

**Glendale Community Forum**  
**Minutes of the meeting 10 Dec 2009**  
7pm at The Cheviot Centre, Wooler

**Present:**

Jane Pannell	Chair
Rachel Sinton	GGT admin
John Cooper	Locality Officer NCC - <a href="mailto:john.cooper@northumberland.gov.uk">john.cooper@northumberland.gov.uk</a>
Cllr Dougie Watkin	NCC
Roseanne Reed	Wooler Parish Council
Edward Brown	Kirknewton Parish Council
Kevin Malloy	Doddington Parish Council
Bob Burston	GGT
Cllr Anthony Murray	NCC
Barbara Rattcliff	GGT
Marc Johnson	CAN
Tim Sharp	GGT
Roger Miket	Gefrin Trust/GGT
E.K. Macaulay	Heyburn Farm
Joyce Robertson	Wooler Parish Council
David Buckle	GGT
M Thomas	Carham Parish Council
Billy Potts	Carham Parish Council
Tom Johnston	GGT
Bob Stott	Tillside Parish Council
Angela Hallam-Baker	Glendale Group of PCs etc
Clive Hallam Baker	Glendale Group of PCs/Branxton Parish Council
John Davidson	GGT/Wooler Parish Council
Iain Hedley	Northumberland National Park
Charles Sellers	Chair – Northumberland Business Network
Adrian Pardey	Wooler Youth Drop-In
Roy Searle	Northumbria Community Trust
David Lockie	Ford Parish Council/GGT
Terry Gordon	Ford Parish Council
Brian Watson	Milfield resident

1. **Introductions & welcome**: Jane introduced herself to the meeting and asked all attendees to say who they were. She welcomed everybody and thanked them for attending.

2. **Apologies**: Linda Murray, John Kirkup & Kate Bagnell-Lowe.

3 & 4. **Notes of previous meeting & Matters arising**: Roy Searle pointed out that he had attended the previous meeting. There being no other matters arising the minutes were **agreed & signed** as a true record.

5. **Frequency & arrangements for future meetings**: John Cooper had suggested that meetings should perhaps be every two months rather than the proposed four per year as this would improve planning in the early stages of the forum – this was **agreed**. Clive Hallam-Baker asked that meetings be held at venues around Glendale. Jane asked for venues to be volunteered at the end of the meeting.

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6. **Parish Councils and service expectations**: The Glendale Group of Parish Councils had asked to air this topic at the forum – Clive was invited to introduce the issue; he explained that the Parishes felt that the new unitary authority had been brought in against the wishes of the public and that it was constantly changing expectation and targets. Originally Parish councils had been offered the option of taking over some service delivery but this now seemed to be almost compulsory. If these services are undertaken by PCs there would have to be an increase in the precept but with no corresponding decrease in council tax or additional income from NCC. Clive asked for comment from the floor which led to a lively discussion - the general feeling amongst the PCs seemed to be that they were being given too little time and information to be able to come to a decision by the 9<sup>th</sup> January deadline set by NCC. There is no time to consult with residents about the financing of these services. NCC has quoted £12,000 to maintain a single play park with two swings and a slide which seemed expensive. PCs could probably do it for less but often they lack experience and capacity.

Cllr Dougie Watkins said that Alnwick have been running their play parks for some time and they could be approached to share their expertise – he added that grants might be available to Development Trusts to run these services. Cllr Anthony Murray said he understood the difficulties as he is also a Parish councillor in Wooler but that it is no longer possible for County to finance these services – one way or the other communities are going to have to pay either through a precept enabling the PC to finance the service or through a direct levy on Parish residents if NCC provide the service. The cheaper alternative may be to run service and charge a precept but NCC want the financial information regarding any precept by 9<sup>th</sup> January which gives very little time to talk to members and make informed decisions. Tom Johnston commented that since Wooler PC had taken over responsibility for the grass cutting a much better job was being done – he sees local service provision as a huge challenge but one that is well worth exploring as it can also help the local economy by providing local employment. The feeling of the meeting was that each PC would have to make an individual decision as there is no time to organise collective action. John Cooper was asked to get as much information as possible to PCs through the GGPCs to help them with decision making. It was suggested that PCs write to NCC expressing their feelings if they hadn't already done so.

7. **Community planning – the work for the year**: Jane spoke to her pre-circulated paper. There is a wealth of information available but some sense of local need is required to refine the bigger picture. Evidence is needed of what is required for sustainable communities – a local flavour that statistics don't show. David Lockie added that this is what the Forum is about – a good action plan will help bring funding into the area. Brian Watson said that the Green Glendale project is working with communities on fuel efficiency projects and fuel poverty etc – this project needs to fit into the action plan. The resulting record of evidence & data will be available to all partners to help access funding. The paper contains three recommendations – 1) the meeting **agreed** to endorse the approach to Glendale opportunities set out in the paper. 2) Suggestions for those who will serve on a working group – GGT, Berwick Borough Housing, Business Community, GGPC, NCC (John Cooper), Homes & Community Agency (HCA), Brian Watson (Green Glendale – through GGT), Marc Johnson (CAN), Iain Hedley (NNPA). 3) It was **agreed** that there will be further reports at future meetings.

John Davidson left the meeting at 8pm

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### **8. Northumberland Business Network – Charles Sellers:**

The role of the Northumberland Business Network (NBN) is to:

- be an inclusive business led network for the county arranged to suit business needs;
- bring together and maximise the voices and influence of locality based business organisations (NBN does not seek to replace them but to strengthen them through collective action);
- act as a two-way communication mechanism as a partnership between private sector and public sector agencies, principally with an interest in business support issues.

Charles spoke about the work of the network and the importance of communication between it and the many and diverse businesses within the 27 Community forum areas. For the network to be able to help businesses it needs a real picture of the needs within the different localities. There must be engagement between the network and local businesses. All forums and localities are being asked to find a local business champion to conduit information from the local area to the network and vice versa via the area partnerships. This will be a challenge in Glendale as many businesses are small. Somebody with real business experience is needed.

Jane suggested that everybody engage with any business contacts they had and try to encourage them to come to the next Forum meeting – where a representative will be sought. (An agenda item at the next meeting) She thanked Charles for attending and his interesting presentation.

### **9. Standard Items:**

- a. Summary of consultations: Dougie Watkin handed out budget consultations to be considered. John Cooper said it was very useful to feed documents through the forums.
- b. Summary of funding opportunities: Tom Johnston said that the GGT had applied through the modernisation fund for collaborative working in service delivery. Jane said that one idea of this section of the agenda is to share funding opportunities with everybody. Charles Sellers told the meeting about an “Innovation Voucher Scheme” More information can be found at <http://www.northumbria.ac.uk/business/nce/info4business/ivs/?view=Standard> NCC website list all available grant opportunities on a weekly list – this can be found at <http://www.northumberland.gov.uk/default.aspx?page=1101>
- c. Update for webpage: [www.wooler.org.uk](http://www.wooler.org.uk) has a page dedicated to the Glendale Community Forum where minutes and information will be regularly posted.

### **10. Next meeting – topics and date for next meeting:**

- Find a business champion
- Glendale opportunities
- Green Glendale
- Parish Council & service issues
- Faster Broadband – perhaps invite a speaker from North Net

The next meeting will be on Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> February 2010 at 7pm in the Cheviot Centre

The meeting closed at 8.45pm