

THE PARISH COUNCIL OF WHITTON AND TOSSON

Minutes of the PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

7.00 p.m. Tuesday 18th May 2023

Parish Rooms, Rothbury

Present: Hilary Dunn (HD -Chair), Fran Tait (FT), Alan Tait (AT),

In attendance: Clerk: Garth Rhodes.

The meeting opened at 7.00 p.m.

1. **Apologies for absence.** Peter Henry (PH).

2. **Police Report** None received.

3. **Minutes of the meeting held on the Thursday 30th March 2023** were reviewed, unanimously approved as a true record and signed as such (proposed AT, seconded (FT), All in Favour).

4. **Matters arising from the minutes including:**

- Simonside & Forestry England Alex MacLennan (AM) had asked the relevant departments to follow up our various requests. Clerk had asked for an update, but Alex was on leave until 22 May. HD reported that AM had been in touch with the two farmers concerning the repairs to their fencing.
- Thropton Spar Garage Lighting There has been no further response from Rob Murfin, NCC Head of Planning. Clerk had asked him again for an update. Agreed item to remain on agenda until response had been received.

5. **Highways and Footways Report**

Highways Inspection:

- Of the 20 potholes notified to Highways Dept (by the lime kiln, and between the Simonside Car Park and the cattle grid on the way to Lordenshaw) none have been fixed yet. AT to chase NCC for timescales. **Action: AT**

- The large potholes in the Simonside Car Park entrance are the responsibility of Forest England but have yet to be addressed.

Footpaths:

- The footpath signpost at Great Tosson has rotted at the base and needs replacing. AT to draft a letter to be sent to Tony Derbyshire and the Northumberland National Park to ask for this to be repaired. **Action: AT/Clerk**

Verges:

- The potholes in the passing places along Carterside Road have been filled by AT /PH . The deep pothole at the top of Tommy's Lonnen was also filled in (it had been partially repaired by NCC) but the filling has already been pushed out as cars drive over the hole at a greater speed than in the passing places. AT to raise this again with NCC. **Action: AT**

- There has been no feedback about inspecting the wall near the bridge over the Routing Burn. AT to follow up. **Action: AT**

Seats & Road Signs:

- The results of the speed survey in Tosson and Newtown have been received but they show speeds almost entirely below 30 mph. This does not justify any warning signs or speed limits to be introduced.

- Inspection of parish seats have been made. The two on Whitton Bank require attention. The one at the top is repairable and PH/AT have removed to repair and paint in black. The other, halfway down the bank, is beyond repair. AT to investigate cost of replacement with Alnwick Sawmills **Action: AT**

- It was agreed when considering the annual budget to consider setting up a reserve for a replacement noticeboard as its serviceable life was likely to be no more than five years. **Action: Clerk**

Drains:

- Although the drain trench along Lime Kiln Bank has been cleared, the blocked drain gullies have not been cleared yet. AT to chase NCC. **Action: AT**

6. **Finance**

i) Notification of receipts since the last meeting Approved.

04/04/2023	NCC Ref 5188901		Precept First Half	2347.50
06/03/2023	Business Acc. 70103195		Interest	2.49
			Total	2349.99

ii) Approval of Clerk's salary, expenses, PAYE & NI and approval of Other Payments since the last meeting. Approved.

03/04/2023	Rothbury DCC	Parish Church Room Hire	12.00
24/04/2023	N/landALC	NALC Annual Subscription/Website fee	135.25
24/04/2023	Rothbury Parish Council	RJBC payment 1st half	1331.00
		Total	1478.25

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- iii) Requests for donations. Coquetdale Squirrel Group. £25 was approved. **Action: Clerk**
 iv) VAT Reclaim 2022-23 A reclaim of £17.49, paid as VAT for sand & gravel and paint, had been submitted to HMRC.
 v) Bank Reconciliation to 17th May 2022. Approved.

