

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 21 MAY 2024 AT 7.30PM IN GREAT WHITTINGTON VILLAGE HALL

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

Also present: Mrs M Senior, Clerk to the Council

1. **Apologies for absence** – None
2. **To receive the minutes of the 2023 Annual Meeting held on 23rd May 2023.** Minutes of the meeting held on 23 May 2023, having previously been circulated, were accepted as an accurate record.
3. **Matters arising.** None
4. **Chairman's Report.** The Parish Council have held our 6 requisite meetings here in the Village Hall.

The Village Hall is thriving, the only planned work that has not been carried out is the installation of a three-phase smart meter, but it now appears that this may not be necessary. The efforts of the Village Hall Committee were recently recognised in a national Inspiration Awards competition for Halls which have been innovative, Great Whittington were third in the competition out of 150 entrants and were awarded £1000.

Chrissy Ross left the Parish Council in January this year as she has moved out of the area, Chrissy joined us in November 2022 and we wish her and her husband Ian well. We are pleased to welcome Dr Bill Brittain to the Parish Council, Bill joined us at our March meeting.

We have again increased the Parish precept. A small increase which reflects on our increased costs mainly for grass cutting and tree management. Although the Parish Council reserves are slightly higher than last year, we did give over £1000 to the Village Hall in a lump sum, which does impact on the figures, and we must remember to spend wisely.

We have considered a number of planning applications over the past year, some have been refused by the LPA based on policies in the Northumberland Local Plan which was adopted in March 2022 and also policies in the Whittington Neighbourhood Plan, which was made five years ago, although the planning process is currently very slow, the way policies are implemented appears to be effective. Although the Badgers End development was incorporated into the Neighbourhood Plan as part of our housing development requirement, the plot remains vacant.

Last year, I commented on the fact that the Great Whittington to Roses Bower Road had been resurfaced, I am now pleased to say that the road between Roses Bower and the A68 has been resurfaced, it has been in very poor condition for years. Sadly, on October 1st last year there was a fatality on the junction of the A68 and the road to Roses Bower. There have been many calls for improved signage³ and road markings at that point, an A68 safety petition was circulated and gathered 81 signatures, I understand that this will be discussed at the next Local Area Committee Meeting on 21st May (tonight).

Some of our local roads are not in good condition, the surface of the road between the village and the Military Road has recently been improved as it was in a poor condition. A number of drainage problems have become evident in the area partly as a result of high

rainfall for many months, there are many blocked gulleys and a lot of road signs have collapsed, I have no doubt that NCC finances are stretched but we would appreciate these issues being resolved.

Dog fouling in and around the village continues to be a problem, this is a health hazard particularly for children and very unpleasant for the operatives who cut the grass. Last year there were incidents of sheep worrying on land around the village, I hope these were isolated attacks, but I ask everyone to be vigilant and keep dogs on leads.

I would like to thank councillors for their good attendance and support, Mandy for all your hard work and Veronica for your support.

5. **Parish Council Accounts 2022-2023.** The accounts for the year 2023-24 were presented for information. A copy is attached to this minute.

Meeting closed at 19:45

Signed as an accurate record _____

| WHITTINGTON PARISH COUNCIL | | | | | |
|---|--|---|------------------|-----------|-------------------|
| STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS FOR YEAR 2023/24 | | | | | |
| RECEIPTS | | | | | |
| Bank Account b/f from 2022/23 | | | | | £7,184.12 |
| Precept 2023/24 | | | | | £6,000.00 |
| Wayleaves | | | | | £15.22 |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | £13,199.34 |
| PAYMENTS | | | | | |
| ADMINISTRATION | | | | | |
| Zurich Insurance Premium | | | £257.60 | | |
| NALC Subscription | | | £131.60 | | |
| Clerk's salary | | | £1,380.00 | | |
| Clerk's expenses | | * | £142.04 | | |
| Website | | * | £118.30 | | |
| Room hire | | | £90.00 | | |
| ICO Subscription | | | £35.00 | | |
| Audit fee | | * | £35.00 | £2,189.54 | |
| | | | | | |
| GRANTS | | | | | |
| Community Action Northumberland | | | £0.00 | | |
| Great North Air Ambulance | | | £0.00 | | |
| Matfen & Ryal PCC | | | £100.00 | | |
| RBL Poppy Appeal | | * | £43.34 | | |
| Campaign to Protect Rural England | | | £36.00 | | |
| | | | | £179.34 | |
| | | | | | |
| PUBLIC OPEN SPACES | | | | | |
| Grasscutting | | | £2,860.00 | | |
| Defibrillator | | * | £123.10 | | |
| Signs | | * | £0.00 | | |
| Tree works | | | £0.00 | £2,983.10 | |
| | | | | | |
| VAT | | | | £61.93 * | £5,413.91 |
| BALANCE CARRIED FORWARD TO 2024/25 | | | | | £7,785.43 |
| | | | | | |
| Represented by (as at 31 March 2024): | | | | | |
| Bank of Scotland Treasurers Account | | | £7,785.43 | | |
| Less outstanding cheques | | | | | |
| | | | £7,785.43 | | |
| * net of VAT which is shown separately | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| Mrs M Senior | | | | | |
| Clerk to the Council & RFO | | | | | |
| 06-Apr-24 | | | | | |

21 May 2024

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF WHITTINGTON PARISH COUNCIL
HELD ON 21st MAY 2024 FOLLOWING THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING 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, W Robson and Dr W Brittain

0524.01 **Election of Chair.** It was proposed by Cllr J Sadler, seconded by Cllr W Robson and RESOLVED unanimously to re-elect Cllr S Gregory as Chairman of Whittington Parish Council.

