

At a Meeting of
WHORLTON AND WESTWICK
PARISH COUNCIL

On Tuesday 21 November 2017, 7.00pm

Present: Cllr Lucy Hoskyns-Abrahall, Cllr Ian Wilkinson, Cllr Martin Saville, Cllr George Stastny, Cllr David Kinch, Cllr Lynda Powell

Apologies: Cllr Roger Foster

Clerk: Jonathan Dickinson

Members of the public were at the meeting. The Chair (Cllr Lucy Hoskyns-Abrahall) invited public comments, and the councillors listened.

1 Apologies were received from the absent councillors. Cllr Stastny declared an interest in a planning application at item 16.

2 Minutes of Meeting 19.09.2017

The minutes from the full council meeting of 19.09.2017, were approved by the council, and signed by the Chair.

3 Approval of Code of Conduct for parish councillors

The Clerk reported that NALC had made a small amendment to the Code of Conduct.

RESOLVED: that the Council adopt the Code as amended.

4 Closure of graveyard at St Mary's Church, Whorlton

The councillors discussed the procedure and consequences of closing the graveyard.

RESOLVED: that the Parish Council make no objection to the closure, but that the Council decline responsibility for its upkeep.

5 Alteration of access to the play area and graveyard

The councillors discussed the problem of the current access to the new land, and the costs of solving it. Quotes had been received from competing contractors.

RESOLVED: that the Council pay the fee for the application for a faculty from the PCC; and that the Clerk authorise contractor Walton to carry out the necessary work, as soon as the faculty is approved.

6 External Audit – approval of annual return

The Clerk read the report of the external auditor to the councillors.

RESOLVED: that the annual return be approved, and that the internal auditor be requested to confirm by letter the findings of her audit.

7 Kiosk outside the pub

The councillors discussed the pros and cons of keeping the telephone kiosk, and considered the agreement with BT which was required.

RESOLVED: that the Council purchase the telephone kiosk outside the pub, and sign the agreement with BT, and decide at a later date what to do with it.

8 Honorary Freedom Scheme (Cllr Kinch)

The councillors had received insufficient opportunity to study the proposed scheme.

RESOLVED: that the Council adjourn this item to the next meeting.

9 Adoption of new Financial Regulations

The Clerk had previously circulated a draft of amended Financial Regulations based very closely on the model published by NALC.

RESOLVED: that the Council adopt the new Financial Regulations.

10 Play Area grant applications – project specification – commencement of work

The clerk notified the councillors of the current progress made regarding the grant applications for the new play area. Durham County Councillor George Richardson, who was in attendance, said that he would be willing to approve a grant of £3,000 for the financial year ending 2018, subject to the receipt of further information; and that the same sum could be offered for the financial year ending 2019, unless there was a general reduction in that fund.

RESOLVED: that the Clerk submit an application for a grant from Tesco; that the Clerk supply to the local Durham County Councillors the information requested on the apparatus to be installed, and the results of the consultations with local children.

11 Proposal for Additional Bollards on the village green (Cllr Wilkinson)

It was noted that there were recent incidents of vehicles driving over the main section of the village green, in spite of the bollards recently installed there. It was also noted that there are still 2 bollards to be installed by Keith Brown under the invoice which has already been paid.

RESOLVED: that there should be 6 more bollards installed around the main section of the village green, using Keith Brown, provided that he charged at no greater rate than before.

12 Update on claim for compensation following damage to village green

The Clerk reported that the insurers had agreed to pay for this damage.

13 Bollards on village green near pub – retrospective authorisation – grant application – progress update

The Clerk reported that a grant application had already been submitted for bollards on the smaller areas of village green in front of the pub.

RESOLVED: that this application should be retrospectively authorised.

14 Carter litigation

The Clerk updated the Councillors about the current position in the litigation.

RESOLVED: to authorise the solicitors in conjunction with the insurers to deal with the assessment of costs, and review the position in December.

15 Approval of budget – calculation of precept request

The Councillors were presented with information relating to precepts in County Durham, and with the budget prepared by the Clerk.

RESOLVED: that the Parish Council should request an increase in the precept of 10% approximately, with precise figures being approved at the next meeting.

16 Planning applications (including those arising at late notice)

Planning Application DM/17/03645/LB for 6 no. downlighters to front elevation at Fernavilles Rest

RESOLVED: that the Parish Council has not objection to the application.

17 Cheques

Cheques were signed for the Clerk, HMRC, Mill Gardens Ltd, Keith Brown and Whorlton Village Community Association.

18 Matters not requiring a resolution

There were none.

Date for the next Parish Council Meeting:

16st January 2018

There being nothing further to discuss the meeting closed at 8pm.

16st January 2018, Chair