

THE PARISH COUNCIL OF WHITTON AND TOSSON

Minutes of the PARISH COUNCIL MEETING 7.00 p.m. Thursday 13th January 2022 Parish Rooms, Rothbury

Present: Hilary Dunn (HD -Chair), Peter Henry (PH), Alan Tait (AT), Fran Tait (FT),
In attendance: Clerk: Garth Rhodes.

1. **Apologies for absence:** None
2. **Minutes of the meeting held on the Thursday 25th November 2021** were reviewed, unanimously approved as a true record and signed as such (proposed FT, seconded PH).
3. **Matters arising from the minutes.** None

New Matters

4. **Highways and Footways Report.** AT Submitted the following report:

Highways Inspection:

- Further re-surfacing work was due to be carried out this week on the Lordenshaw road, but postponed due to Covid related staff shortages. I have been assured that they plan to complete that work in this financial year.
- I have received no response yet from NCC Highways Department regarding the speeding issues along Carterside Road. I will follow this up before the next meeting.
- FT had reported broken glass on Carterside Road near the farm and holiday cottages, but this had been cleared up by the time we returned from the PCC meeting.

Footpaths:

- The Highways Department have not as yet addressed the 18-inch drop at the southern end of the Ladybridge. However, Graham Bucknall has agreed to try to get this improved with a concrete ramp in this financial year.

Verges:

- The council has not yet been able to supply us with suitable hard core to fill the pot holes in the passing places as all the road planings that they have are contaminated with tar, and so are treated as hazardous waste. Wayne Gair is aware that we need some more material and will provide it when suitable material is available.
- The sign at the Lordenshaw road at the east end of Tossion has now been replaced with lettering on both sides.

Drains:

- Work needs to be carried out on various drains and roadside grips. This is particularly problematic along the Tossion Tower Road and all the way down the lane to Weavers Cottage. I plan to get in touch with Mitch Young at the Highways Department to discuss what (if anything) can be done to improve this area.
- Alan Winlow has informed me of another drain that needs to be cleared, which I will do next week.
- Hillary has identified that water draining from the new BMK Bike track flows across the road and has frozen on many nights recently. I will include this in my discussion with Mitch Young.

5. Finance

- i) Receipts since the last meeting. Approved.

06/12/2021	Business Acc. 70103195	Interest 01/09/2021-30/11/2021	0.05
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- ii) Clerk's salary, expenses, PAYE & NI and Other Payments since the last meeting. Approved.

29/11/2021	NCC 861018232062	PC Insurance renewal	175.07
04/12/2021	G Rhodes	Pay & Expenses (Oct-Dec)	227.92
04/01/2021	HMRC	PAYE (Oct-Dec)	53.00
04/01/2021	David Smith	Strimming seating areas (yearly)	120.00
04/01/1900	Thropton PC	Coquet Cluster Fee	13.00
		Total	588.99

- iii) Requests for donations. None

- iv) Bank Reconciliation to 13th January 2022. Approved.

Balance per bank statements at 11th January 2022	Community account	1935.93
	Business Saver	2007.22
		3943.15
Less unpresented cheques		0.00
Uncredited Deposits		0.00
Balance		3943.15
Balance per cash book		3943.15

- v) To agree Budget and Precept y.e. 31st March 2023. The budget and precept of £4659 were approved. See Appendix 1.

Action: Clerk

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6. **Correspondence:** All key issues had been included within the agenda. Members had also received a detailed list of correspondence since the last meeting.
7. **Planning:** To consider any planning applications and planning matters including:

Reference	Address	Status	PC Comments
21/03106/FUL	Mace Convenience Store Townfoot Rothbury: New Co-op	Awaiting decision	Object – see comments in previous minutes
21/03335/FUL 21/03336/LBC	Whitton Grange C181 Whitton Village Whitton	Registered	No objection
21/04383/FUL	Rams Wood- The Pele Tower Whitton: Single detached dwelling and restoration of historic woodland garden	Registered	No Comment - see comments in previous minutes

