

## THE PARISH COUNCIL OF WHITTON AND TOSSON

### Minutes of the Virtual PARISH COUNCIL MEETING held on 20<sup>th</sup> August 2020 at 7.00pm at Zoom 846 8908 0337

**Present:** Hilary Dunn (HD -Chair), Alan Winlow (AW -Vice Chair), Fran Tait (FT), Val Burwood (VB).  
**In attendance:** Tom Burwood (TB - web master), Alan Tait (AT- parish resident). Clerk: Garth Rhodes

*The meeting opened at 7.00 p.m.*

1. **Apologies for absence.** None
2. **Minutes of the meeting held on the 20th August 2020** were considered. FT proposed that the minutes were a true record, seconded by AW. The minutes to be signed by the Chair. **Action: Clerk**
3. **Matters arising from the minutes**
  - i) Whitton wastewater improvements and associated road closure. Work continuing along Whitton Terrace.
  - ii) Northumberland Local Plan Examination. The second phase of the public hearing sessions for the examination of the Northumberland Local Plan will commence on Tuesday 20 October 2020. The Phase 2 hearings will cover the parts of the plan not considered in the Phase 1 hearings as well as matters outstanding from Phase 1. The hearings will take place virtually over four weeks as follows:
    - Week 1 - Tuesday 20 to Thursday 22 October 2020
    - Week 2 - Tuesday 27 to Thursday 29 October 2020
    - Week 3 - Tuesday 10 to Thursday 12 November 2020
    - Week 4 - Tuesday 17 to Thursday 19 November 2020
  - iii) Update on the impact of the Coronavirus on Parish Council business. Government and NALC advice remains that council meetings should continue on-line. It was possible to arrange face to face meetings, but all national and local restrictions would have to be met, making this extremely difficult to arrange. Agreed to continue to meet on-line, until further guidance is forthcoming.
  - iv) Tree Planting. AW reported that over 50 Nordman fir seeds had been collected for planting and clearing areas for more tree planting over the winter had taken place.
4. **Highways and Footways Report** including:
  - i) Traffic speed along Carterside Road/lorries on the lower road & email from resident. An email had been received from a resident regarding her concerns about speeding on Carterside Road and asking for the PCs support and action. The clerk had replied that this matter would be taken into consideration by members who were currently drawing up the LTP proposals for 2020/21. AW confirmed that he had used this information in the development of the proposals
  - ii) Local Transport Plan priorities for 2021/22. AW had consulted with Graham Bucknall prior to drawing up the proposed WPTC priorities documentation. Alan assisted by VB had produced a document which set out in detail the three PC priorities, outlining the location for each, the current situation and the proposed developments. Members thanked Alan and Val for producing such an excellent and detailed document. The document outlining the following three priorities were agreed to be submitted to the NCC Highways Department:

#### **PRIORITY 1: Silverton Lane through Whitton Village:**

- Prohibition of HGV vehicles using the road, or if this is not possible, the erection of advisory
- signs at each end of the road stating that the road is unsuitable for HGVs
- Installation of official, sign posted, passing places in accordance with current design guidelines
- for rural roads
- Erection of 'road narrows' warning signs at each end of the road together with "Single track
- road with passing places" signs
- Repairs to the existing road to make it safe for users

#### **PRIORITY 2: Carterside Road:**

- Installation of official, sign posted, passing places in accordance with current design guidelines
- for rural roads
- Erection of "Single track road with passing places" signs in appropriate locations
- Repairs to the existing road to make it safe for users

#### **PRIORITY 3: Speed Restriction: Silverton Lane, Whitton Village, Carterside Road**

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- Extension of the existing 30mph limit from Silvertown Lane to the east and Whitton Bank Road to the north, to a point past the access road to Whitton Glebe Farm just beyond the entrances to the two caravan sites on Carterside Road.
- iii) Re-surfacing work at Tosson. Preparatory work had been undertaken with re-surfacing to take place in October.
- iv) Definitive Map Modification Order (No10) 2020. Notification of an Order from NCC for the addition of a short stretch of Footpath (No 42) from the Harbottle-Thropton road at Flotterton in a north-westerly direction to join Footpath No.1 in the Parish of Snitter, north of Flotterton, had been received. AW had investigated this order to find that the footpath was not actually in our parish. The order has been withdrawn by NCC and will be re-submitted in December.

### 5. Finance

- i) Receipts since the last meeting. Agreed.

28/08/2020	Business Acc. 70103195	Interest 29/05 - 28/08 2020	0.54
03/09/2020	NCC	Precept 2nd half	2546.00
		<b>Total</b>	<b>2546.54</b>

- ii) Clerk's salary, expenses, PAYE & NI and approval of Other Payments. Agreed.

