

WHITTINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 10 MAY 2022 AT 7.30PM

PRESENT: Councillor S Gregory, Chairman of the Council together with Councillors J Sadler, M Petrie, S Lawson, C Ross and W E Robson.

Also present: Mrs M Senior, Clerk to the Council
County Councillor Mrs V Jones
2 members of the public

1. **Apologies for absence** – None
2. **To receive the minutes of the 2021 Annual Meeting held on 18th May 2021.** Minutes of the meeting held on 18 May 2021, having previously been circulated, were accepted as an accurate record.
3. **Matters arising.** None
4. **Chairman's Report.** Although Covid 19 is still with us, restrictions have eased, and we have been able to hold all six of our meetings here in the Village Hall over the past year. Our meetings have not been well attended by members of the public. Andrew Williamson left the Parish Council in September last year and has moved out of the area, his place has been taken by Chrissy Ross who joined us at our November meeting.

We agreed that we would not increase the precept this year as we felt that we could maintain a reasonable surplus, however, there has been an increase in the cost of grass cutting and the presence of Ash Dieback in the village will also create additional expense. The Ash trees will be surveyed later in the year, when they are in leaf, to assess their health and we will manage the trees conservatively, following recognised guidelines.

After many years of consultation and modifications, the Northumberland Local Plan has now been declared 'sound' by government inspectors, was adopted on the 31st March and has been published on the county council's website. The plan replaces the adopted Core Strategies and saved policies of Local Plans and will guide future development until 2036. This gives us an up-to-date document when we consider planning applications. There have not been a lot of planning applications over the past year, work has not started at Badgers End and a PREAPP for 10 houses has been submitted for development at Aspen Ridge.

Repairs and maintenance have been carried out at the Village Hall and the Village Hall Committee has organised many events, regular coffee mornings, fish and chip pub evenings, yoga and Pilates sessions along with talks and other events. Grant applications have been successful to fund renewable energy installations at the hall and the VHJ committee hope that work can begin in July or August. Although the village hall events are well attended there are still divisions within the community. The Parish Council will continue to support the Village Hall. To mark the Queen's Platinum Jubilee, there will be an afternoon tea party in the hall on 5th June from 3.00pm until 6.00pm.

The Queens Head remains closed, but a refurbishment is underway and there are plans to open in time for the Queen's Jubilee.

On 30 November the region was hit badly by Storm Arwen, and a major incident was declared. Considerable damaged was caused, many trees blown over and village was without power for several days. A Council led review is underway to see what lessons can be learned by everyone to minimise the impact of future events. The opportunity to equip the village hall to act as an emergency centre is being considered, but I feel that we should all be better prepared for a power outage as the less help we need the more help we can give to others.

Dog fouling remains a problem despite the polite reminders which have been posted on the Village Hall and Friends of GW Facebook pages. Dog faeces can contain tapeworm eggs and be infected

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with Neospora, this can create a health risk to humans and farm animals. I hope the dog owners concerned can be encouraged to show consideration and respect.

I would like to thank all Parish Councillors for their good attendance, Mandy for all your unseen work and support and Veronica, for all your help.

5. **Parish Council Accounts 2021-2022.** The accounts for the year 2021-22 were presented by the Clerk for information. A copy is attached to this minute.
6. **Communication.** The Village Hall committee holds emails for 140 parishioners, and it was agreed that the Village Hall would publicise the Parish Council meetings on their website and through their emails/newsletters. This will hopefully encourage more residents to attend.

Signed as an accurate record: _____

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MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON 10TH MAY 2022

PRESENT: Cllr S Gregory, Chairman of the Council together with Cllrs J Sadler, W E Robson, S Lawson, C Ross and M Petrie.

Also present: Mrs Mandy Senior, Clerk to the Council
County Councillor Mrs V Jones
2 members of the public

- 0522.01 **ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN.** It was proposed by Cllr J Sadler, seconded by Cllr M Petrie and AGREED to re-elect Cllr S Gregory as Chairman. Cllr S Gregory took the chair.
- 0522.02 **TO RECEIVE CHAIRMAN'S DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE.** Cllr S Gregory gave and signed his Declaration of Acceptance of Office.
- 0522.03 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.** None
- 0521.04 **ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN.** It was proposed by Cllr S Gregory, seconded by Cllr W E Robson and AGREED to elect Cllr J Sadler as Vice Chairman. Cllr J Sadler accepted.
- 0522.05 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.** None.
- 0522.06 **MINUTES** of the meeting held on **22 March 2022** having been circulated were taken as read and confirmed as a true record.
- 0522.07 **ITEMS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES.** No matters arising.
- 0522.08 **COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT.** Cllr Mrs V Jones gave her verbal report on items relating to Northumberland County Council and local issues relating to Whittington Parish.
- a) **Road from Ryal** is now open since the repairs have been carried out on the bridge.
 - b) **Work at Halton Shield** continues. A petition has been submitted to NCC for a reduction in the speed limit and also a lorry ban on the Military Road. Although there is a 40mph at Harlow Hill, residents would like this reduced further. It was agreed that more consideration should be taken at the planning stage for infrastructure.
 - c) **Road closures** are being seen around the area as work starts on repairing the roads to coincide with the start of the new financial year.
 - d) **Dog fouling** incidents should be reported via NCC website as the enforcement team will then follow this up.
- 0522.09 **PLANNING MATTERS**
- a) **Planning Application No: 22/00289/PREAPP.** A pre- application had been received for the construction of 10no dwellings at Land East of Aspen Ridge. The site is divided by the Neighbourhood Plan village boundary with 4 properties on the land by Aspen Ridge and 6 properties by the paddock in the open countryside. The Whittington Neighbourhood Plan had set aside a certain number of houses/land for development and the housing allocation in the Local Plan is 0. Great Whittington is straining under the pressure of the new houses and development is unsustainable as there are no services in Great Whittington. The Parish Council felt that development in Great Whittington on this site would detract from the conservation area which should be preserved. An objection will be submitted to Northumberland County Council with mention to the volume of houses on the site and road safety issues surrounding the site.