0524.02 **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.

0524.03 **Election of Vice Chair.** It was proposed by Cllr S Gregory, seconded by Cllr J Sadler and RESOLVED unanimously to elect Cllr W Robson as Vice Chairman.

0524.04 **Apologies for absence** – None

0524.05 **Declarations of Interests.** None

0524.06 **Minutes** of the meeting held on **12th March 2024** having been circulated were taken as read and signed as a true record.

0524.07 **Items arising from the Minutes of the meeting held on 12th March 2024.**

- a) Smell. Minute 0324.05a refers. The Parish Council had a responsibility to follow up on the reports which Cllr S Gregory had done. Cllr S Gregory had report this to the Environment Agency and Public Protection who had carried out a site visit. The smell now appears to have disappeared however if it returns then NCC will be contacted again.
- b) Tree works. Minute 0324.05b The work continues on the trees. Cllr S Gregory thanked Cllr W Robson for his help with this.

0524.08 **County Councillors Report.** Cllr Mrs V Jones was unable to attend.

0524.09 **Planning Matters**

| REFERENCE | ADDRESS | DESCRIPTION |
|------------------------------|--|---|
| 24/00188/FUL | Lane House, Bingfield | Two storey extension to east gable. REFUSED |
| 23/03020/FUL | Long Byre, Great Whittington | Re-submission: Erection of an axillary building to serve the principal dwelling of Long Byres to create a home office, garden room and store. REFUSED |
| 23/03139/FUL | Duck Pond Cabin, NE of Quarry House, Great Whittington | Retrospective: change of use from agricultural land to allow stationing of shipping container for holiday letting with parking, landscaping and solar array. REFUSED |
| 23/04307/FUL 23/04308/LBC | North Farm, Hallington | Corner infill extension partially in place of existing and detached garage and conversion of adjoining building (as amended 23.04.24) GRANTED |

0524.10 Finance/Administration

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

| ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT | | | | | |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------|------------|------|--------------|-------|
| PAYEE | DETAILS | NET AMOUNT | VAT | GROSS AMOUNT | REF |
| J C Accountants | Internal audit fee | 48.00 | 8.00 | 40.00 | 10913 |
| Mrs A Senior | Clerical services | 224.00 | | 224.00 | 10914 |
| H M Revenue & Customs | PAYE | 56.00 | | 56.00 | 10915 |
| Mrs A Senior | Postages/travel expenses | 46.10 | | 46.10 | 10916 |
| NALC | Subscription 2024 | 134.74 | | 134.74 | 10917 |
| Great Whittington Village Hall | Hall rent – May 2024 | 15.00 | | 15.00 | 10918 |
| Zurich Insurance | Insurance renewal | 257.60 | | 257.60 | 10919 |
| Mrs A Lawson | Defibrillator electricity | 40.00 | | 40.00 | 10920 |

- b) **Risk Assessment.** The Risk Assessment was presented to the Parish Council for review. It was RESOLVED to accept and approve the risk assessment.
- c) **To reappoint Internal Auditor for 2024-25.** It was RESOLVED to reappoint Mrs F Ramsey, J C Accountants as the internal auditor for the financial year 2024-2025.

0524.11 Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2023/24

- a) To consider and agree any actions arising from the Internal Auditor's Report 2023-24. It was RESOLVED to accept and approve the Internal Auditor's Report which had no items to note.
- b) To approve the Annual Governance Statement 2023-24. It was RESOLVED to approve the Annual Governance Statement.
- c) To approve the draft annual accounts, bank reconciliation and asset register 2023-24. It was RESOLVED to approve the draft annual accounts, bank reconciliation and asset register 2023-24.
- d) To approve the Accounting Statement and Explanation of Variances 2023-24. It was RESOLVED to approve the Accounting Statement and Explanation of Variances 2023-24.
- e) To confirm and approve the Certificate of Exemption. It was RESOLVED to confirm and approve the Certificate of Exemption 2023-24.

0524.12 Great Whittington Village Hall and the village environment.

- a) **Village Hall.** The Village Hall is being well used with 8 private bookings up to September 2024 and a regular upholstery session bringing in £600 pa. The coffee mornings are going well and the Annual BBQ will be held on 22 June 2024. The AGM will be held on 11 June 2024 and there is still a position for a Parish Councillor to sit on the Committee. The solar panels have saved approx. £1200 in the first year. Improvements will be made to the garden and the hall floor will be resealed.

0524.13 **To receive Councillors reports and Highway matters.**

- a) Road conditions. Improvements have been made on the road from the Village Hall to the Military Road however the Matfen to Great Whittington road is still in poor condition.
- b) The Little Library. These are now ready to be installed and will be installed on the Village Green. They will be installed onto posts, supported underneath and one of the village benches can be relocated beside the libraries, if needed.
- c) Speeding. An email had been received from a resident over the speed of traffic on the Roses Bower road. Many residents walk this road.
- d) Hallington Mill. The promised new signage and road markings have still not been installed. This road was badly flooded several weeks ago. This will be chased up with County Councillor Mrs V Jones.
- e) Ash Die Back. Concern was expressed over the state of the Ash Trees from Bingfield Farm to Gardeners Cottage. This will be reported to Northumberland County Council.
- f) War Memorial. Cllr S Gregory RESOLVED to once again cut the grass at the War Memorial in Hallington.

0524.14 **Date of next meeting** – The next meeting will be held on **Tuesday 23 July 2024** at 7.30pm in Great Whittington Village Hall.