

Minutes of Coquetdale Cluster meeting held on Tuesday 29th March 2022 commencing 730pm in the Dovecote Room, Jubilee Institute

34.1 Introduction and welcome

J Famelton (Chairman), A Arkle, J Sutton, C France, M Milne, A Tait, C Palframan, J Scarpa (Parish Cllr's)
G Sanderson, A Lawson (Northumberland County Council)
C Miller (Clerk)

34.2 Apologies for absence

F Tait (Parish Cllr), I Hedley (Northumberland County Council), W Munro (Northumbria Police)

34.3 Meeting with Anne Lawson to discuss Borderlands Place Programme

Anne Lawson provided update on Borderlands Place Programme. Please see below.

<https://www.northumberland.gov.uk/Economy-Regeneration/Programmes/Borderlands-Place-Programme/Blyth-Borderlands.aspx>

33.4 Meeting with Glen Sanderson, Leader of Northumberland County Council

Glen thanked the County Council staff who were dealing with the Borderlands project. County Council budget had been produced, with no cuts being made to frontline services. Staff had worked hard during the Covid Pandemic and Storm Arwen, and were now involved with the Ukrainian refugee crises. County Council enquiry ongoing relating to Storm Arwen. It was noted a large number of County Cllr's had worked extremely hard during Storm Arwen, however there would be an improvement in preparations for any future emergencies. The Council support existing business and encourage new, do the best for residents and look after those who need the most help. Council had worked hard to get British Volt to set their business up at Blyth, with jobs being advertised to benefit the County. A lot of time and energy is spent improving skills for young person's who are not academic. A new windfarm technological centre to be based at Blyth. The Port of Blyth was built on coal and now thrives on renewable energy. A whiskey distillery to open at Wooler; a new village at Alnwick Gardens; the Maltings at Berwick to be transformed, along with Berwick Barracks. The Council continue to work with partners of the North of Tyne Combined Authority, with significant funding available to Northumberland. Devolution and working together in a bigger Combined Authority being considered, involving the seven Local Authorities of Durham, Sunderland, Gateshead, South/North Tyneside, Newcastle and Northumberland, however the Council would only join if this would be right for Northumberland. Inner quality summit arranged with professionals who work in child poverty, food poverty and areas that will suffer with the impending cost of living crises, with action plan being pulled together. Additional funding secured for country parks, which had been important during the Covid pandemic, along with additional funding for improvements to public W/C's and improved W/C signage for visitors. £2.2m funding earmarked for u and c class roads; a large amount of funding agreed towards affordable housing to provide new accommodation, working with partners. Climate change Action Plan very much a priority, with a £50K Community Fund for local communities to bid into for Climate Change action work, ie. tree planting. A Platinum Jubilee Fund with £70K is available to local communities to mark the event. Significant spending in Leisure Centre's planned, and new car parks to be built in Amble, Berwick and Morpeth. Town centre parking charges currently nil. New schools to be built in Seaton Valley, Amble and Berwick. £10m to be spent on Todsteads road, which is to be repaired properly. B.T. appeared to have put on hold their digital roll out, due to the need to fund an alternative service, with NCC having made this point to them. Glen to find out if there is a Duty of Care for vulnerable people to have access to communications in their own homes during times of crises.

34.5 Minutes of meeting held on Tuesday 12th October 2021

It was resolved the minutes of the previous meeting held on Tuesday 12th October 2021 be accepted as a true record.

34.6 Matters arising from previous meeting held on Tuesday 12th October 2021

There were no matters arising from the previous meeting held on Tuesday 12th October 2021.

34.7 Cluster Group's future, aims and objectives

The Coquetdale Cluster considered useful. It was agreed to invite Anne Lawson and Glen Sanderson to the next meeting. Clerk to contact Sue Bolam, Northumberland National Park Authority representative, and invite to meeting/request update on NNPA matters. Clerk to contact Alwinton and Harbottle Parish Council's to ask if they would consider joining the Cluster Group.

34.8 Policing Matters

W Munro, Neighbourhood Policing, had left note to report 114 crimes since last Coquetdale Cluster meeting, with 35 of these linked to ongoing conflict between Rothbury residents; remaining crimes sporadic and had no pattern, nothing serious or of potential concern. Regular speedwatch patrols carried out on main routes and Thropton; operations continue within National Parks to target off-road motorbike disorder; designated rural crime team had been set up to target rural crime issues; poaching operations to be run; new computerised app to be launched called Northumbria Connected.

34.9 Roads/Traffic/Local Transport Plan

Resurfacing works carried out between Simonside and Tosson, however ditches had been dug out causing issues for vehicles, and which could be easily rectified by placing gravel and installing French drains. The road(s) had not been originally designed for the volume of traffic. Clerk to provide details of Local Transport Plan requests which were to be actioned f/y 31.3.23. (once available).

34.10 Broadband

There was no information regarding the Factco broadband proposals for Coquetdale.

34.11 Planning

Hollinghill & Rothley Parish Council concerned about a controversial application for 3 houses to be constructed within a wood. There was wide concern regarding the Rothbury CO-OP relocation to Townfoot, with major traffic concerns envisaged, particularly at school start and finish times.

34.12 Priorities from individual Parish Councils

Rothbury bike track opening to be held 23/24 April 2022. Traffic calming measures to be provided by County Council, and financed by Rothbury Parish Council.

34.13 Any Items from Northumberland County Council

I Hedley not present.

34.14 Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Coquetdale Cluster will be held on Tuesday 4th October 2022 commencing 730pm in the Dovecote Room, Jubilee Institute.

The meeting closed at 845pm.