REFERENCE	ADDRESS	DESCRIPTION
22/00289/PREAPP	Land East of Aspen Ridge, Great Whittington	Construction of 10no dwellings.
22/01384/FUL	South View, Great Whittington	Internal alterations, demolition of rear sun room and replacement with new sun room. Conversion of existing barn to studio/home office and recladding with timber cladding. Replacement of existing timber sash windows with double glazed sash windows.

0522.10 **FINANCE**

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

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ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT PAYEE	DESCRIPTION	CHEQUE	VAT	NET	CHQ NO
Northumberland CC	Supply and installation of litter bin – Carr Hill layby	310.24	48.04	262.20	10835
Mrs A Senior	Clerical Services	163.20		163.20	10836
HM Revenue Customs	PAYE	40.80		40.80	10837
Northumberland Assoc of Local Councils	Subscription 2022	129.07		129.07	10839
Zurich Municipal	Insurance renewal 2022	257.60		257.60	10840
Mrs A Senior	Postages/travel	35.05		35.05	10838
Income					
Northumberland CC	Precept	2500.00		2500.00	12.04.22
HMRC VTR	VAT refund	44.97		44.97	27.04.22

0522.11 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN 2021-2022

- a) **To consider and agree any actions arising from the Internal Auditors Report 2021-22.** It was AGREED to accept and approve the Internal Auditor's Report. The only items to note were: there was a typing error on the November 2021 minutes regarding cheque number 010820. This was corrected and the minutes signed as an accurate record. There were no invoices for cheque number 010799 for £56.13 however receipts had been provided.
- b) **To approve Annual Governance Statement 2021-2022.** It was agreed to accept and approve the Annual Governance Statement 2021-2022 which had been circulated.
- c) **To approve the draft annual accounts for 2021-2022 together with bank reconciliation and asset register.** It was agreed to accept and approve the draft annual accounts, bank reconciliation and asset register for 2021-2022 which had been previously circulated.
- d) **To approve the Account Statement and Explanation of Variances.** It was agreed to accept and approve the Accounting Statement and Explanation of Variances which had been previously circulated.
- e) **To confirm and approve the Certificate of Exemption 2020-2021.** The Certificate of Exemption was confirmed and approved.

0522.12 **GREAT WHITTINGTON VILLAGE HALL AND THE VILLAGE ENVIRONMENT.** There is currently no Parish Council representative on the Village Hall Committee however the Chairman will forward his annual report and accounts once they have been published. The AGM is to be held next month. Broadband has now been installed in the hall and the solar heating project is going ahead.

0522.13 **COMMUNITY FIELD.** A proposal for a new community field had been circulated. The Parish Council felt that this is a good idea for the village of Great Whittington however it will have a much lesser impact for the outlying areas. The responses to the questionnaire had been very positive and the group now need a meeting with the landowner to discuss the project in detail. The public footpath that runs through Aspen Ridge is important for this project as it provides safe access to the field.

0522.14 TO RECEIVE COUNCILLORS' REPORTS AND HIGHWAY MATTERS.

- a) **Hallington Road.** There is a large pothole opposite South Farm on the blind hill which is causing vehicles to move onto the opposite side of the road. C
- b) **Bingfield Road.** Two potholes have appeared on the Bingfield Road, Cllr S Gregory will report these.
- c) **Northumberland County Council – Reporting issues.** Cllr Mrs V Jones advised that people were finding the website 'Fix My Street' easier to use than NCC. Once reported on Fix My Street, this is reported direct to NCC. <https://www.fixmystreet.com/>

0522.15 **CORRESPONDENCE.** All correspondence received since the March meeting had been noted and most has been circulated to all councillors by email.

- Healthwatch Northumberland – Pharmacy Needs Assessment
- Campaign to Protect Rural England – Countryside Voices April 2022
- NALC – weekly eNews
- Community Action Northumberland – monthly CAN eNews.

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0522.16 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING.** The next meeting of the Parish Council will be held on Tuesday 19th July 2022 at 7.30pm in Great Whittington Village Hall. Apologies received from Cllr J Sadler.

_____Chairman