

At a Meeting of
WHORLTON AND WESTWICK
PARISH COUNCIL
On Tuesday 19th January 2016, 7.00pm

Present: Cllr George Stastny (Chairman), Cllr Colin Cummins, Cllr Ian Wilkinson, Cllr Roger Foster, Cllr Martin Saville

Apologies: Cllr Lucy Hoskyns-Abrahall, Cllr Trevor Honeyman

Members of the public at the meeting:

There was a large public gallery. The meeting commenced with comments and questions from the public. Most of the public made comments in connection with the planning application DM/15/03464/FPA. There was also a comment about the protection of the Village Green. There was also a comment about the listing of properties on Grange Terrace.

1 Interests

No interests were declared.

2 The Minutes of the last Meeting:

The minutes of the meeting held on 9th December 2015 were confirmed as a correct record, and signed by the Chairman.

3 Financial Update

The clerk presented a spreadsheet of the current finances of the Council.

4 Parking at the Pub, and Protection of The Village Green in Front of the Pub

The chairman observed that in view of the successful planning application, it was likely that there would be building works carried out behind the pub, with a consequent increase in traffic. The chairman also observed that there was still damage occurring in front of the pub, due to the cars turning there.

RESOLVED: that, on a temporary basis, there should be stones placed around the Village Green directly in front of the pub, and that the matter should be reconsidered at the next meeting, with a view to erecting permanent wooden posts, in sympathy with the rest of the Village Green.

5 Procedure for Deregistration of Part of the Village Green

This matter was postponed until the next meeting.

6 Request for Bus Stop

There was a request from the public that there should be a bus stop at Whorlton cross roads. RESOLVED: that the Clerk should ask Durham County Council for a bus stop at Whorlton cross roads near to Gatehouse Garage.

7 Grass Cutting Contract Renewal

The clerk produced a report of the competitive tenders for the grass-cutting contract at Whorlton Village Green.

RESOLVED: that the contract be awarded to Mill Gardens Ltd.

8 Progress Report on Danshell Transaction

The Clerk reported that Danshell directors had been deliberating on the council's request to complete for 16 weeks, without giving any substantive response.

RESOLVED: that the Chairman volunteered to send an email to Danshell to push for progress, and suggest that the two transactions be separated; and that there should be a meeting arranged when the management next visits Whorlton Hall.

9 Paths Update

The Clerk reported that Danshell and the agricultural tenant had given consent to the new gravel path. There was a question of which contractor to use.

RESOLVED: that the clerk should clarify whether a grant could be obtained for this project, and that the matter should be adjourned until the next meeting.

10 Untidy Area East of Whorlton Beck Bridge within the Conservation Area

The Chairman reported that this area had become an eyesore once again. It had already been reported to Durham County Council a couple of years ago, and the landowner had promised to take steps, but had never made significant improvements. It was noted that Durham County Council may have contributed to the problem by discarding building materials after completion of the work on Whorlton Beck Bridge.

RESOLVED: that the Clerk should report this matter to Durham County Council, who would take the appropriate enforcement steps.

11 Planning Application DM/15/03464/FPA has been approved: Should the Parish Council oppose it further; If yes, what action; What about the problem of access across the Village Green to the development site.

The councillors were extremely concerned that the application had been successful, despite their strongest possible objection. There was no evidence that the planning officer had taken the relevant matters into consideration. There was also a serious question over access to the site over the village green.

RESOLVED: that the Clerk should enquire of firms of solicitors with suitable expertise how much they would charge for advising on the legality of the access to the site, and on the likelihood of a successful judicial review application; that the Clerk should write to Durham County Council expressing strong dissatisfaction; that the Clerk should open negotiations with the landowner.

12 New Planning Applications (if any)

There were none.

Date for the next Parish Council Meeting:

15th March 2016

There being nothing further to discuss the meeting closed at 8.30pm.

15th March 2016, Chairman