8. **Police Report.** None. Clerk had omitted to send out request and gave his apologies. He did however send out the last report which arrived late after the November meeting. Agreed to invite the police representative to the next meeting. **Action: Clerk**
9. **Rothbury JBC Report.** A recent tree survey in the cemetery had identified; several trees requiring urgent attention; trees that required action in the future and those needing re-planting. Discussions continue regarding the dissolution of the JBC. One suggestion was to replace the JBC by a sub-committee of Rothbury Parish Council, with representation by each 'member' council. The situation regarding Snitter which has no PC, yet is part of the JBC, complicates negotiations about its future. Clerk advised the meeting that further advice needed to be sought from NCC and NALC before deciding on the dissolution. In the meantime, the current arrangements remain in force.
10. **Impact of Storm Arwen and follow-up actions.** Members expressed their concerns about the follow-up to the storm, particularly regarding the length of time it had taken Northern Powergrid to get power back to residents and businesses. Discussions centred around the lack of preparedness, management and upkeep of power and telephone systems in the area. People were beginning to receive compensation from Northern Powergrid although it was clear that some people would need to follow-up with the company on what compensation was being offered. Following a letter to the Council from AW, Clerk had written to our MP, Anne- Marie Trevelyan outlining our concerns in the wake of Storm Arwen, particularly focussing on the problems of communication and the BT planned withdrawal of the landline telephone system. A response had been received thanking us for the letter expressing our concerns about Openreach's planned switch from analogue to digital. She stated that she was aware of the real worries about what this might mean for customers affected by future power outages. Several people had been in touch already who had been switched to digital and who experienced difficulties as a result of the storm. She recognised these concerns were absolutely valid and needed to be addressed. She had asked Openreach for a meeting to discuss these concerns and was in the process of arranging this for the first week of January 2022. Ofgem had published the terms of reference for the review into the networks' response to Storm Arwen. This can be viewed in full on the Ofgem website – <https://www.ofgem.gov.uk/publications/terms-reference-review-networks-response-storm-arwen>. She agreed to keep The PC informed. NCC had also announced an inquiry into Strom Arwen. They were expected to make their initial report in the Spring and would be inviting residents and organisations to submit their comments.
11. **Whitton and Tosson Parish Council Website - Quarterly Report.** The report was received. It was noted that there had been little activity on the webpage in the last quarter.
12. **Tosson Mill Lane Post-box Upgrade.** After receiving a complaint from a resident that the Victorian post box could not take A4 size packaging Clerk had written to Royal Mail asking for an upgrade. The response was far from customer friendly and said if the box was not upgraded within 25 weeks from the letter it meant our request was not warranted. He had replied saying this was a rather disappointing response which was not very customer friendly or focussed and once again it would appear that people living in rural communities were being treated as second-class citizens. No further reply received. There were two further Victorian post boxes in the parish which also required updating. Members agreed to supply Clerk with details and for him to submit a further request to the Post Office. **Action: HD/AT**
13. **NALC Survey on the relationship with the County Council.** The Chair had completed and submitted the survey which was mainly concerned with the support and attendance of the County Councillor to Parish Council Meetings. Unfortunately, the survey did not enable a response that our County Councillor never attending our meetings.
14. **Any Other Business.**
- i) **Debris on road following Hedge Cutting on roads within the Parish.** The contractor had left lots of branch debris on the roads much of which was thorn bush which was a tyre puncture hazard. AW had asked the contractor about the debris and was told that a road sweeper was following-on to clear up. This had not happened, so he had left a message for Graham Bucknall.
15. **Date of and Venue for next meeting:** **Thursday 31st March at 7.00 p.m. in the Rothbury Church Rooms**
AGM & PC Meeting Thursday 19th May at 7.00 p.m. in the Rothbury Church Rooms

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Appendix 1

Annual Allocation of Income and Expenditure 2021-2022 & BUDGET 2022 -2023							
	2020/21	2021/22	2021/22		2022/23		2022/23
		Actuals to Dec 2021	Est Annual total @ March 2022	Diff	DRAFT Budget	Notes	AGREED Budget
Opening Bank/Cash On Hand	3557.18	3358.92	3358.92	0.00	3251.05		
Precept	5092.00	4250.00	4250.00	0.00	4695.00	Suggested amount to maintain reserve*	
Total Precepted Income	8649.18	7608.92	7608.92	0.00	7946.05		
Other income	0.00			0.00			
Interest	1.43	0.15	0.20	0.05	0.20		
Donations etc.	0.00	0.00		0.00	0.00		
NCC Cemetery Double Charge	25.00	13.00	13.00	0.00	13.00		
Capital Receipts	0.00	0.00		0.00	0.00		
General	0.00	0.00		0.00	0.00		
VAT	0.00	0.00		0.00	0.00		
Total Other income	26.43	13.15	13.20	0.05	13.20		
Total All Income	8675.61	7622.07	7622.12	0.05	7959.25		
Expenditure	0.00			0.00			
Admin Salary (NET)	851.08	603.24	831.00	227.76	900.00	included estimated annual increase	
PAYE	212.60	150.20	203.00	52.80	220.00	"	
Admin expenses	60.00	30.00	60.00	30.00	60.00		
Admin General	175.58	134.46	175.00	40.54	175.00		
Insurance	175.07	175.07	175.07	0.00	185.00	includes estimated annual increase	
Total Administration Expenditure	1474.33	1092.97	1444.07	351.10	1540.00		
Village Amenities Expenditure	0.00						
Maint/ance	120.00	120.00	150.00	30.00	50.00		
Room Hire	0.00	24.00	48.00	24.00	48.00		
Capital Spend	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00		
JBC	3592.36	2429.00	2429.00	0.00	2661.90	Agreed by JBC Dec 2021	
Total Village Amenities Expenditure	3712.36	2573.00	2627.00	54.00	2759.90		
Grant Expenditure	0.00			0.00			
Grants given	130.00	0.00	300.00	300.00	300.00		
S.137	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00		
Total Grants Payable	130.00	0.00	300.00	300.00	300.00		
Total Expenditure	5316.69	3665.97	4371.07	705.10	4599.90		
Total Income less Expenditure	3358.92	3956.10	3251.05	-705.05	3359.35		
Total Income	8675.61	7622.07	7622.12	0.05	7959.25		
Total Expenditure	5316.69	3665.97	4371.07	705.10	4599.90		
	3358.92	3956.10	3251.05	-705.05	3359.35		0.00
Precept for Individual Properties							
	Precept	ITB	Amount Paid				
y.e. 31 March 2022	4250.00	65.65	64.74				
Proposed y.e. March 2023	4695.00	64.73	72.53				
Property increase on previous year	2022	2021	Increase	Monthly	% Increase		
	72.53	64.74	7.79	0.65	12.04%		
ITB: Indicative Tax Base equates to the number of households at Band D after removing those exempted							