



HEXHAM TOWN COUNCIL

I GIVE NOTICE that a meeting of the Hexham Town Council Planning & Infrastructure Committee will be held on Tuesday 19 September 2023 at 5.30pm when the following items will be discussed:

A G E N D A

1. Apologies for absence.
2. To receive minutes of the Planning and Infrastructure Committee meeting held 4 July 2023, enclosed.
3. Matters arising.
4. Declarations of interest (see enclosed).
5. To receive a presentation from Sarah Brannigan, NCC Interim Planning Manager, on Affordable Housing.
6. To agree the Biodiversity Policy (circulated on 3 September).
7. To add to/amend the Clerk & Councillors Report (Google Docs).
8. To consider allotment fees for 2024/25.
9. To consider burial fees for 2024/25.
10. To consider any change of electricity supplier.
11. To consider any update on Grow Hexham.
12. To consider updates to the Hexham Net Zero Action Plan (if any).
13. To consider correspondence received (if any).
14. To comment on Planning Applications received (see enclosed).
15. To note the next meeting will be held on Tuesday 17 October at 5.30pm.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Jane Kevan'.

Jane Kevan
Locum Town Clerk
12 September 2023

Hexham Town Council
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St Andrew's Cemetery
West Road
Hexham
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Hagenda 0923 PlanningInfrastructureCommittee

**DRAFT MINUTES OF THE TOWN COUNCIL PLANNING & INFRASTRUCTURE
COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 4 JULY 2023**

PI23/14	PRESENT: Councillors Baty, Domingue and Kennedy.
PI23/15	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE were received from Councillors Grennan, Hartland, Ord and Pearson.
PI23/16	MINUTES of the Committee meeting held 1 June, having been circulated, were AGREED except that Councillor Greenan rather than Councillor Hartland was nominated as the Deputy.
PI23/17	DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST: Councillor Kennedy, as a Member of the NCC Tynedale Local Area Committee (Planning), declared a non-pecuniary interest in all planning applications and left the meeting before consideration of any of the applications.
PI23/18	CLERK AND OFFICERS REPORT: The report was reviewed and several updates made. It was AGREED to submit the Hexham Town Council Climate Emergency Vision to the Full Council meeting on 10 July.
PI23/19	CEMETERY GATES: It was AGREED to award a contract to refurbish the gates.
PI23/20	WYDON PARK ALLOTMENTS: It was AGREED to ask the Operations Manager to take some photos regarding the possible installation of a gate at allotment 5 Wydon Park.
PI23/21	HEXHAM MARKET PLACE: It was AGREED to investigate the feasibility of the use of rising bollards.
PI23/22	SOLAR PANELS/HOME BATTERIES: It was AGREED to engage with housing partners regarding the possibility of funding to aid resident take up of these.
PI23/23	LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN: It was AGREED to recommend the following three priorities for 2024/25 to NCC: 1. A 20mph speed limit across the town 2. Provide drop kerbs east and west of the town centre 3. Provide a courtesy crossing at the bottom of the junction at Eastgate
PI23/24	CORRESPONDENCE: It was noted that a complaint regarding use of weedkillers by allotment tenants on shared paths would be considered at the next meeting.
PI23/25	PLANNING APPLICATIONS: It was AGREED there were no objections to the applications received in accordance with the list circulated and attached to the agenda, except for 23/02122/ADE (23-25 Fore Street) where it was AGREED not to support the application.
PI23/26	NEXT MEETING: It was noted that the date of the next Committee meeting will be Tuesday 19 September 2023 at 5.30pm.

Action Log

List the Climate Emergency Vision on the July Full Council agenda (minute PI23/18)	Clerk
Arrange for the refurbishment of the gates (minute PI23/19)	Clerk
Ask the Operations Manager to take photos at Wydon Park allotments (minute PI23/20)	Clerk/Operations Manager
Research rising bollards (minute PI23/21)	Councillors Domingue and Smith
Engage with housing partners re solar panels (minute PI23/22)	Councillors Domingue and Smith
Refer the LTC priorities to Full Council (minute PI23/23)	Clerk
Consider the allotment complaint (minute PI23/24)	All

HEXHAM TOWN COUNCIL – DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Under the Code of Conduct adopted by the Council on 3 September 2012 Councillors must declare if they have a disclosable interest in any matters under consideration.

