

THE PARISH COUNCIL OF WHITTON AND TOSSON

UNCONFIRMED Minutes of the Virtual PARISH COUNCIL MEETING held on 18th June 2020 at 7.00pm at Zoom 846-8448-6382

Present: Hilary Dunn (HD -Chair), Alan Winlow (AW -Vice Chair), Fran Tait (FT)

In attendance: Alan Tait (parish resident). Clerk: Garth Rhodes

1. **Apologies for absence.** Val Burwood (VB). Peter Henry (PH).
2. **Minutes of the meeting held on the 3^{0th} April 2019** 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) Highways and Footways Report. AW made the following report:
 - Highways:
 - Pothole in the road up-hill from the Lime Kiln car park towards Tosson. This is located at the side of the road just below Tosson adjacent to a gully.
 - There are several potholes in the Tosson to Lordenshaw road between the parish council seat and the cattle grid. Most of them are either near the seat or the entrance to the FE car park.
 - Preparation for the resurfacing of the road through Tosson and the road up to Tosson continues. The scheme is being designed by a NCC engineer.
 - The three fence posts supporting the rails and safety markers alongside the cattle grid on the Tosson to Lordenshaw road have rotted through at ground level – the fence is in a fragile state and only supported by the gate post of the gate for animals by passing the grid.
 - Footpaths:
 - Waymarkers replaced on Whitton Hillhead bridleway – the post is in need of replacing. This has been reported to the Footpaths officer and the land tenant.
 - Waymarkers replaced at gate at the edge of the Duke’s wood close to the Tosson to Lordenshaw road cattle grid.
 - Verges:
 - The wall alongside the Carterside road at the unofficial passing place close to the Tosson road junction remains in an unstable condition. NCC to create an official passing place to minimise forces from vehicles pulling off the road
 - Seats & Road Signs:
 - We have identified a road signage issue for Silverton Lane to be included in the next LTP proposals. (Possible signage for ‘Single Track Road with Passing Places’ and ‘Not suitable for HGV’s’)
 - The Cattle Grid sign on the Tosson to Lordenshaw road is missing and needs replacing.
 - The seat located on the Tosson to Lordenshaw road needs re-staining.
 - Drains:
 - Entrances to pipes under Carterside road & entrance to Lime Kiln car park road checked and both are in working order. The latter ditch has a large branch lying in it close to the entrance to the pipe under the entrance road and this needs to be removed. I will remove it when next in the area.
 - AW has submitted relevant reports to the appropriate authorities.
 - ii) Whitton wastewater improvements and associated road closure. The road up to Great Tosson was now open but the road from Great Tosson to Whitton remained closed. However. Residents did have access to their properties.
 - iii) Local Electricity Bill. The Local Electricity Bill had been successfully introduced, following its presentation to government under the Ten-Minute Rule on 10 June. It was unopposed in Parliament, and introduced without a vote. Should it now pass into law, it would allow consumers to purchase energy from local groups, and not just nationally licensed utilities. As such, the new ‘Right to Local Supply’ for energy would allow communities to sell locally generated electricity directly to local households and businesses.
4. Matters arising
 - i) Update on the impact of the Coronavirus on Parish Council business and any changes in operation as restrictions are eased. NorthumberlandALC provide the following advice:
 - a. “The advice from Govt. was that businesses should continue to work from home wherever possible and legal restrictions on gatherings remained in place. In essence this meant that there should not be physical meetings for parish, town or community councils.”
 - b. “The national NALC and BHIB Councils Insurance had produced a new guide on risk assessment for COVID-19. The guide features guidance and information to help make risk assessments and directs to

THE PARISH COUNCIL OF WHITTON AND TOSSON

useful resources from the government and the Health and Safety Executive, with specific details on how to adapt your risk assessments for COVID-19..” The risk assessment template was very comprehensive and related mainly to councils who had offices, a workforce of more than one, public amenities. There was little that is relevant to WTPC being such a small parish. The key issue for WTPC was that guidance was for on-line meetings continue for the foreseeable future. Members agreed not to undertake a limited Covid-19 risk assessment at this time but to monitor the situation in an on-going manner.

- ii) Maintenance of the Parish Council Noticeboard. AW reported that the noticeboard was in need of some maintenance and varnishing. Alan Tait volunteered to do this. Members expressed their thanks to Alan.

5. Finance

Receipts since the last meeting were agreed:

02/03/2020	Business Acc. 70103195	Interest 02/12/2019 -01/03/2020	0.56
------------	------------------------	---------------------------------	------

- i) Clerk’s salary, expenses, PAYE & NI and Other Payments were approved:

06/05/2020	N/land Association of Local Councils	Subs (73.39) Website Fee (75.00)	148.39
06/05/2020	Coquetdale Lunch Club	Donation	30.00
06/05/2020	Rothbury Parish Council	WPTC JBC Proportion First Half	1796.00
18/06/2020	Garth Rhodes	Salary & Expenses (Apr/May/Jun)	222.36
18/06/2020	HMRC	PAYE (Apr/May/Jun)	51.60
		Total	2248.35

- ii) Requests for donations. None

- iii) Bank Reconciliation to 18th June 2020 was approved

Balance per bank statements at 28 May 2020	Current account		£	£
		Savings Account		
				2006.15
				4154.35
Less unpresented cheques	Garth Rhodes	Salary & Expenses (Apr/May/Jun)	222.36	
	HMRC	PAYE (Apr/May/Jun)	51.60	
				273.96
Uncredited Deposits				0.00
Total				3880.39
Balance per cash book				3880.39

- iv) To agree Reserves 2020-21. Having checked that the balance carried forward at 31st March 2020 of 2021.01 was less than twice the amount received in Precept £1500 (less JBC amount), in accordance with the JPAG Guidelines, there was no need to agree specific reserves.

