

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF WHITTINGTON PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON 18th NOVEMBER 2025 AT 7.30PM IN GREAT WHITTINGTON VILLAGE HALL

PRESENT: Cllr S Gregory, Chairman of the Council together with Cllrs W Robson, Mrs A Lawson, H Lewins, Prof M Petrie and Dr W Brittain

1125.01 **Apologies for absence** were received from County Councillor Mrs V Jones.

1125.02 **Declarations of interest.** None

1125.03 **Minutes** of the meeting held on **23rd September 2025**, having been circulated were taken as read and signed as a true record.

1125.04 **Matters arising from the Minutes of the meeting held on 23rd September 2025.**

- a) Hallington Mill. Minute 0925.04b refers. Still no action taken.
- b) Alncom. Minute 0925.04c refers. Alncom has now finished in Great Whittington . They have one or two wayleaves still to arrange.
- c) Bank of Scotland. Minute 0925.07 refers. Following the lengthy delay in updating signatories, Bank of Scotland managed to make the most recent changes within a few days. Signatories are now updated and the Clerk can view the account online. Unity Trust is not currently taking any switches until the New Year. This will be progressed in 2026.
- d) Sport Tynedale Awards. Minute 0925.07c refers. A thank you has been received from Sport Tynedale for the donation. Their annual awards will be held on Sunday 30th November at 6pm at Hexham Auction Mart.
- e) NCC Budget and Corporate Priorities Meeting. Minute 0925.10 refers. Cllr S Gregory attended this meeting however, it was noted that Cllr Glen Sanderson, Leader did not attend. It was also noted that Northumberland County Council is rewriting the Local Plan due to house building targets. This may affect the Whittington Neighbourhood Plan.
- f) Tree survey. The tree survey has been booked for the beginning of December with Woodsman Arboriculture.

1125.05 **County Councillors Report.** Cllr Mrs V Jones was unable to attend the meeting.

1125.06 **Planning Matters**

REFERENCE	ADDRESS	DESCRIPTION
25/03726/FUL	Wildflower Shepherds Hut, North East of Sewage Works, Great Whittington	Retrospective: Change of use from agricultural land to the stationing of a shepherds hut for holiday letting with parking and landscaping
25/04155/FUL	1 Bingfield Cottages, Bingfield	Standalone garden room and store
25/02243/VARYCO	Agricultural building at west of South Clarewood Farm, Great Whittington	Variation of condition 2 (approved plans) on approved application 24/00304/FUL in order to reconfigure the internal layouts of Units 3, 4 and 5, remove the connecting extension and provide garages GRANTED

1125.07 Finance/Administration

- a) Accounts for payment. Payments were reviewed and it was RESOLVED to approve the items of expenditure on the list, previously circulated.
- b) To consider donation to Wag and Co. It was AGREED to send a donation of £50 to Wag and Co.

PAYEE	DETAILS	GROSS AMOUNT	VAT	NET AMOUNT	REF
Bank of Scotland	Bank account charges	4.75		4.75	DD
Bank of Scotland	Bank account charges	6.25		6.25	DD
Mrs A Senior	Clerical services	240.00		240.00	10975
H M Revenue Customs	PAYE	60.00		60.00	10976
Mrs A Senior	Postages/travel expenses	44.20		44.20	10977
Great Whittington Village Hall	Hall rent – November 25	15.00		15.00	10978
The Poppy Shop	Remembrance Day wreaths	50.00	6.66	43.34	10979
Wag and Co	Grant aid	50.00		50.00	10980
Bank of Scotland	Bank account charges	4.75		4.75	DD

1125.08 Great Whittington Village Hall and the village environment.

- a) **Village Hall.** The hall has been awarded a grant of £5000 from the Green Rigg Wind Farm Fund for batteries for the solar panel project. They have also applied for another grant to fund the shortfall. It was noted that the Village Hall Christmas Party will be held on 6th December 2025.

1125.09 To receive Councillors reports and Highway matters.

- a) Bridge. It appears that the issue has been noted as the area is marked.
- b) Speed camera. Cllr S Gregory had been advised that County Councillors may fund average speed cameras.

1125.10 To consider the report on Assertion 10 – Digital and Data Compliance for the 2025-26 Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) and adoption of the draft IT Policy. The Clerk presented a report on the new AGAR Assertion 10 – Digital and Data Compliance, which applies from 1 April 2025 and requires all smaller authorities to demonstrate appropriate arrangements for managing digital systems, data security, and information governance. The requirements include the use of secure authority-owned email accounts, an accessible and compliant website, adoption of an IT and Data Policy, registration with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO), and publication of the statutory information required under the Transparency Code for Smaller Authorities. The Clerk confirmed that Whittington Parish Council now operates using a dedicated council-owned email address. A draft IT Policy has been prepared and was presented to Members for adoption. Members noted that some further work is required on the Council's website to ensure it meets the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG 2.2 AA) and that mandatory information continues to be published in an accessible format. It was also confirmed that Whittington Parish Council is registered with the ICO as a Data Controller, and that the Council already publishes the required documents and financial information in line with the Transparency Code for Smaller Authorities. After discussion, the Council was satisfied that progress is being made to ensure full compliance with Assertion 10. It was RESOLVED that the report on AGAR Assertion 10 be received and noted, that the IT Policy be adopted. The Clerk will continue to make the necessary updates to the Council's website. Progress will be reviewed later in the year to ensure the Council can confidently answer 'Yes' to Assertion 10 for the 2025-26 AGAR.

1125.11 **To consider report to supply a Parish Council laptop and telephone.** Members considered the report on the provision of a dedicated Parish Council laptop and mobile telephone for the Clerk. Following discussion, it was agreed to defer a decision until the next meeting to allow the Clerk to explore whether it may be feasible and cost-effective to share a laptop and/or mobile telephone with Matfen Parish Council, given that the Clerk serves both authorities. RESOLVED: That the matter be deferred to the next meeting, pending further information on shared-equipment options.

1125.12. **Parish Council Chairs' Meeting.** Following the initial meeting in September, the Bywell Chair is trying to arrange a Forum where Chairs can share ideas and best practice. An email had been received regarding a planning application in our area where there were a number of inaccuracies. An email had been sent reminding members of GDPR, confidentiality and the need to declare interests.

1125.14 **Date of next meeting** – The next meeting will be held on **Tuesday 20th January 2026** at 7.30pm in Great Whittington Village Hall.