

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 23 MAY 2023 AT 7.30PM

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

Also present: Mrs M Senior, Clerk to the Council

1. **Apologies for absence** – Cllr Mrs C Ross and County Councillor Mrs V Jones.
2. **To receive the minutes of the 2022 Annual Meeting held on 10th May 2022.** Minutes of the meeting held on 10 May 2022, having previously been circulated, were accepted as an accurate record.
3. **Matters arising.** None
4. **Chairman's Report.** During the past year, we have been able to hold our six meetings here in the Village Hall but we have not been well supported by members of the public.

The Village Hall appears to be thriving, the Committee members have secured significant funding to enable the installation of an air source heat pump a PV array and a battery bank, some of the works have not been completed yet but are on target. The Parish Council had £1036 returned to us from the Mid Tyne Trust some time ago and that money was ringfenced to be used for the benefit of the community. At our last meeting it was decided to transfer that money to the Village Hall, primarily to buy a bench to be placed outside the Hall. The village Hall has also secured funding to act as a warm hub in the event of future emergencies where people could cook a meal, access the internet or simply stay warm. The Village Hall continues to host a range of events which are well supported.

The Parish Council has not had to consider any significant planning applications, we objected to a PREAPP regarding Aspen Ridge last year and it has not come back in a different form, the Badgers End development has not progressed.

The Parish Council have had tree works carried out following the recommendations of a recent tree survey, Ash Dieback is taking its toll on the majority of ash trees in the area, we have had a number of infected trees in the village removed and will continue to manage the trees conservatively by not removing trees which are only mildly affected.

We have increased the precept this year, a significant increase in percentage terms but very small in monetary terms. To put that in perspective, over the last nine years the PC Precept for a band C dwelling has increased by £3.35 while the rest of your Council Tax has increased by £593.70. Our precept is one of the lowest in the west area and only 25% of that of Hexham. This increase is necessary to cover the cost of grass cutting, our biggest outgoing and the increasing costs of managing the trees in the village which are our responsibility.

The road between Great Whittington and Roses Bower has been resurfaced and is a huge improvement but unfortunately, we are now receiving reports of vehicles being driven at excessive speeds on that road. We are also receiving complaints about vehicles travelling too quickly through the village, this is an ongoing concern, and we are working with our

County Councillor to try and resolve this issue. The County Council are managing to repair potholes at a reasonable rate but some roads in our parish are in poor condition. There are other areas which are lacking such as replacing road signs which have collapsed and clearing blocked gulleys. Communicating with Council officers continues to be very difficult and at times impossible.

Unfortunately, dog fouling continues to be a problem despite our continued efforts to improve the situation. Recently, John Sadler wrote a message which was posted on the Village Hall Facebook page, but it is too early to say if this has had any effect, we will continue our efforts.

May I thank all Parish Councillors for their contributions, Mandy, thank you for all your work and support and Veronica for your ongoing help.

Parish Council Accounts 2022-2023. The accounts for the year 2022-23 were presented for information. A copy is attached to this minute.

Meeting closed at 19:45

Signed as an accurate record _____

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF WHITTINGTON PARISH COUNCIL
HELD ON 23rd MAY 2023 AT 7.30PM IN GREAT WHITTINGTON VILLAGE HALL**

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

- 0523.01 **Election of Chair.** It was proposed by Cllr M Petrie, seconded by Cllr W Robson and AGREED unanimously to re-elect Cllr S Gregory as Chairman of Whittington Parish Council.
- 0523.02 **Declaration of Acceptance of Office.** Cllr S Gregory gave and signed his declaration of Acceptance of Office in the presence of Mrs M Senior, Clerk to the Council.
- 0523.03 **Election of Vice Chair.** It was proposed by Cllr S Gregory, seconded by Cllr S Lawson and AGREED unanimously to re-elect Cllr J Sadler as Vice Chairman.
- 0523.04 **Apologies for absence** – Cllr Mrs C Ross and County Councillor Mrs V Jones.
- 0523.05 **Declarations of Interests.** None
- 0523.06 **Minutes** of the meeting held on **21st March 2023** having been circulated were taken as read and signed as a true record.
- 0523.07 **Items arising from the Minutes of the meeting held on 21st March 2023.**
 - a) Parking on the Village Green. Minute 0323.04a refers. This appears to have been resolved.
 - b) Speed survey and advisory 20mph signs. Minute 0323.05 refers. Unfortunately, no update was available as County Councillor Mrs V Jones was looking into this.
 - c) Dog fouling. The dog fouling situation appears to have improved however it was agreed that Cllr J Sadler would draft a letter to be sent to all properties in Great Whittington advising all dog owners to pick up after their dogs and the need to keep dogs on a lead when walking beside the public highway. A copy of the Northumberland County Council (Dog Control) Public Spaces Protection Order will be forwarded to all Councillors.
- 0523.08 **County Councillors Report.** Cllr Mrs V Jones was unable to attend.

