

Minutes of Coquetdale Cluster meeting held on Tuesday 6th August 2024 commencing 730pm in the Dovecote Room, Jubilee Institute

43.1 Introduction and welcome

J Famelton, F Tait, J Tait, J Sutton, C France, A Evans, J Scarpa, D Wise (part of meeting), C Miller

43.2 Apologies for absence

Northumbria Police, I Hedley

43.3 Election of Chairman and Vice Chairman

J Famelton proposed and seconded as Chairman and duly elected.

J Scarpa proposed and seconded as Vice Chairman and duly elected

43.4 Minutes of previous meeting held on Tuesday 2nd April 2024

RESOLVED:

Members agreed the minutes of the previous meeting were a true record.

43.5 Improved walking, cycle routes

Meeting with Duncan Wise, Visitor Development & Tourism Officer, Northumberland National park Authority

A presentation was given by Duncan Wise in relation to Northumberland National Park Visitor Active Travel Network Plan. Objectives were to appeal to a diverse range of visitors; provide for health and wellbeing; be more accessible; support sustainable tourist development and the wider rural visitor economy; a net-zero and nature-enhanced National Park. The visitor development strategy aimed to improve visitor facilities, services and information and to work with partners, including strengthening connections with gateway towns. The focus to be on essential visitor facilities, creating new experiences, strengthening connectivity between places and experiences, including development of low-carbon and active travel. Interpretive plans for each area to be created to result in revised activities and programmes, with new partners delivering activities, new cycle and walking routes. Active Travel England were the government agency responsible for making walking, wheeling and cycling the preferred choice for everyone to get around in England. NNPA had been awarded funding to produce an Active Travel Network Plan for Northumberland National Park. The plan would be a robust and costed action plan to create and/or improve four active travel corridors between the main gateway towns and their respective areas of the National Park. This would enable more people to participate in active travel. Consultants to be in place September 2024 who would work with local stakeholders, such as the Forestry Commission. Detailed schemes to be prepared by end of March 2025.

The Sustrans bridleway created several years ago between Rothbury and Thropton noted, funding had ultimately run out to extend the path. The possibility of using disused railway lines noted. Signage at Cragside to indicate Rothbury would be beneficial, however several entrance and exits had been trialed over the years, which had not encouraged visitors to the town centre. Entrance signage such as "Rothbury, Gateway to the Coquet Valley," would be the remit of the County Council. A regular bus from Rothbury to Simonside would be an ideal scenario, however footfall would need to be proven, and buses able to accommodate cycles. A cost benefit analysis should be carried out, there would be health and wellbeing as well as economic benefits.

Duncan thanked the Cluster for the invitation to attend and left the meeting.

43.6 Climate Change Action Plan within Coquetdale

Clerk had been led to believe each Parish Council should prepare their own biodiversity plan. I Hedley had contacted NALC suggesting drainage issues could form the basis of a NALC advisory, publicised in their monthly newsletter, but had not received feedback. However it is likely this would be a matter for the County Council Liaison Working Group.

43.7 Policing Matters

Nothing to discuss.

43.8 Update on Borderlands Place Programme

Borderlands Place Programme progressing.

43.9 Roads/Traffic/Local Transport Plan

Individual Parish Council's would be submitting their annual LTP requests to County Council. Clerk advised additional funding had been secured for road and drainage repairs.

43.10 Footpaths

County Council were currently running a Public Right of Way consultation. Clerk to circulate document and summary.

43.11 Crises Management/Emergency Resilience Grant Funding

Jubilee Institute Committee had advised the solar panels on the roof were to be replaced with a new Tesla battery system. This was the third element of the project to reduce carbon footprint and energy consumption, and provide the hall with battery backup power in the event of a power cut.

43.12 Items from individual Parish Council's

- Whitton and Tosson resident had requested a litter bin at Ladies Bridge via Rothbury Parish Council. Clerk advised the County Council had not confirmed whether they would be prepared to empty a bin in the location.
- There were issues with visibility when turning left at road bridge in Rothbury, due to trees/shrubbery. Clerk to report to County Council.
- Foliage on trees at Thropton bridge problematic, however drivers need to heed road signage. Good progress being made with drainage problems at Hepple.
- Hole had appeared at Kennels Bridge, Swindon. Northumberland National Park Authority had had to submit a planning application due to the stream being SSSI, which would involve working with the Environment Agency. The works would require a road closure.

43.13 Proposed bridleway from Wagtail Farm to Brinkburn Station Definitive Map Modification Order (No 3) 2024 (Parish of Brinkburn)

Clerk had received notice of the addition of BOAT No 40 Junction of Wagtail Lane and Wagtail Road, 10m north of 15 Lordenshaw Drive. Footpath No 45 to be amended from the Southern end of BOAT No 40 in a south-easterly direction by Craghead to join Footpath No 6 in the parish of Brinkburn.

43.14 Items from Northumberland County Council

Next Town and Parish Council conference to be held 3/10/24 at County Hall.

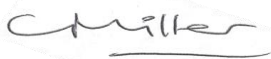
43.15 To elect representative to Town & Parish Council Liaison Working Group

Clerk to circulate next meeting papers to Cluster members. It was resolved a member of the Cluster should attend the meeting to assess whether it would be a useful Committee to be part of.

43.16 Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Coquetdale Cluster is scheduled to be held on Tuesday 3rd December 2024 commencing 7m in the Dovecote Room, Jubilee Institute. It was resolved to invite David Smith, M.P, and if unable to attend, request dates and times when he would be available.

Further to the meeting, David Smith, M.P agreed to attend a meeting on 15th November 2024 commencing 1230pm in the Dovecote Room, Jubilee Institute.



C Miller, Clerk

The meeting closed at 905pm

DRAFT