		£
Community account	2401.67	
Business Saver (at 28.02.22)	2011.65	
		4413.32
Less unrepresented Payments	0.00	0.00
Uncredited Deposits	0.00	0.00
Balance		4413.32
Balance per cash book		4413.32

- vi) Annual Governance and Accountability Return for 2022/23
- a) To consider and agree any actions arising from the report of the internal auditor. None
 - b) To agree the 2022/23 Statement of Control. Approved.
 - c) To approve 2022/23 – Certificate of Exemption Approved.
 - d) To approve Sections 1 - Annual Governance Statement; Approved.
 - e) To approve Section 2 - Accounting Statement; Annual Accounts Explanation of Variances; Final End of Year Bank Reconciliation to be submitted with AGAR - Approved
 - f) To agree the period for the Exercise of Public Rights Period to commence on 5th June 2023 and end on 14th July 2023. Approved.
 - g) Annual Insurance Clerk had completed an application to Zurich for the PC insurance cover for the next five years. As this is a group insurance though NCC, this was likely to continue to be the most competitively priced but Clerk to review this when informed of the premium. **Action: Clerk**

7. Planning: To consider any planning applications

Reference	Address	Type/Status	WTPC Comments
23/00585/FUL	Land South West Of Weavers Cottage	Application /Registered	No Objection

8. Rothbury JBC Report. The recent meeting was inquorate and therefore did not go ahead.

9. Coquetdale Cluster Report. AT reported that there were concerns about the proposed removal of the landline telephone system and its impact in the event of an emergency power outage. A meeting with Anne-Marie Trevelyan had been set up to discuss this matter on Friday 23rd June at 2.45 p.m. Cllr Steven Bridgett had attended the Cluster meeting and had reported that he was still pushing for all new mobile masts to have emergency generators installed.

10. Honorary Titles *This item held in camera*

- i) To consider and approve the Policy for Granting Title of the Honorary Freedom of the Parish Approved
- ii) To agree sponsors. It was agreed that FT would act as sponsor for the first nominee and HD for the second.
- iii) To consider the arrangements for Honorary Freedom of the Parish Presentation Ceremony including:
 - a) Nominees. It was agreed that the meeting convened for the purpose of the consideration of nominees would take place immediately before the start of the next PC meeting on 13th July at 7.00 p.m. **Action: FT/HD/Clerk**
 - b) Date of Award Ceremony event. During week 11th- 15th September, dependent upon peoples' and venue availability. **Action: Clerk**
 - c) Venue & refreshments. It was agreed to look into a room (with access to the kitchen) at the Jubilee Hall as the first venue option. **Action: Clerk**
 FT to follow up on refreshment providers and costs. **Action: FT**
 - d) Freedom Scroll. Clerk had identified source for the production of scrolls. Cost for each scroll around £85 plus postage. Clerk to produce mock-up for meeting on 13th July. Turn around for production 7 days. **Action: Clerk**
 - e) Guests. 15 – 20 guests agreed. Each nominee would be allowed 2/3 guests
 - f) Budget. Maximum of £500 for the award ceremony and scrolls

11. Tree Planting Update Alan Winlow had reported that they were getting to the end of the planting for this season. Planting of larch on the wide verge at Newtown Park and apple trees at Carterside Road and the Grand Fir walk had been carried out. Alan to forward a copy of this season's tree-planting sites when completed.

12. Consultation on draft recommendations for division boundaries in Northumberland. The Boundary Commission had issued a consultation on boundary changes and required comments by 10th July. This did not affect Whitton & Tosson, but it was proposed that Brinkburn & Hesleyhurst (BHPC) be moved into Longhorsley Division. A counter suggestion was being considered for Brinkburn to become part of the Rothbury Division. No further action required.

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- 13. Invasive plants along streams and rivers: Northumberland Rivers Trust Project.** The Northumberland Rivers Trust had received funding to actively treat invasive plants along our streams and rivers this summer and autumn. Clerk to forward the information to Alan Winlow for his advice/action. **Action: Clerk**
- 14. Any Other Business**
- a. Local Transport Plan Capital Programme 2024-25 NCC were requesting PCs to submit their three LTP priorities by 28th July, which was much earlier than usual. To be agreed at the next meeting in July.
- 15. Date for the next Parish Council Meeting and agree dates and venue of meetings for the next 12 months.**
- 13 July 2023
 - 21 September 2023
 - 23 November 2023
 - 11 January 2024
 - 21 March 2024
 - 16 May 2024

All at 7.00 p.m. in the Rothbury Parish Rooms

Their being no further business the meeting closed at 8.52 p.m.

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