

WHITTINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 10 MARCH 2020 AT 7.30PM IN GREAT WHITTINGTON VILLAGE HALL

PRESENT: Councillor A Williamson, Vice Chairman of the Council together with Councillors P Martin, J Sadler, E Gillam.

Also present: Mrs M Senior, Clerk to the Council
Mrs V Jones, County Councillor

1575. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE – Cllr S Gregory

1576. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST – Cllr A Williamson declared a personal interest in matters relating to Aspen Ridge.

1577. TO CONSIDER CO-OPTION OF A COUNCILLOR. Application received from Mr W E Robson. After discussion, it was AGREED to co-opt Mr Robson onto the Council. Mr Robson signed his declaration of acceptance of office in the presence of the Clerk and took his seat around the table.

1578. MINUTES of the meeting held on **21 January 2020** having been circulated were taken as read and confirmed as a true record.

1579. PRESENTATION BY MR JOHN ROBERTS, CHAIR OF GREAT WHITTINGTON VILLAGE HALL COMMITTEE. John Roberts had taken over as Chair to the Village Hall Committee in November 2019. He had been looking at the history and running of the village hall and the detailed structural survey carried out in 2009 when the hall was close to being condemned. This survey identified rot in the roof timbers and sub floor supports and penetrating damp. John had met with Louise Currie from the West Northumberland Community Buildings Consortium and advised the kitchen does not meet the minimum standards for a public building. He had also met with providers of solar energy however the building is not sufficiently insulated, and this would not guarantee sufficient income. In 2009 the Village Hall Committee looked at the feasibility of building a new hall. The asset value of the current hall is insufficient to finance a new building and finance would need to come from grants and public subscription but the project would need to be financially underwritten through some form of enabling project where the value of land outside the settlement boundary increased if it becomes available for development. John Roberts had spoken to Jo Anne Garrick who acted for the PC in writing the neighbourhood plan. Her advice is to review the plan adjusting the settlement boundary to provide land for a new village hall and development land that can finance the whole project. At that time design codes for the conservation area can be introduced which would be an alternative to the management plan that had previously been discussed. The current Neighbourhood Plan was made in September 2018 and a full grant of £17,000 would be available for the review.

Over the last 10 years, grant funding had been received and various work carried out. In total approx. £39K had been spent on refurbishing the building. Financially the hall has no significant reserves and income is about £500-£2000 over fixed expenses. The committee is unable to increase income through higher levels of activity due to the poor condition of the hall. To bring the hall up to a standard would require a very large investment. The village hall committee has been increased from 4 or 5 to 12 and has been restricted with a sub committee taking responsibility for the hall's structure, maintenance and future development. They are looking at what needs to be done to the building to bring it up to a standard (i.e. new roof, floor, kitchen and associated costs) to gain more bookings which will also include the Highlights Rural Touring Shows. They are pursuing 2 strands based on evaluation future potential needs, activity and identifying new stake holders. This information will drive the decision about whether they should seek to redevelop the existing hall or seek a rebuild on a different site.

Member of the parish council expressed concerns over selling the Village Hall especially in view of the considerable amount of money received from grants to refurbish the building. The Village Hall belongs to the parish. It was suggested that the Village Hall committee seek costs from an independent surveyor on priorities of the costs of the work identified in the survey and what is needed to bring it up to an acceptable standard. John Roberts advised that the Village Hall committee does not have the funds to do this and cannot generate sufficient funds to pay for the work that needs to be done. He also advised that the Village Hall could not be demolished so would be used for development should it be sold.

John Roberts was seeking permission from the Parish Council to review the Neighbourhood Plan which would involve a consultation to see if the parish would like to pursue the possibility of a new Village Hall. John feels that the consultation is best done in a formal way as part of the Neighbourhood Plan. The Parish Council would make the decision on whether to review the Neighbourhood Plan at their next meeting.

WHITTINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

It was questioned where the new site would be, and this would form part of the consultation process. Cllr Mrs Jones stated that during the process of the Neighbourhood Plan, the steering group were quite tight on settlement boundaries at the time. The review of the Neighbourhood Plan will stretch these boundaries if there is no identified site for a new Village Hall.

1580. MATTERS ARISING.

- a) **BINGFIELD ROAD.** Minute 1564B refers. Cllr S Gregory had contact Northumberland County Council several times regarding the ditch. This has now been actioned.
- b) **SNOW CLEARANCE AND GRITTING.** Minute 1569b refers. It was noted that the gritter had been through Great Whittington during recent periods of freezing weather.

1581. PLANNING MATTERS

REFERENCE	ADDRESS	DESCRIPTION
19/03701/FUL	Land South West of Gardeners Cottage, Bingfield	Construction of 2no holiday cottages with parking and new access (Amended description)
19/04707/FUL	Rose Hill, Great Whittington	Construction of a side extension to create a 3 bed family home including; extension to accommodate additional bedroom space with a shared shower room; a utility space; central entrance hall and relocated front door. GRANTED
19/04668/FUL	Bridleside, Great Whittington	Provision of rear dormer window replacing rooflights GRANTED
19/04731/VARYCO	Leadgates, Great Whittington	Variation of condition 2 pursuant to planning permission 18/04009/FUL in order to allow step free wheelchair access to the vehicular level
20/00154/FUL	Land West of the Old Barns, Roses Bower, Great Whittington	Proposed conversion of existing barn currently used as storage/workshop to yoga retreat (recreational space). Addition of front entrance porch and toilet facilities to rear and side elevation

1582. FINANCE

- a) **ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT –** Payments were reviewed and it was AGREED to approve the items of expenditure on the list previously circulated.

