaration.

24: PLANNING COMMITTEE

24.1 To receive an update on the new JCSC build and note concerns sent to NCC.

No update has been received. Clerk is seeking clarification on variations and impact on the size and facilities included.

24.2 To note agreed culvert re-route agreed by NCC and request for legal agreement to be drawn up

It was noted that the new footway had been created and resurfaced. Legal agreement for use of culvert has been requested from ESH. There has been no response at time of writing.

24.3 To consider writing to NCC to raise concerns regarding the development on the B6345 and the additional congestion it would cause at the junction to the A1068, as well as traffic going through Togston.

Resolved: Clerk to write to NCC. The proposal for traffic to travel this route is not viable or safe due to the volume and speed of traffic. It is felt that this new estate should be

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coming out at the South Roundabout and this has already been requested by ATC. Clerk to ask for NCCs evidence that this new proposed route is more suited.

24.4 To note the Planning outcomes for April 2025

The planning outcomes were noted.

25 AGENDA ITEMS:

25.1 To discuss request for involvement in discussions to retain JCSC Sports Hall as Social Value Application

IP declared an interest.

Matthew Connolly attended on behalf of Amble Development Trust.

Amble Development Trust are keen to retain the JCSC sports hall in order to create a Sports Village in that area. Whilst former County Cllrs insisted on demolishing the building, some officers within NCC can see the merit of this building being retained for activities and pursuits not offered by the new school facilities (so as not to be in competition with community access facilities at the new school), especially during the day and term time. Consultation at the Neighbourhood Plan demonstrated that the community felt there is a need for such a facility within the town, especially during inclement weather.

The building was classed as fit for purpose in 2017 and 2021 and is also planned to be in use until new school has been built. It was noted that contained in two out of the five proposals put forward for the development of the new school build, the sports hall was retained.

It was emphasised that there is no expectation for this to be run or managed by ADT or ATC, but for ATC to be involved in the discussion process to demonstrate community support.

A vote was taken whether to be involved in discussions with ADT, Paul Brooks and Kathie Keady.

Resolved: On the provision of additional information from NCC, it was agreed to be involved in discussions regarding retaining the JCSC sports hall.

25.2 To consider Council commitment to Neighbourhood Development Plan

Resolved: The Town Council reconfirmed its commitment to the Neighbourhood Plan.

25.3 To resolve that Council adopts the General Power of Competence

Resolved: That this council hereby adopts the general power of competence, as defined in Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011, and undertakes to exercise it in accordance with the requirements of the Act.

25.4 To agree % increase for allotment rent 25/26

Cllrs Rackham and Richards declared an interest

Resolved: Members agreed not to raise the allotment rent for 25/26

25.5 To discuss the possibility of hosting a joint town and parish meeting with Neighbouring Parishes to discuss shared issues.

Resolved: Members agreed to joint meetings to discuss shared issues with neighbouring parishes including Warkworth Parish Council, Hauxley Parish Council, Togston Parish Council and Acklington Parish Council. Clerk to contact Councils and arrange first meeting. It was agreed to continue with separate meetings with Northumbria Police for those parishes outside of the Alnwick policing area.

25.6 To agree information re Amble Town Council Awards, and agree a date for shortlisting gardens, to agree Civic Award nominations, to agree a judging date and

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date of ceremony.

Cllr McTaggart proposed a Peoples Choice Award, whereby the community nominate a garden and send in photographs for Cllrs to judge.

Arrangements were agreed as follows:

Cllrs to submit their shortlist by 20-25 June 2025

Seek Alnwick Garden Judge availability w/c 30 June 2025

Main event takes place mid-July

A new category for The Peoples Choice to be included and advertised ASAP.

Cllrs to liaise with fellow ward members to determine how they wish to shortlist.

25.7 To discuss amendments to the Honorary Freeman policy and determine whether there are nominations for 2025-2026

Resolved: Members agreed to reduce the time of volunteer work to ten years and increase the number of recipients of the honour to three.

Members agreed three recipients. In line with the policy the award shall be made at a small ceremony which may take place at a Council meeting or the Annual Civic Awards.

A scroll and a pin will be presented to the recipient.

The Council will maintain a public list of all Freeman/Freewomen.

Such persons will receive an invitation to all civic occasions.

Clerk to action.

25.8 To discuss and agree prizes to be purchased for Young Citizen of the Year Award and Cllr representation at event on 11 July 2025

Goodie bags to be purchased for all those nominated up to a total cost of £110. Clerk to retrieve trophy and arrange engraving. Usually, the Chair would attend but all members are welcome.

25.9 To agree Council representation to St Cuthberts Church event on 3rd July 2025, 7.00pm

Resolved: Cllr Rackham and Cllr Parks to attend.

25.10 To consider writing to NCC to request a pelican crossing on the A1068 near High Street

Resolved: Clerk to contact NCC Councillors.

25.11 To discuss agree design and measurements of proposed headstone at Amble West Cemetery

Resolved: Provided the measurement of the base conforms with permitted measurements, there is no objection.

25.12 To consider request for information sharing re Amble First School building survey

Clerk to ascertain whether there are any restrictions on sharing the document. If not, Members agreed to sharing the survey.

26. COMMUNICATIONS: RECOMMENDATION - *That the Council note the items.*

26.1 To note response from Northumbria Water re CCTV on Percy Drive

26.2 To note staff and Councillor training opportunities from NALC

26.3 To note resident continued correspondence

26.4 Community Support and Heritage Opportunity – Northumberland Haunted Museum, Amble

26.5 Neighbourhood Watch May 2025 Newsletter

26.6 Amble Links Primary School Governors

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All items noted enbloc

27. INFORMATION ITEMS AND ITEMS FOR CIRCULATION:

27.1 To note letter of support sent re Bathing Status Application

27.2 Leazes Street Drainage update

All items noted.

DIARY DATES:

29 May 2025, 6.00pm Amenities Committee, ATC Offices

13th June 2025, JCSC, 10.30am

28. DATE & TIME OF NEXT MEETING:

28.1 12 June 2025, 6.00pm venue Amble Town Council Offices, Fourways2, 6 Dilston Terrace.

EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC: To consider passing the following resolution: That under Section 1(2) 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 due to their sensitive nature

PRIVATE

29. PRIVATE REPORTS FROM COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES & REPORTS OF MEETINGS ATTENDED BY MEMBERS AS PRIVATE INDIVIDUALS

30. AGENDA

30.1 To discuss progress of Option Agreement and provisions requested by developer

The extensions were agreed however further clarity was requested on status of covenant and disposal obligations. Clerk to action.

30.2 To discuss complaint re Councillor behaviour

This is being dealt with by the monitoring officer and no discussion took place.