

## MINUTES OF THE ONLINE MEETING OF WHITTINGTON PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON THURSDAY 21 MAY 2020 AT 7.30PM

**PRESENT:** Councillor S Gregory, Chairman of the Council together with Councillors A Williamson, P Martin, J Sadler, E Gillam, W E Robson.

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

0520.01 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** – None

0520.02 **TO RECEIVE W E ROBSON'S DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE.** Mr W E Robson gave and signed his declaration of acceptance of office in the presence of Mrs M Senior, Clerk to the Council.

0520.03 **MINUTES** of the meeting held on **10 March 2020** having been circulated were taken as read and confirmed as a true record.

0520.04 **ITEMS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

- a) **Bingfield Road.** Minute 1580a refers. Northumberland County Council had agreed to carry out the work however this had not gone ahead.
- b) **Grass cutting.** Minute 1585 refers. Simon Ogg had carried out the first 2 cuts of the season with no grass collected. He will forward an invoice for the purchase and planting of the trees.
- c) **Defibrillator.** Minute 1587 refers. It was noted that the defibrillator had been installed and was registered with the Ambulance Service. **Action: Mrs M Senior to complete end of grant monitoring form for the Community Foundation.**
- d) **Speeding.** Minute 1584b refers. Unfortunately, no site visits had been carried out due to the current Covid 19 crisis.

0520.05 **COUNTY COUNCILLORS REPORT.** Cllr Mrs Jones gave her verbal update on matters relating to NCC and Matfen Parish.

- **NCC's Covid 19 Response.** Cllr Jones gave an update on NCC's response to the Covid 19 crisis. Community Hub had been set up however at a local level hasn't had to do a lot. Most queries had been passed to the hubs set up by the local communities. Stamfordham and Matfen's hub had been set up and was being co-ordinated by the church parishes. NCC has a small fund to support volunteers. There is also a Business Hub which is giving specialist advice and financial support. NCC is the 4<sup>th</sup> best Council in the country for delivery the Business Support Grants.
- **Roads/Local Services.** Some work around the county has been able to continue on the roads with further work being done when able. The Household Waste Recovery Sites, which are ran by a private company, have now reopened after pressure from NCC. There had been an increase in fly tipping.  
The LTP is on hold however work was continuing when capacity allowed.  
NCC is easing the restrictions on some of the public car parks around the county.

0520.06 **PLANNING MATTERS**

| REFERENCE                    | ADDRESS  | DESCRIPTION  |
|------------------------------|--|--|
| 18/04349/LBC<br>18/04347/FUL | East Farm, Great Whittington                                     | Listed building consent for fenestration changes to front and rear. Replace windows with timber framed, double glazed sliding sash style top opening without horns and brass furniture. <b>GRANTED</b>         |
| 19/01996/LBC<br>19/01995/FUL | Bingfield Mews, Bingfield  | Single storey extension to provide new kitchen/dining room with associated internal and external alterations. <b>GRANTED</b>   |
| 20/01130/FUL                 | Bingfield Farmstead,<br>Bingfield                                | Erection of one 3.5m x 3.5m feed bin next to an agricultural shed.   |
| 20/00154/FUL                 | Land West of the Old Barns,<br>Roses Bower, Great<br>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 <b>GRANTED</b> |

0520.07 **FINANCE**

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

0520.08 **ANNUAL GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY REPORT FOR 2019/2020**

- a) **TO APPROVE THE ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT.** It was AGREED to approve the previously circulated Annual Governance Statement 2019-2020.
- b) **TO APPROVE THE DRAFT ANNUAL ACCOUNTS FOR 2019/2020.** It was AGREED to approve the previously circulated Draft Annual Accounts 2019-2020.
- c) **TO APPROVE THE ACCOUNTING STATEMENT AND EXPLANATION OF VARIANCES.** It was AGREED to approve the previously circulated Accounting Statement and Explanation of Variances.
- d) **TO CONFIRM AND APPROVE THE CERTIFICATION OF EXEMPTION.** It was AGREED to confirm and approve the previously circulated Certification of Exemption.
- e) **TO RECEIVE AND APPROVE THE BANK RECONCILIATION FOR 31 MARCH 2020.** It was AGREED to accept and approve the bank reconciliation for the period ended 31 March 2020.

0520.09 **GREAT WHITTINGTON VILLAGE HALL AND THE VILLAGE ENVIRONMENT.** It was noted that the Village Hall had closed in March due to the current pandemic and had been granted £10,000 for the Northumberland County Council Business Grants Scheme. Plant cuttings had been dropped off at the Village Hall for residents to pick up and swap.