To do so Councillors must use one of the following statements:

1. “I have a disclosable pecuniary interest
in..... (for example) Agenda item 3, Planning
application number 14/1234”.
(NOTE: Code of Conduct paragraphs 11&15 apply).

2. “I have a disclosable personal interest
in..... (for example) Agenda item 4, Grant
aid application by Hexham Youth Initiative
(NOTE: Code of Conduct paragraph 13 applies).

Councillors should familiarise themselves with the Code of Conduct regarding the definitions of (A) pecuniary interest and (B) other personal interest and their obligations when declaring any such interests.

To ensure Councillors interests are correctly minuted please use one of the above statements when declaring an interest.

NB. Should a Councillor wish to take part in the consideration and voting on a matter or matters in which he/she has a disclosable interest then they may request a dispensation be granted to enable them to take part in the discussion and voting on it but at least 10 days’ notice must be given for any dispensation request.

HEXHAM TOWN COUNCIL
Planning & Infrastructure Committee

ANNUAL REVIEW OF ALLOTMENT RENTS

Allotment rents must be reviewed annually. At the 2022 review the Committee agreed to increase the annual rent from £70.00 to £75.00 and for a half plot to increase from £40.00 to £45.00 from 1 October 2023.

Anticipated income from allotment fees for 2023/24 is £6850.00. The budget for expenditure on allotments is £2000.00 (Quatre Bras), £800.00 (Dene Park) and £150.00 (Wydon Park), a total of £2950.00. There are also administrative costs to maintain a waiting list, update records, offer new tenancies and for the annual fees, etc and other staff costs such as maintaining the central path at the Quatre Bras allotments.

The Committee is requested to consider whether the fees should remain unchanged or be increased for 2024/25.

Jane Kevan
Locum Town Clerk
September 2023

HEXHAM TOWN COUNCIL
Planning & Infrastructure Committee

ANNUAL REVIEW OF CEMETERY CHARGES

Cemetery charges must be reviewed annually. The Charges and Rules valid from 1st April 2023 are below.

Between 2017 and 2021 it was agreed to increase the fees by between 1% and 3% (in round figures) so that the disparity between the standard charge and those for parish residents (where they differ) did not continue to increase.

However, it was noted that in 2020/21 cemetery income was £92,062.00 but expenditure was £113,888.10 so in 2021 the Committee agreed to increase both the standard charge and those for parish residents for 2022/23 by 15%.

In 2021/22 cemetery income was £105,408.00 and the estimated income from cemetery fees for 2022/23 was £109,250.00, so the 2023/24 fees were raised by 10%.

The 2023/24 estimated income from cemetery fees has remained at £109,250.00.

It is recommended that a sliding scale of fees for people who used to live in Hexham until four or five years ago is again agreed and the Committee is requested to consider whether the fees should remain unchanged or be increased for 2024/25.

HEXHAM TOWN COUNCIL
St. Andrew's Cemetery, West Road, Hexham NE46 3RR (on the B6531)
Phone 01434 609575 Email: clerk@hexhamtowncouncil.gov.uk

CHARGES AND RULES – 2023/2024

48 hours advance notice must be given for all burials

The Standard charge is payable UNLESS the deceased was before (that is within 12 months of) death a resident living in Hexham Parish.

PART 1: Burials (Monday to Friday only)

		Standard charge	Parish resident
1	Body of a stillborn child or baby under six months old	No charge	No charge
2	Body or cremated remains of a child	805	424
3	Body of a person whose age at death was over 12 years old	3542	822
4	Burial in a reopened grave - see Rule 8	1580	760
5	Burial of an urn or casket of cremated remains	425	425
6	Cremated remains below turf level (surface scattering is NOT permitted)	215	215
7	Additional charge for double depth grave	215	215

PART 2: Rights

		Standard charge	Parish resident
1	Right of burial for 99 years	412	210
2	Right to construct and to burial in a walled grave (a vault)	Fee by prior arrangement	Fee by prior arrangement
3	Right to erect a memorial for 30 years	635	635
4	Renewal of right to erect a memorial for a further 30 years	No charge	No charge