02/09/2020	Garth Rhodes	Salary & Expenses (Jul/Aug/Sep)	222.16
02/09/2020	HMRC	PAYE (Jul/Aug/Sep)	51.80
01/10/2020	Rothbury Parish Council	WPTC JBC Proportion 2nd Half	1796.36
01/10/2020	Northumberland CC	WPTC Annual Insurance 2020/21	175.07
		<b>Total</b>	<b>2245.39</b>

- iii) Requests for donations. Agreed donation of £100 to GNAAS

**Action: Clerk**

- iv) Bank Reconciliation to 1<sup>st</sup> October 2020. Agreed.

Balance per bank statements at 28th August 2020				£
			Community account	1874.24
			Business Saver	<u>2006.69</u>
				3880.93
Less unrepresented cheques	02/09/2020	Garth Rhodes	222.16	
	02/09/2020	HMRC	51.80	
	01/10/2020	Rothbury PC	1796.36	
	01/10/2020	Northumberland CC	175.07	
				2245.39
Uncredited Deposits			2546.00	
				2546.00
Balance				4181.54
Balance per cash book				4181.54

- v) Insurance cover. Insurance documentation had eventually been received. There had been a delay in producing this for all NCC small parishes within the scheme. Assurance given that the PC was covered prior to receipt of the documents.
- vi) Bank account – online arrangements – No further development as the business development team were still not available during the pandemic.
- vii) Review Clerk's salary in line with National Pay Award. This matter would normally be agreed at the start of the current financial year but had been delayed as national agreement on Local Government salaries had only just been reached. The clerk was currently on SCP 10 = £10.79 per hr. This would rise to £11.08 per hr. backdated until 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020. The members approved the clerk's salary increase for 2020/21 and agreed to discuss an incremental rise at the anniversary of the Clerk's appointment in February 2021.
6. **Planning:** To consider any planning applications and planning matters including:
- i) Planning Applications There were currently no requests for consultations that have not already been commented on. Clerk was asked to follow up on the 19/03930/FUL, Land South West of Carterside Whitton Northumberland Appeal.

**Action: Clerk**

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- ii) Planning for the Future - White Paper and Changes to the current planning system. VB had yet to produce a brief overview and recommendations for the consultation. Any communication on the consultation to be through email. The deadline for submission was 29<sup>th</sup> October. **Action: All**
7. **Police Report.** The following report had been received:  
**Police Update Whitton and Tosson 01/10/20.**  
*The below information reflects Whitton and Tosson area from 27th August 2020*  
**Crimes reported 2** – *These both relate to burglaries to non-residential properties (Carterside road area). Both crime investigations are still live with extensive CCTV enquiries being carried out. We believe these break-ins occurred on the night of Saturday 19th September into early hours of Sunday 20th. Any information would be appreciated.*  
*Please continue to make us aware of any suspicious vehicles in the area. Criminals will usually visit the area they intend to target weeks or even months in advance. It is important suspicious vehicles or persons in the area are reported to us we can investigate.*  
*Anti- Social Behaviour - 0*  
**Other Business**  
*We hope everyone is staying safe and well. We appreciate the reports being received by members of the public and encourage this to continue.*  
**LOCAL CORONAVIRUS RESTRICTIONS** – *As you will be aware there are current restrictions in our area to reduce the spread of coronavirus. Any reports received of breaches of guidelines are followed up and dealt with accordingly. Please report any breaches.*  
**OP CHECKPOINT** – *We have been conducting proactive patrols around rural areas including your area stopping and checking vehicles suspected in poaching and rural crime.*  
*Any incident of this nature that is reported will always be followed up. Please, if you see any suspicious vehicles or persons in the area REPORT THIS on 101 or online NORTHUMBRIA.POLICE.UK.*  
**FARMWATCH** – *Please spread the word to any farmers/workers that we are here to support them and provide crime prevention advice. I have already visited a few farms in the area and issued new FARMWATCH signs and signed them up to the scheme – Basically this allows us to notify them of suspicious vehicles or incidents in the area.*  
*My email address is 4965@northumbria.pnn.police.uk – if something is not urgent and you would like some advice please get in touch.*  
*Thank you – Russell Stalker cso4965 Alnwick and Rual*  
Members expressed their concern regarding the burglaries. Clerk was asked to thank the Police for their helpful report. **Action: Clerk**
8. **Mid Coquetdale Neighbourhood Plan** There had been local interest in resurrecting the Mid Coquetdale Neighbourhood Plan (NP) and initial talks had been held. In March 2018, the funds allocated for the initial NP were returned to the respective Parish Council's with £453.46 returned to WTPC. The PC had been asked if they wanted to be involved on the new NP development and recontribute the money previously returned. A further exploratory meeting had taken place on Monday 28<sup>th</sup> September which VB attended. Val reported that she had some reservations as to the resurrection of the NP, given the difficulties experienced during the previous attempt and the apparent disregard by the NCC Planning Committee to comments and objections raised, citing the previous draft NP. Val had expressed that if the NP was to be revived then it would need a strong local project lead. Those attending the meeting of 28<sup>th</sup> Sept. had asked her to take on this role. She was undecided as to whether she would be willing to do this. A further meeting was to be held on 19th October which Val will attend. Several members expressed their concerns over the proposal. The Clerk informed the meeting that Longframlington had recently gone through a similar experience but was now well on the way to producing a NP which was led by a small number of enthusiastic and talented volunteers. Also, that the new Head of Planning was on record to say that NPs would have an important role to play in the planning process in Northumberland. The Clerk suggested that he put Val in touch with the project lead in Longframlington who would be able to share with her current knowledge on the development of a NP. Members agreed to this suggestion. This matter to be discussed further when more information is available. **Action: Clerk**
9. **Declaring a climate change emergency.** AW set out the argument for the PC to declare a climate change emergency, given the endless problems across the planet which are having an increasing impact upon our future civilisation. Alan informed the group that there were many PCs across the country who had already declared an emergency, and which could be used to inform the development of our own statement. There was a growing number of councils who were involved in a variety of environmental protection projects across the country. WTPC had themselves already gone a long way with environmental work with their tree planting scheme, which was fixing a large amount of carbon. There may be other activities in which the PC could