0523.09 Planning Matters

REFERENCE	ADDRESS	DESCRIPTION
23/01158/LBC	Land at North East of High Baulk, Great Whittington	Listed Building Consent: conversion of agricultural buildings into 4no residential units.
23/01231/FUL	Long Byre, Great Whittington	Erection of axillary building to serve principle dwelling of Long Byres.
23/00719/VARYCO	Buildings to North and Land TO West of Hallington Mill	Variation of conditions 2 (approved plans) and 10 (access type) on approved application 22/01481/FUL in order to alter new access from Type C Construction (Heavy Vehicle) to Type B (Medium Vehicle). GRANTED
23/01659/FUL	Land South of High Baulk Farm, Great Whittington	Proposed vehicular access.

0523.10 Finance/Administration

- a) Accounts for payment. Payments were reviewed and it was AGREED to approve the items of expenditure on the list, previously circulated.

ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT					
PAYEE	DETAILS	NET AMOUNT	VAT	GROSS AMOUNT	REF
Zurich Municipal	Insurance renewal	257.60		257.60	010878
Mrs A Senior	Clerical services	184.00		184.00	010879
H M Revenue & Customs	PAYE	46.00		46.00	010880
Mrs A Senior	Postages/travel expenses	22.29		22.29	010881
NALC	Subscription 2023	131.60		131.60	010882
Great Whittington Village Hall	Hall rent – May 2023	15.00		15.00	010883
Plexus Media Ltd (Spanglefish)	Annual website hosting	39.95	6.65	33.30	010884
DefibPad	Replacement defibrillator pads	96.99	19.40	116.39	010885
Income					
Northumberland CC	Precept	3000.00		3000.00	06.04.23

- b) **Risk Assessment.** The Risk Assessment was presented to the Parish Council for review. It was AGREED to accept and approve the risk assessment.

0523.11 Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2022/23

- a) To consider and agree any actions arising from the Internal Auditor's Report 2022/23. It was AGREED to accept and approve the Internal Auditor's Report which had no items to note.
- b) To approve the Annual Governance Statement 2022/23. It was AGREED to approve the Annual Governance Statement.
- c) To approve the draft annual accounts, bank reconciliation and asset register 2022/23. It was AGREED to approve the draft annual accounts, bank reconciliation and asset register 2022/23.
- d) To approve the Accounting Statement and Explanation of Variances 2022/23. It was AGREED to approve the Accounting Statement and Explanation of Variances 2022/23.
- e) To confirm and approve the Certificate of Exemption. It was AGREED to confirm and approve the Certificate of Exemption 2022/.23.

0523.12 Great Whittington Village Hall and the village environment.

- a) **Grass cutting.** Cllr S Gregory will continue to cut the grass around the war memorial in Hallington. It was noted that the war memorial will need pointing and Cllr S Gregory will continue to monitor the situation.

0523.13 To receive Councillors reports and Highway matters.

- a) **Speeding.** Concerns were expressed over the speed of traffic on the newly resurfaced Roses Bower Road. Complaints had been received regarding the speed of tractors and farm traffic through Great Whittington.

0523.14 **Correspondence/Information items** All correspondence received since the March meeting had been noted and most had been circulated to all councillors by email.

- NALC – Weekly eNews
- Community Action Northumberland – Monthly CAN eNews
- Campaign to Protect Rural England – Countryside Voices
- Northumberland County Council – Electoral review of Northumberland
- NALC – Star Council Awards 2023

0523.15 **Date of next meeting** – The next meeting will be held on **Tuesday 18 July 2023** at 7.30pm in Great Whittington Village Hall.