PART 3: Woodland section. The charge includes the casket and flat stone marker. (Note: Woodland burial plots are larger than in other sections with only one burial in each plot)

		Standard charge	Parish resident
1	Burial	5060	1315
2	Burial of casket of cremated remains in area set aside for ashes NB Surface scattering is NOT permitted	1900	650
3	Burial of cremated remains in casket or under turf in pre-purchased plot. N.B. An <u>additional</u> plaque or surface scattering of cremated remains are NOT permitted	805 (casket) 380 (under turf)	418 (casket) 253 (under turf)

PART 4: Other charges

		Standard charge	Parish resident
1	Use of the Chapel	253	253
2	Certified copy of entry of burial	37	37
3	Transfer of Right of Burial	108	108
4	Supply of memorial fixing saddle, each	215	215

5	Any item not previously described	Fee by prior arrangement	Fee by prior arrangement
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PART 5: Pet Cemetery charges

Fee includes exclusive right of burial for fifteen years renewable on payment of an additional fee

1	Burial of a pet dog, cat or other small pet or their ashes (includes a numbered flat stone marker)	225
2	Renewal of right of burial for additional 15 year period	120

PART 6: Cemetery Rules

(1) **In all** matters relating to the Cemetery the Council's decision is final. The Council acts under the Local Authorities Cemeteries Order 1977 (as amended).

(2) **These Rules** must be read in conjunction with the Rules relating to the erection and maintenance of Memorials.

(3) **Charges.** Any alteration in the charges overleaf will take effect on 1 April. Save in an emergency no changes will be made in charges before the 1 April following. Council employees are not empowered to grant any reduction in the charges for any reason whatsoever.

(4) **The Council** may prune or remove any plants, pots, ornaments, shrubs, grass or trees anywhere within the Cemetery without notice or compensation, if the Council at its own absolute discretion considers it necessary for the good order and running of the Cemetery. Objects of decoration are not allowed on grave plots however objects can be placed on the apron of any memorial.

(5) **After funerals** all flowers and wreaths **laid** on a grave will be removed and disposed of but not earlier than 14 days after the funeral takes place.

(6) **After Christmas** all flowers and wreaths **laid** on a grave will be removed and disposed of by 31st January.

(7) **Grave Spaces.** No marking, delineating or decoration of a Grave space is allowed. Any ornamentation on a grave will be removed. Grave spaces must be kept in a tidy condition. Please contact the Cemetery Supervisory Staff if further clarification is needed.

(8) **Reopened grave.** If a grave is reopened to bury the widow, widower or partner of the deceased then a reduced charge is payable. Charge is under Part 1(4).

(9) **Ashes cannot be scattered:** they must be buried (see charges list).

(10) **Memorial headstones** are not permitted unless the fee in Part 2(3) has been paid.

(11) **Grave curbs** are not permitted anywhere in the Cemetery, however existing curbs may be repaired or renewed.

(12) **In the Woodland Burial area:**

An alternate flat stone marker to that provided by the Council may be used provided it is in stone size 23cm by 23cm by 6cm (depth). Any wording must include the plot number.

Flower bulbs can be planted but only with prior permission from the Cemetery Supervisory Staff.

Any trees planted, the site of, the type of and the retention of, are at the sole discretion of the Council.

Woodland burial plots cannot be purchased in advance but an adjoining plot, if available, may be purchased by the partner of the deceased. No refund is made if the plot is subsequently not used.

For a plot purchased before 31 March 2004 the refund of a prepaid fee is permitted but only if the Reservation Certificate issued at the date of purchase is returned with the request for a refund. An administration charge of £100.00 will be deducted from the original fee paid when the refund is made.

No refund will be made without production of the Reservation Certificate.

(13) **Vehicles and Dogs (which must be held on a lead) are not allowed in the Cemetery** without permission of the Cemetery Supervisory Staff.

(14) **The Cemetery is normally open** between 8.00am and 6.00pm (or dusk if earlier).

(15) **The Operations Manager, Steven English, is normally available for enquiries** Monday to Friday (Bank Holidays excepted) between 9.00am and 3.00pm by telephoning 07891 101236.