PAYEE	DESCRIPTION	CHEQUE	VAT	NET	CHQ NO
Mrs A Senior	Clerical services	152.00		152.00	010755
H M Revenue & Customs	PAYE	38.00		38.00	010756
Mrs A Senior	Expenses; postages/travel	35.58		35.58	010757
Campaign to Protect Rural England	Subscription 2020	36.00		36.00	010758
Arborforce Tree Specialists Ltd	Tree works	1440.00	240.00	1200.00	010759
NE Ambulance Service	Defibrillator	1807.60	301.27	1506.33	010760

- b) **TO CONSIDER CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS THE VILLAGE CALENDAR ARRANGED BY THE VILLAGE HALL COMMITTEE.** A request had been received from John Roberts for a contribution towards the production of the Village calendar. It was noted that a contribution of £109.97 had been made in January 2019.

1583. COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORT. County Councillor Mrs V Jones gave her verbal report on matters relating to Northumberland County Council and Whittington Parish including the Corona Virus pandemic and the construction of the new QE High School in Hexham and Ponteland High School and leisure centre.

1584. COUNCILLORS REPORTS AND HIGHWAYS MATTERS.

- a) **RESURFACING.** Cllr Mrs V Jones advised that the following roads will be resurfaced in the new financial year; Matfen to Great Whittington Junction and Matfen to the Military Road. This work will be carried out via the LTP 2020-2021.
- b) **TRAFFIC SPEED.** Concerns were expressed over the speed of traffic through Great Whittington especially the stopping distances of some of the heavy vehicles. Cllr Mrs V Jones advised that she would try and get the road safety officer from NCC to come out.

1585. TO CONSIDER GRASS CUTTING REQUIREMENTS FOR 2020 SEASON. Following discussion, it was agreed to cut the grass 10 times during 2020 at a cost of £222.50 per cut with an additional cost of £40 for grass disposal. Mrs Senior will clarify with Simon Ogg how many times the grass will need to be disposed of. An additional cut will be requested, if and when required.

1586. TO CONSIDER TREE PLANTING AND TREE WORKS. It was noted there are 3 small stumps left in the village to grind. It was agreed to order 3 replacement trees plus 1 flowering cherry at a cost of £804.00.

WHITTINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

- 1587. PROPOSAL TO INSTALL DEFIBRILLATOR IN HALLINGTON.** Whittington Parish Council had been accepted for a grant of £1798 from the Ray Wind Farm fund to install a defibrillator in Hallington. This was on the condition of Whittington Parish Council having a Safeguarding Policy and confirmation of the location of the defibrillator. It was noted that an additional cost of £375 would be required to upgrade the electricity at the location of the defibrillator. This was AGREED and the clerk will contact the Community Foundation to confirm location and forward a copy of the safeguarding policy.
- 1588. CORRESPONDENCE.** All correspondence since the January meeting had been noted and most had been circulated by email to all Parish Councillors.
- 1589. PLANNING ENFORCEMENT.** Northumberland County Council advised that a site visit would be carried out at Aspen Ridge to establish the facts surrounding the enquiry. It was noted that the wall had not been reinstated on the roadside.
- 1590. PUBLIC SPACES PROTECTION ORDER FOR THE CONTROL OF DOGS.** It was noted that the new PSPO had replaced the existing PSPO with amendments and was now in force.
- 1591. PUBLIC SPACES PROTECTION ORDER FOR THE CONSUMPTION OF ALCOHOL IN DESIGNATED PUBLIC SPACES.** NCC has a number of PSPO in force under the provision of the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 which deal with the consumption of alcohol in certain areas. The current orders were for a period of 3 years and took effect from October 2017. NCC is requesting views on whether it is considered necessary to extend the existing PSPS for a further period of 3 years. The Parish Council had no comment to make
- 1592. LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN PROGRAMME – LINN WELL CULVERT, NEAR HALLINGTON.** NCC is carrying out a feasibility study to investigate options to address issues present at Linn Well Culvert. Works are planned for the Financial Year 2020/21. Works are expected to take 12 weeks to complete. The information was noted and no comments were made.
- 1593. INFORMATION ITEMS.**
Copies of all information items are available from the Clerk on request.
- NALC – weekly eNews
 - Matfen PCC – Thank you letter for donation.
 - LCR Magazine – Winter Issue 2019
 - Community Action Northumberland – CAN News Winter Issue – January 2020
- 1594. ASPEN RIDGE.** Email received from planning enforcement advising that a site visit would be undertaken and an update will follow in due course. It was noted that the wall on the roadside had still not been reinstated.
- 1595. DATE OF NEXT MEETING.** To be arranged.

_____ Chairman