

Inaugural Meeting Falcon Action Group 17.02.21

Attendees

Ken John
Emma Johns
Susan Ewart
Stephen Westgarth
Averil Armstrong
Melanie Dunnett
Holly Waddell
Peter Mawer as an observer from the Northumberland County Council and a regeneration officer.
Steve Grinter
Vicki Strassheim
Gray Mytton
Jim Robertson
Andy Haddon
Colin Percy
Marion Cassidy
Michael Cassidy
Tony Pierre

Apologies

Joan Wappat
Robin Piette

Meeting Notes

Item 1

Welcome and Introductions.

Led by Steve Grinter, acting chair.

Item 2

Zoom meeting protocols

Steve outlined how the meeting would work

Item 3

Steve gave a brief review of work of the group so far (see also a written report on the website)

For the Action Group, the inaugural meeting is an important step. Their campaign to secure the future of the Falcon Centre has been continuing in one form or another for about 4 years. The Falcon Centre was considered an alternative option for a GP practice following the closure of the Riversdale surgery, however, this was ruled out by the CCG (part of the NHS) and GP's. A possible option is to have a wellbeing facility within the Falcon Centre for health care and GP ancillary sessions.

The focus – the building is in danger of falling into disrepair and has an uncertain future. There is a fear that Northumberland County Council may be unwilling to spend money to bring the centre up to modern standards and that the site poses an attractive option for land developers to build new housing. The site is currently under used.

The initial role for the action group was to gain ideas for the reorganisation and regeneration of the site. In 2018 the group formulated a long term plan and renamed themselves The Falcon Centre Action Group.

In late 2020, 900 surveys were delivered to residents across Wylam of which 137 were returned.

The results of the survey have allowed the group to priorities ideas and begin to create a sustainable plan for the future development of the Falcon Centre.

The plan is to commission a feasibility study using the data from the surveys to inform the feasibility consultants.

In summary, the library and museum are valued facilities within the village, however, much more is possible on the site.

In order to move the ideas forward a committee must be elected and tasked with the role of taking the plans forward.

All documents pertaining to progress to date were viewable on the Falcon Centre Action Group website: <https://colinwpercy4.wixsite.com/falconcentre>. There is also a brief for consultants to perform a feasibility study.

Item 4 Adoption of a constitution

Colin Percy presented the draft constitution for adoption. The group has progressed to this point on an informal basis. However, when considering grant aid, the group needs to become constituted.

The most simple way to do this is to become an unincorporated association, which is a minor legal step which could progress to becoming a charity or Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO).

The plan is to adopt the constitution at this evening's meeting. The constitution has been created from an existing template. There will be a link to the adopted constitution on the website. It is relatively simple and includes provisions regarding the annual meeting, committee meetings, election of officers, quorums and finances. It contains a broad set of aims, but the intention now was to create a mission statement that encompasses more precisely the ethos and aims of the group.

The constitution had been revised in the last week to allow the co-option of new officers or committee members/replacements between AGMs, so it is version 2 that is up for adoption.

Everyone attending this evening's meeting plus those giving apologies would be recorded as members, except Peter Mawer who was in attendance as an observer. There were no subscriptions or upfront commitments.

No questions were raised about the constitution.

The members unanimously moved to adopt the constitution.

Item 5 Election of Officers

Chair – Steve Grinter – happy to contribute for no more than a year, nominated and elected.

Secretary – Vicki Strassheim nominated and elected.

Treasurer- Gray Mytton nominated and elected.

Membership Sectary – Colin Percy nominated and elected.

Additionally, 4 ordinary members volunteered:

1. Jim Robertson
2. Andy Haddon
3. Sue Ewart
4. Mel Dunnett

Tony Pierre will volunteer at the next meeting as per the constitution.

Item 6 Date of next meeting

March 3rd 7.30pm on Zoom. This and future meetings would be publicised by the Secretary and on the website.

Any other Business

Colin Percy:

1. The next addition of the Parish Council newsletter the Globe will need articles soon. It is important to publicise an overview of tonight's meeting.
2. There will be a parallel article about the work of the National Trust and the Parish Council to establish a Wylam Heritage Partnership and the reopening in stages of the George Stephenson's Birthplace . There is a meeting Friday 26th February on this. The article needs to publicise the need for resident support.

Actions

Draft an overview of tonight's meeting and the parallel article from the Wylam Heritage Partnership involvement meeting for publication in the Globe – Colin Percy.