Valid from 1st April 2023

PlanningInfrastructureCommitteeMinute XXXX

HEXHAM TOWN COUNCIL
Planning & Infrastructure Committee

Electricity Contracts

The Council's current two electricity contracts, both with Octopus Energy, for the Cemetery buildings and Abbey Floodlights, will both expire on 21 November 2023. These contracts were arranged through BusinessSave and both were for three years.

The current contract prices are:

Abbey Floodlights: 10.54 per kilowatt hour plus a standing charge of 28.24p per day and a Climate Charge Levy (CCL) exempt charge.

Cemetery: 14.92 per kilowatt hour plus a standing charge of 28.24p per day but no CCL.

As prices fluctuate daily, information on possible new contracts has been promised for the day of the meeting so they will be circulated at the meeting.

The Committee's decision is requested.

HEXHAM TOWN COUNCIL
Planning & Infrastructure Committee

**PLANNING APPLICATIONS RECEIVED FROM NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY
COUNCIL FOR COMMENT ON 19 SEPTEMBER 2023**

Reference		
23/03209/PRUTPO	Prune back six lowest branches on south side of tree by up to 4.5m at 44 Bondgate Close, Hexham	
23/03027/LBC	Proposed alterations: new staircase between ground and first floors; 3 new windows in rear elevation; 2 new openings in existing internal stone wall; subdivision of existing floor space with stud partition walls to new layout at 20-22 St Mary's Chare, Hexham	
23/03198/FUL	Proposed front dormer to existing room at 1 Elm Close, Hexham	
23/03225/PRUTPO	T1 and T2 sycamore – pollard at 8m height at land west of Kitty Frisk, Corbridge Road, Hexham	
23/03274/FUL	Demolition of existing garage and summerhouse, provision of replacement domestic garage for use as a studio at 13 Hextol Crescent, Hexham	
23/03087/LBC and 23/03392/FUL	Reconstruction of former warehouse rear wing to form three storey accommodation comprising of two flats at land at rear of 3A Market Street, Hexham	
23/03342/PRUTPO	Various tree works at Hackwood House, Dipton Mill Road, Hexham	

Applications to be commented upon under Committee's delegated powers (minute 6588 refers).

Any objections made on applications must be 'material planning considerations'. To be material, a matter must relate to the "purposes of planning". The views of local Councils and other consultees can only be taken into account by the planning authority if they are material. Such comments must always bear in mind that:

"The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development" (Paragraph 6 National Planning Policy Framework)

There is no definitive list but examples are:

- National planning policy
- The local planning authority's planning policies (including Neighbourhood Plans)
- Overlooking/loss of privacy
- Loss of light or overshadowing
- Parking, means of access, highway safety and traffic
- Noise, odours
- Effect on listed building and conservation area
- Layout and density of building
- Design, appearance and materials
- Nature conservation
- Flood risk

- Crime prevention and community safety
- Previous planning decisions
- Views of parish and town councils
- Views of statutory consultees: Highway Authority/Environment Agency/English Heritage/Sport England/Others (neighbouring LPA, HSE, etc.)

Non-material planning considerations include:

- Loss of view
- Negative effects on the value of other properties
- Land ownership or restrictive covenants
- Applicant's personal circumstances or past conduct (unless exceptional, such as relating to a physical disability in certain circumstances)
- Business competition
- Matters controlled under building regulations or other non-planning legislation
- Disabled person's access
- The nature of the applicant or owner
- Prospect of a "better" proposal

These are subject to change in national legislation or planning policy. NB All planning applications (and related decisions) are online at: <http://publicaccess.northumberland.gov.uk/online-applications>
If Hexham Town Council objects to an application listed above the objection is lodged online.

Hexham Neighbourhood Plan Considerations

Hexham Neighbourhood Plan

Practical Guide May 2021

Following the referendum on 6 May 2021, the Hexham Neighbourhood Plan has been formally "made" by NCC and become part of the statutory development plan for Northumberland. The Plan's provisions are, as the Independent Examiner confirmed, the result of 'comprehensive and robust' consultation across the town's population.

Two overarching Planning Policies that address **Sustainability** in widest sense – to sustain/expand Hexham's economic, social and community well-being base as well as environmental concerns:

HNP1 p18 supports e.g. expansion of community facilities and recreation, new (market and affordable) housing, increasing local employment e.g. tourism, development that increases travel on foot or by bike; use of brownfield for above. All **inside** existing greenbelt boundary (greenbelt dev subject to national policy).

