

At a Meeting of  
**WHORLTON AND WESTWICK**  
**PARISH COUNCIL**

On Tuesday 17th May 2016, 7.00pm

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

**Apologies:** Cllr Roger Foster, Cllr Trevor Honeyman, Cllr Lucy Hoskyns-Abrahall

**Clerk:** Jonathan Dickinson

**Members of the public at the meeting:**

Members of the public were in attendance. They began with some comments. A parishioner wanted speed limits just before the village on both the Westwick approach/exit, and the A67 approach/exit. The Clerk will put it on the agenda for next meeting. A parishioner asked for permission to clean some road signs, and the Clerk said that permission was needed. A parishioner questioned whether the phone box was worth keeping. A parishioner lamented the damage to Abbey Bridge. The Clerk will put it on the agenda for next meeting.

**1 Election of Chairman**

The Clerk began the meeting by asking for a vote on the Chairman.

RESOLVED: that Cllr George Stastny should continue in the post of Chairman.

Cllr George Stastny signed the form to declare his acceptance.

Cllr George Stastny took over conduct of the meeting.

**2 Election of Vice-Chairman**

The Clerk reported that Cllr Lucy Hoskyns-Abrahall had stated prior to the meeting that she would be willing to continue in her role as Vice-Chairwoman.

RESOLVED: that Cllr Lucy Hoskyns-Abrahall should to continue in her role as Vice-Chairwoman.

**3 Interests**

No interests were declared.

**4 The Minutes of the last Meeting:**

The minutes of the meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> March 2016 were confirmed as a correct record, and signed by the Chairman.

**5 Protection of the Village Green: Proposal for Alternative Bollards**

RESOLVED: that this item be deferred until the next meeting.

**6 Review Standing Orders**

The Clerk and councillors reviewed the Standing Orders, but wanted no amendments.

**7 Review Financial Regulations**

The Clerk and councillors reviewed the Financial Regulations, but wanted no amendments, and were satisfied with the measures for the control of finance.

### **8 Approval of governance statement (in the annual return)**

RESOLVED: that the governance statement prepared by the Clerk in the annual return be approved.

It was immediately signed by the Clerk and the Chairman.

### **9 Approval of accounting statement (in the annual return)**

RESOLVED: that the accounts prepared by the Clerk, and the accounting statement in the annual return, which were audited by Jane Ascroft, be approved.

It was immediately signed by the Chairman.

### **10 Cheques**

Cheques were authorised and signed to: Zurich Insurance, Jamie McBain; Jane Ascroft; Mill Gardens; S&A; and the Clerk.

### **11 Unilateral Notice**

The Clerk reported that the application for a unilateral notice had not been successful, and explained why, and asked whether to pay the bill of the solicitors, as specified by email on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2016.

RESOLVED: that the solicitors, Hewitts, be paid their bill.

### **12 Whorlton Pub Development – report from Clerk**

The Clerk reported that the estate agents acting on behalf of the owner of the pub, who were employed the market the land having the benefit of planning permission, had been informed that the Parish Council disputed the extent of the access to the plots, and denied that there was any access over the village green for the purpose of the residential development. This fact would have to be disclosed to a potential buyer.

### **13 Community Assets: proposal to register Whorlton Pub**

The Clerk explained the benefit of registering Whorlton pub with Durham County Council as an asset of community value, and explained the procedure involved.

RESOLVED: that the Clerk on behalf of the Parish Council register Whorlton pub as an asset of community value.

### **14 Planning applications: (a) DM/16/01437/FPA - Former Engine Shed Site Of Former Whorlton Lido - Change of use from former engine shed to residential holiday let (b) DM/16/01295/FPA- The Coach House Whorlton - Reinstatement of Riverbank (c) DM/15/03628/FPA appeal for non-decision regarding Field To The North Of 1 To 3 Grange Cottages Whorlton (d) any others arising before the meeting.**

The councillors considered each of these planning applications in turn.

RESOLVED: (a) that the Clerk state no objections; (b) that the Clerk state no objections: (c) that the Clerk write to Durham County Council stating that as the Neighbourhood Plan was now even closer to final approval, there was additional ground for opposition from the Parish Council, and restating all the points made in the original objection statement.

### **15 Gravel order for further footpath repairs and round bench on Village Green**

The councillors reported that Keith Brown was happy to let his field be used for temporary storage of a pile of gravel to be used for repairing the path from the graveyard to the sewage works. It could also be used for the round bench, and any other village paths requiring improvement.

RESOLVED: that the Clerk procure at the best price 20 tonnes of gravel to be delivered to Keith Brown's field.

**16 Danshell transfer of land – report from Clerk**

The Clerk reported little or no progress on the Danshell transfer of land.

RESOLVED: that the Chairman on behalf of the Parish Council again write to Danshell's chief executive.

**17 Transparency Fund for Smaller Authorities - Approval of Grant Application**

RESOLVED: to approve the grant application made by the Clerk to the Transparency Fund for Smaller Authorities.

**18 Matters Not Requiring a Resolution (if any)**

A councillor raised the issue of equal treatment of all parishioners regarding planning infringements. In particular, why had the Parish Council not taken action against the pub in connection with the bulkhead lights fixed to the front of the pub without planning permission, despite the fact that it is a listed building.

A councillor enquired what progress was being made regarding the private complaint of the Chairman made to Durham County Council about the replacement of the wall with a fence on the entrance to Whorlton just before Grange Cottages. The Chairman reported that there was no progress as yet.

The Chairman handed out to all those present, and published on the Notice Boards his Chairman's Report, in the form at the Appendix below.

**Date for the next Parish Council Meeting:**

19<sup>th</sup> July 2016

There being nothing further to discuss the meeting closed at 7.30pm.

19<sup>th</sup> July 2016, Chairman .....

APPENDIX:  
**CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

Whorlton & Westwick Parish Council AGM 17 May 2016

I felt it would be useful to sum up the main events since the last AGM. First I wish to thank all Councillors for giving up their time and regularly attending the Council meetings, the Clerk for his friendly and efficient guidance and members of the public for their interest in the Council's affairs.

Perhaps the main event during the year was dealing with the flood of planning application for housing in Whorlton when six dwellings were approved already and further six are under consideration. Some applications were supported and some were vigorously opposed, mainly due to the wishes of the residents for slower rate of development, as stated in the emerging Neighbourhood Plan.

The NP is now at the final stages of approval by DCC and then by a Government Inspector prior to the public vote and I wish to thank all the sub-committee councillors and representatives from other public bodies for their help and attendance at the meetings.

The Council has dealt with the perennial issues such as damage and protection of the Village Green, dog fouling, path improvements etc. Many of the works such as tree surgery, path improvements, road verges clean up and protection of The Green were carried out by public spirited Councillors and other parishioners, free of charge.

The Council remains in legal negotiations with Danshell for the purchase of land for the cemetery extension and the play area at the Village Hall. Planning consent for the cemetery land has been taken up by fencing off the land and soil investigation by a specialist was carried out at a considerable expense, sadly the progress of the acquisition is not as swift as was hoped for despite of our best efforts.

The Village Green has been greatly enhanced by a round seat kindly donated by Honeyman Associates Ltd and installed by volunteers at the chestnut tree, indicating the new spirit of "we can" in the village and the parishes as well.

Cllr. George Stastny  
May 2016