0520.10 **TO DISCUSS PROPOSAL BY JOHN ROBERTS TO REVIEW NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN AND PURSUE PLANS FOR THE VILLAGE HALL.** The Parish Council discussed the proposal submitted at the last meeting by John Roberts on behalf of the Village Hall committee. Several questions were raised including - What was the brief that generated the advice given? Why does Great Whittington need a new Village Hall to serve such a small community? What information is available on the structural issues and costs involved? Why does the Village Hall need to be refurbished/rebuilt to increase income? Concerns were expressed that for a new build Village Hall there would need to be a development attached to it. If the village boundary was extended to allow for a new Village Hall this may open the village up for further development. The Neighbourhood Plan was created to stop development. It was noted that members of the Village Hall committee had put a lot of work into refurbishing the Village Hall and several grants had been received from various sources and it is currently still a very useable space. It was agreed to put the decision to review the Neighbourhood Plan on hold until a more detailed proposal was received from the Village Hall committee with the current condition of the hall, work required, and costs involved. A consultation should be held in the Village Hall to establish what the people of Whittington Parish want from their Village Hall.

0520.11 **TO RECEIVE COUNCILLORS REPORTS AND HIGHWAYS MATTERS.** Cllr S Gregory advised that a coach had gone off the road on the A68 and debris was across the road. This had been reported by Cllr Gregory several times however the debris had not been cleared. NCC advised that they will clear this.

0520.12 **CORRESPONDENCE.** All correspondence since the March meeting had been noted and most had been circulated by email to all Parish Councillors.

- a) **Aspen Ridge.** Planning enforcement have carried out a site visit and made contact with the owners of the property. They confirmed that steps have been taken to improve the site however due to the current restrictions they are unable to carry out a site visit to confirm this. Once restrictions have been relaxed a further site visit will be carried out.
- b) **Insurance renewal.** Zurich had provided the insurance renewal for 2020 at a premium of £257.60. The defibrillator had been added to the schedule at no extra cost.
- c) **Northumberland County Council Covid 19 Response.** Northumberland County Council had provided regular updates on their ways of working during the current crisis.

0520.13 **INFORMATION ITEMS.**

Copies of all information items are available from the Clerk on request.

- NALC – weekly eNews
- Community Action Northumberland – CAN eNews March 2020, April 2020 and May 2020.
- Campaign to Protect Rural England – Countryside Voice – Spring 2020

0520.14 **ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA.**

- a) **Dog Fouling.** Simon Ogg had complained about dog mess on the village green when he is cutting the grass. It is becoming a serious issue in Great Whittington. Dog fouling signs had been bought and will be put up in the village. Simon Ogg will advise of the worst

areas. Installing a dog bin at the bottom of the village was discussed. NCC can provide a small wheelie bin on a stand at a cost of £150.00.

- b) **Overgrown Trees.** The rowan trees on the green next to the Old Blacksmiths Shop are in poor condition and interfering with the neighbouring property. An application will be submitted to remove the two trees and the Parish Council will look to replant in the Autumn with suitable trees.

0520.15 **ANY URGENT BUSINESS [FOR INFORMATION ONLY]**

- a) **Hallington Memorial.** Cllr S Gregory advised that he will continue to cut the grass at the Hallington War Memorial this year.
- b) **Memorial Plaque.** The Parish Council would like to mount a memorial plaque on a post beside Jessie's flowering cherry tree. Parish Councillors are asked to send any suggestions for the inscription on the plaque to Cllr S Gregory and Mrs M Senior.

0520.16 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING.** The next meeting of the Parish Council will be held on Tuesday 21 July 2020 at 7pm. It is unknown at this stage whether the Parish Council will be able to meet face to face in the Village Hall.

\_\_\_\_\_ Chairman

**ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT**

| <b>PAYEE</b>          | <b>DESCRIPTION</b>                  | <b>CHEQUE</b> | <b>VAT</b> | <b>NET</b> | <b>CHQ NO</b> |
|-----------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------|------------|------------|---------------|
| Mrs A Senior          | Clerical services                   | 160.00        |            | 160.00     | 010761        |
| H M Revenue & Customs | PAYE                                | 40.00         |            | 40.00      | 010762        |
| Northumberland ALC    | Subscription 2020/21                | 141.40        |            | 141.40     | 010763        |
| Gary Brown Electrical | Installed circuit for defibrillator | 450.00        | 75.00      | 375.00     | 010764        |
| Zurich Municipal      | Insurance renewal                   | 257.60        |            | 257.60     | 010765        |
| Mrs A Senior          | Expenses – postages/travel          | 23.29         |            | 23.29      | 010766        |