- v) Annual Governance and Accountability Return for 2019/20.

- a. To consider and agree any actions arising from the report of the internal auditor. There were no outstanding issues identified by the internal auditor who had completed and signed the Annual Internal Audit report.

The following were approved:

- b. The Annual Statement of control
c. Sections 1 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return - Annual Governance Statement.
d. Section 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return - Accounting Statement.
e. Explanation of Variances and Final End of Year Bank Reconciliation
f. Certificate of Exemption
g. Period for the Exercise of Public Rights from Friday 28th June – Friday 7th August 2020

The documents to be signed by the Chair and Clerk/RFO and Certificate of Exemption to be forwarded to the External Auditor. Clerk to post Notice of Public Rights, AGAR and accounts on Parish Webpage and forward to AW to post on Parish Noticeboard.

THE PARISH COUNCIL OF WHITTON AND TOSSON

vi) Insurance Cover. Whilst Public Liability insurance was not compulsory all organisations were exposed to some risk and insurance allowed the PC to have some degree of certainty around its finances. Having an employee required the Council to have insurance in accordance with the Employers' Liability (Compulsory Insurance) regulations 2008. 2. The PC was able to participate in the scheme handled by the County Council currently with Zurich. The premium under the policy remained unaltered for 2020/21 at £175.07 p.a. including Insurance Premium Tax for the full cover available including Employers Liability insurance. Property in excess of the standard £250 where additional premium would apply dependant of the type of property. There would be a £100 excess on each item. The policy ran from the 1st June 2020 and a proposal form. I have full details of the policy needed to be completed. There are 18 small parishes who are currently insured by this scheme including most of the small parishes in this area. The following insurances were included in the package:

- Public Liability
- Libel & slander
- Fidelity Guarantee: (This is cover which protects an organisation against the loss of money and/or property which you may suffer by a dishonest or fraudulent act by an employee or volunteer.)
- Personal Accident cover for Members and Volunteers
- Loss of Money
- Loss of material property up to £250 (can be increased for additional premium).
- Employers Liability (optional depending on whether you have any employees).

It was agreed to take out the insurance with the NCC/Zurich scheme.

Action: Clerk

vii) Banking issues including:

- a. Bank's response to letter sent by PC. The change of address for the bank account had taken place, however the bank has made no response to the request for the Clerk to have on-line access, other than the standard information regarding on-line access. Clerk to pursue access to accounts on-line by following procedure for requesting on-line banking. **Action: Clerk**
- b. Interest rate change. We have been informed that the interest rate on the Savings account will reduce from 0.1% to 0.01% on 24th July.

6. **Planning:** There were no new or current planning applications or planning matters.

7. **Correspondence.** To consider any key issues of correspondence. *Correspondence List has been circulated*

- a. Coquetdale Lunch Club. A letter of thanks for our donation of £30 had been received
- b. New model code of conduct consultation. *The Local Government Association (LGA) had launched a consultation on a new model member code of conduct. HD had scrutinised the document and believed there was little within the code which was relevant to WTPC. She hoped that the Council operated in an open and supported manner and that if anyone had concerns that they would feel safe to raise them. This was agreed by all in attendance. No further action was agreed.*

c. Police Report

- i. Whitton & Tosson Report. The clerk read out the main points from this report. Incidents reported in our area: 20 Crimes. 1 theft of phone, Simonside Car Park (visitor). Most incidents related to breaches of C19 guidance, in the Simonside area. Police working with the Northumberland National Parks, Forestry Commission and Northumberland Fire and Rescue, carrying out patrols and speaking to visitors. A few incidents where police had to advise people to return home due to breaching restrictions. Two reports of BBQs being lit in the area from Northumberland Fire Service. Police have stopped visitors and advised them not to use BBQ'S/ smoke cigarettes etc. due to fire risk. A lot more visitors to the area due to restrictions being lifted. Clerk to circulate full report. **Action: Clerk**

- ii. General Police Update from Police Community Support sent to all local parish councils. 'This is just a quick update and to check in with the parish councils on our foot beat. Please feel free to forward this to anyone who may be interested. We are still sending out email updates to individual parishes during the pandemic. We understand some of the original meeting dates that were planned may have changed. Please keep us up to date so we can send out updates accordingly.

Over the past few months, we have been responding to hundreds of calls relating to breach of covid19 guidelines. We would like to thank all of the residents who have reported these issues during this uncertain time to ensure everyone's safety.

We also have two operations running – OP RATIO/OP DETERENCE. This involves us patrolling local beauty hotspots, in partnership with Northumberland National Parks/Forestry commission/Fire Service, such as Simonside/Thrunton, Fontburn and many other locations due to concerns regarding overnight camping, large groups gathering and risk of fires due to BBQs. Patrolling premises such as industrial estates, post offices, pubs, shops and other locations vulnerable to break ins with a number of vehicles being

THE PARISH COUNCIL OF WHITTON AND TOSSON

stopped/checked. An incident of note being an attempted theft at Rothbury on 19th May whereby we quickly located the vehicle/persons involved who were arrested and vehicle seized. Despite this demand we have continued to carry out speed checks, particularly in the areas of Longframlington and Powburn where complaints have been high. Any concerns please ring 101 or contact us online <https://beta.northumbria.police.uk/contact-us/> .We look forward to attending your meetings in the near future, Thanks, Russell Stalker CSO4965 Alnwick Police Station'

8. **AOB** - None
9. **Date of next meeting: Thursday 20th August 2020**

Garth Rhodes
Clerk

5 Wardle Terrace, Longframlington, NE65 8AB

Tel: 01665 570347

Email: whittonandtossontparishcouncil@gmail.com