HNP2 p19 establishes **principles for design**: positive attention to local character (different in different parts of town) (developers can be asked how they have met this), with attention to appearance, scale, massing, height, density, access, landscaping, highway safety, residential amenity (e.g. retail, public transport, noise)

and for low carbon technology: embedded renewables (solar, geo-thermal), low carbon build technologies (reduced carbon footprint into future, e.g. insulation, glazing), reduction of water run-off (Sustainable Drainage Systems - SuDS), plus net biodiversity gains or enhancement nearby.

Built Heritage Environment, uniquely strong in Hexham, visually the Hexham story.

HNP3 p21 **Design in the Conservation Area**. Makes existing national CA regulations Hexham-specific. Local character to be sustained or enhanced, with attention to character and setting (neighbours): i.e. views into and out of Hexham, with historic and unique roofscapes, and 3 key historic buildings, lay-out of streets and narrow chares.

HNP4 p25 **Non-designated Heritage Assets**: special protection for specific buildings that have value to local community (list at Annex A). Can be added to.

HNP5 p26 **Shopfront Design**, must respect 2018 NCC Hex Shopfront design guide.

HNP6 p28 **Market Place**: conserve or enhance character, respect highway safety, pedestrians, especially old or with disability, and cyclists.

HNP7 p29 **Designated/Listed Assets**: names buildings, parks, gardens and monuments for clarity.

New Housing, including to redress the imbalance in available housing and respond more strongly to local people's needs.

HNP8 p31 **Site Allocations**: lists 10 sites with sizes and special considerations.

HNP9 p40 **New Housing Developments**: these must demonstrate how they have considered: trees, wildlife corridors, heritage assets; vehicular and non-vehicular movement and safety; high quality design (see HNP2 and Building for Life 2015); the locally needed mix of housing: more 2- and 3-bedroom houses and bungalows.

HNP10 p41 **Affordable Housing**: market schemes of 10+ houses must include 10%, 15% and majority of town 25% affordable homes, to rent or buy, according to NCC/HNP Viability Zones (see map). Some data from Housing Needs Assessment Report provided. Emphasises 1-, 2- and 3-bedrooms.

HNP11 p41 **Older People's housing**: including sheltered, supported and bungalows, well served by public transport.

HNP12 p42 **Rural Exception Sites**: follows national policy for new dwellings on greenbelt – must be small sites of affordable homes to benefit local people.

Natural Environment and Wellbeing

HNP13-17 pp44-49 **Green Spaces**: lists the protected green spaces the public value, and also covers protection for Tyne Green, wildlife corridors, allotments (+increased provision), and hedgerows/trees/verges (any new build could impact negatively on these, and replacement can be required).

HNP18 p50 **Dark Skies** – link to policy of Northumberland National Park and 'astro-tourism'.

HNP19 p51 **Community Facilities**: no loss of these, as listed, unless defunct.

HNP20 p52 **Community Renewable Schemes**: support for these, with caveats.

HNP21 p53 support for **Improvements to Walking and Cycling** expected in all applications where it is relevant, and impact of new development on access and safety to be explicitly avoided.

Local Economy

HNP22 p56 **Primary Shopping Area**: aims to maintain the vitality and viability of this crucial area, and explanatory text offers tests to ensure any change of use will contribute positively; conversion to residential above ground floors is supported.

HNP23 p57 **Hotel and Tourism Accommodation** is supported to develop what Hexham offers and to encourage longer stays; Hexham's proximity to key areas (Hadrian's Wall, Dark Skies, North Pennines AONB) can lead to visitor hub status.

HNP24 p58 **New Business Units** for small scale businesses and live-work units. Earlier developments have been very successful.

HNP25 p59 **New Car Parking Facilities**: much needed, but new proposals must meet design criteria HNP2+3, with cycle storage included; if multi-storey, impact to be carefully considered, on setting, views and roofscape.

Section 9 Monitoring and Review

Para 9.1.8 provides a framework for monitoring, registering and reporting achievements within the Plan's policies.

A review of the Plan, also a formal opportunity to make small updates and modifications (e.g. post-pandemic) is planned .

NB Also available and useful are NCC/HNP viability zones map and HNP town centre policies map.