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become engaged. Members felt they needed more time and information before they could make a decision on this matter and asked Alan to provide more detail on possible ideas both for a climate declaration and potential projects to be used for a further discussion at the next meeting. Members were asked to give this matter serious thought. **Action: AW/ALL**

**10. Forest Management carried out by Forestry England SA-FM/COC-006972. AW**

In November 2020, the Forestry section of the Soil association would carry out a Forest Stewardship Council: the programme for certification of forest management by Forestry England in the United Kingdom. They had asked PCs for comments and priorities. AW had consulted with John Monaghan who had provided this helpful response to enable the PC to make a reply:

*'If you would like to make comment as a rural PC I think something along the lines of getting the nation to not only 'like' trees but to make the life of the people trying to generate a better tree environment a little easier.*

*1/. Put forestry on an equal footing with farming. I.e. a fair and level support system.*

*2/. To make English forestry on an equal basis with Scottish and Welsh forestry where huge support systems are in place. For a so-called United Kingdom this is not even.*

*3/. Invest in the teaching of forestry skills in our HE network. In recent times there has been closure of teaching courses not expansion.*

*4/. Encourage forest schools and the inculcation of an appreciation of the importance of forestry to the whole community. This should take place at as early a stage as possible. E.g. The Teaching tree programme of the RFS.*

*5/. Encourage the use of timber in housing through changes in planning advice.*

The members agreed to submit John's comments as the contribution from WTPC. **Action: Clerk**

- 11. Community Chest Scheme.** The information on the scheme had been sent to the PC for us to inform community groups, local charities and social enterprise businesses in our local council area who may wish to seek funding. The Scheme was now open for 2020 and full details were available at the following link: <https://www.northumberland.gov.uk/Councillors/Community-Chest.aspx>. The first-round deadline was 2nd October, and a second round would run until the 15th January 2021. The Scheme supported up to 75% of eligible costs up to a maximum of £5,000. However, projects that were specifically related to the Covid-19 pandemic could apply for up to 100%. In recognition of the fact that local council precepts were set before lockdown and the full implications of the pandemic were known, parish councils were able to apply to the Scheme for the first time but only for projects specifically related to the Covid-19 pandemic. Councils could apply for up to 100% of eligible costs up to a maximum of £5,000. The Scheme would support capital costs and one-off hire items. There would be no Countywide budget this year as the focus of the Scheme was local. The Community Chest continued to run with a small grant of up to £200 for young people under 18 years of age to help them achieve an ambition. Members were asked to inform relevant groups or individuals who might benefit from the scheme. **Action: All**

- 12. Correspondence:** Correspondence list had been previously circulated to members. Key items of correspondence had been included within the agenda.

**13. AOB**

- 14. Date of next meeting: Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> December 2020 at 7.00 p.m. on-line**

*The meeting closed at 7.59 p.m.*

**Garth Rhodes**

Clerk

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