



WHITTINGHAM, CALLALY & ALNHAM PARISH COUNCIL

<https://northumberlandparishes.uk/whittingham>

Clerk: Sarah Trushell | whittinghampc29@gmail.com | 07455 004164

MINUTES of the Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council

Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of WCA Parish Council held on Tuesday 17th June 2025, 7:00pm at the Whittingham Memorial Institute Hall.

Present:

Councillors Andrew Whincup (Chairman), Karen Armstrong, Paul Bradley, Jonathan Clark, Stuart Gray, Toni Marsden, James Renner, Brian Wood

Clerk Sarah Trushell

Members of the Public: 5

63/25 Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllrs Bateson, Blackshaw, Bolton and Gardiner

64/25 Declaration of interests.

Cllr Whincup declared an interest in items 69/25(a)

65/25 Public Participation

No members of the public spoke at the meeting.

66/25 Minutes of the Meeting of 20th May 2025

It was noted that at the May meeting, Cllr PB seconded the approval of the April minutes in error, as he was not a member of the Council at the time of the April meeting. The Council resolved to correct this and confirm that the minutes of the April meeting were unanimously approved as a true record.

67/25 Neighbourhood Plan

The Council received an update on the Neighbourhood Plan Working Group meetings held in May and June. Draft Terms of Reference (ToR) prepared by Cllr Blackshaw were discussed at the Working Group, with amendments proposed. It was agreed the ToR and a Steering Group call for residents will be considered for adoption at the July meeting.

The Council noted plans for a parish-wide consultation event in autumn 2025 and agreed in principle to allocate the remaining Neighbourhood Plan budget (£649) for initial costs such as meeting venue hire and consultation materials, subject to formal approval at the July meeting.

68/25 Communication Received

a) Donation Offer and Proposed Purchase of Benches

The Council acknowledged the generous offer of a donation from a resident towards new composite benches in the village, designed to look like wood but offering increased durability.

Councillors discussed whether the £10,000 budget earmarked for village improvements could be used to replace all existing benches at once, noting the need to confirm the total number and locations of benches, arrangements for removal of old benches, and delivery and installation of new ones as a single project.

Signed as a true record of the meeting _____ on Date _____



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The possibility of adding commemorative plaques to one or more benches in recognition of notable local individuals was raised, and councillors agreed to confirm whether any existing benches already have plaques. It was agreed to bring detailed proposals, including costs, logistics, and plaque options, to the next meeting agenda for a decision.

69/25 Community Matters.

a) Path along Riverside

Cllr Whincup reported he will contact County Cllr Bridgett to confirm the planned location for the materials expected to arrive around 1 July 2025. Cllr Whincup will arrange the final placement of materials upon delivery and the Clerk will hold off requesting the invoice until work is ready to commence.

b) Cast Iron Road Signs

The Council agreed to defer this item pending further information from Cllr Gardiner, who will continue investigating restoration options and report back at a future meeting.

c) Bus Shelter

The Council agreed to defer this item to allow Cllr Gardiner to continue investigations.

d) Litter Picking Group

The Council unanimously resolved to formally support the Whittingham Wombles Litter Picking Group, enabling them to be covered under the Parish Council's public liability insurance. No ongoing responsibility will be taken for the group's activities.

e) Litter Bins

The Council discussed informal requests to relocate a litter bin further up Callaly Road. It was agreed to check with Northumberland County Council (NCC) whether they would continue to empty the bin if moved. Cllr PB will provide the Clerk with the geolocation of the suggested new site.

70/25 Parish Council Administration Matters

a) Parish Wide Communication

The Council resolved to proceed with creating a mailing list for parish-wide communication instead of using Google Groups. It was agreed to request a post on the Whittingham Facebook page inviting residents to email the Clerk directly to join the mailing list. The Clerk will manage the mailing list in compliance with GDPR requirements to protect residents' personal data.

b) Other Meeting Locations

The Council discussed the possibility of holding future meetings in Alnham Church to improve accessibility for residents in that part of the parish. It was agreed to carry out a public consultation to gauge local interest and determine whether there is sufficient need or support for holding meetings at this location.

71/25 Governance Documents

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a) Standing Orders

The Council reviewed the draft Standing Orders and resolved to adopt them subject to the amendments confirmed at the meeting.

b) Financial Regulations

The Council reviewed the draft Financial Regulations and resolved to adopt them subject to the amendments confirmed at the meeting.

c) Complaints Policy

It was RESOLVED to adopt the amended policy presented by the Clerk.

d) Reserves Policy

It was RESOLVED to adopt the presented Reserves Policy

h) Risk Register

It was resolved to adopt the Risk Register as presented.

i) Biodiversity Plan

It was AGREED to defer this item.

Suspension of Standing Orders

As the meeting exceeded two hours, it was resolved to suspend Standing Order - 3 to allow business to continue beyond the time limit.

72/25 Financial Matters:

a) Transaction Report

The Transaction Report has been published on the Council's website in accordance with transparency requirements and was circulated at the meeting.

b) Bank Reconciliation

Cllr Renner confirmed that the bank reconciliation had been checked and agreed.

c) Payments for Authorisation

The following payments were APPROVED:

Internal Audit £100

Parish Insurance £397.80

Clerk's travel expenses: £11.88

The Clerk's wages and Working from Home Allowance (£26) were noted as contractually approved and paid in accordance with the Clerk's contract of employment.

d) AGAR

The Council noted the Internal Auditor's report and resolved to approve the Certificate of Exemption, the Annual Governance Statement (Section 1), and the Accounting Statements (Section 2). All documents were signed at the meeting. The proposed dates for the Exercise of Public Rights were also noted.

73/25 Items for Information or Future Agenda

The Clerk noted the recent email from NALC regarding the use of gov.uk email addresses for parish business.

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It was suggested that the Council create a Press and Media Policy to guide communications with the public and local media. This item will be added to a future agenda for discussion.

74/25 Date of next and future meetings (all start at 7pm unless stated otherwise)

15 July 2025

No meeting in August 2025

16 September 2025

21 October 2025

18 November 2025

No meeting in December 2025

Signed as a true record of the meeting _____ *on Date* _____