



THE PARISH COUNCIL OF WHITTON AND TOSSON

Minutes of the PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
7.00 p.m. Thursday 20th March 2025
Parish Rooms, Rothbury

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

The meeting opened at 7.00 p.m.

1. **Apologies for absence.** None.
2. **Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Thursday 16th January 2025** were reviewed, unanimously approved as a true record and signed as such (Proposed AT, Seconded (FT), All in Favour).
3. **Matters arising from the minutes not included in the agenda.** None.
4. **Police Report.** No report received.
5. **Highways and Footways.** AT reported:
 - i) Highways:
 - The large pothole East of Carterside Farm has been repaired.
 - The pothole at the entrance to Tommy's Lonnen has been reported, but it is growing larger by the day. The day after our meeting the pothole had been filled.
 - Two smaller potholes have appeared near Carterside Farm and will be notified shortly.
 - The potholes reported near Little Tosson are still not fixed.
 - ii) Footpaths:
 - No issues with footpaths have been reported
 - iii) Verges:
 - Verges on local roads have been impacted by the wet weather and the heavy vehicles using the roads (farm vehicles and delivery lorries for building works). The recent warmer and drier weather should mitigate these problems.
 - iv) Seats & Road Signs:
 - PH has bought 2 benches from the sawmill in order to replace the one removed from Whitton Village and on Whitton Bank. I have painted these, and waiting for them to dry before arranging deployment.
 - v) Drains:
 - The drains have been checked and cleared again with no significant problems.
 - There is some concern over Tosson Bank where the water runs over the road and freezes. The culvert at the top of Tosson Bank was inspected and found to be clear and working, but water is now coming through the tarmac. To be checked and reported.
 - The sandbags for the winter have now been purchased and stored in the dry basement of Weavers Cottage. We have not needed to deploy these during this winter.
 - The drain at the top of Whitton Bank has been cleared and the sludge used to guide the water into the drain. The overflow pipe in the drinking trough has been cleared, and the water no longer flows along the road.

6. **Finance**

- i) Notification of receipts since the last meeting. Approved.

03/03/2025	Barclays A/C 70103195	Interest	7.28
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- ii) Approval of Clerk's salary, expenses, PAYE & NI and approval of Other Payments since the last meeting. Approved

20/01/2025	Rothbury DCC	Hire Parish rooms	12.00
20/01/2025	Thropton Parish Council	Cluster Fee	13.70
20/01/2025	G Rhodes (reimbursement)	Just the Job - Sand bags	22.92
		Total	48.62

- iii) Requests for donations. None.

- iv) Bank Reconciliation. Approved.

Bank Reconciliation at 17th March 2025		£
Balance per bank statement Community account 29/02/2025		1490.23
Balance per E- bank statement Business Saver 17/03/2025		<u>2066.06</u>
		3556.29
Less unrepresented cheques		0.00
Uncredited Deposits		0.00
Balance		3556.29
Balance per cash book		3556.29

7. **Planning:**

- i) To consider any planning applications

<u>Reference</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>Status</u>	<u>Parish Council Comments</u>
4/04127/VARYCO	Rams Wood Whitton Northumberland	Application Registered	This application is for a historic site within the Whitton Conservation area. All developments within the site need to meet ecological regulations and be sympathetic to this conservation status.

Clerk had written to Planning to report that the Council had received very disturbing reports from residents that work had already been undertaken to clear the pond at this site, and which had seriously disturbed frogs, newts, and other fauna. The application was still under consideration by Planning. He asked if permission been given to allow such work to proceed and if not, what action was being taken? A response from the Planning Officer informed him that the new owner had submitted new ecological documents which included detail on the removal of additional trees and other ecological aspects but that there was conflicting information in the documents provided. Also, the applicant wanted to change the design of the house. Further information was awaited from the applicant before a final decision on the application was made. On the advice of the Planning Officer, the Clerk had submitted a report to Planning Enforcement to outline our very serious concerns about this development.

- ii) Ryehill - Woodland Creation Planning Grant Stage 2 stakeholder consultation (NU018003). HD declared an interest in this application and took no part in the discussion or decision. The members gave their unanimous support for this application. **Action: Clerk**

8. **Community Flood Plan** including:

- iii) Flood defence improvements at Ryehill. AW had reported that the NCC civil work was now complete, and he had thanked the team and the contractors for the work completed. The site was in much better shape to withstand future floods. AW proposed to keep a supply of sand/sandbags available for possible use during floods, as there were one or two low points that may need attention if the water was very high. The other job to do was to scour the upstream banks of the burn and the low-lying area close to the culverts to remove all loose branches and timber where the water would pond during floods. NCC had chosen not to fit a screen in front of the culverts due to the additional cost. The spiling work remained to be done, and this was to start within the next week. It was agreed to send a letter of thanks to Martin Snaith thanks for his vital role in the flood prevention work, for organising and paying for the JCB for the community part of the job and supplying the rocks and soil for the bank. **Action: Clerk**
- iv) Flood Signage at Cow Haugh. Graham Bucknall, NCC Highways had informed the Clerk that the signs were currently under construction. He would inform us when they would be ready for erection to arrange a joint site visit with AW/Clerk to agree exact locations for the signs.

9. **Rothbury JBC Report**

- i) Shed to be built in the Spring
 ii) Drainage works ongoing.
 iii) Five-Yearly Electrical Testing passed.

10. **Coquetdale Cluster Report** Next meeting on 1st April 2025.

11. **Parish Council Election 1st May 2025**

- iv) Nomination papers had been received and completed by members. To be submitted to the Elections team for final checking and submission on Tuesday 25th March 2025. **Action: Clerk**
- v) Election Costs. The NCC Estimate of Election Costs which advised the PC to use its information to ascertain whether WTPC needed to consider such costs within the Precept, was received only 2 days before the precept request had to be submitted. Clerk had sent an email on behalf of the Chairs of Longframlington, Brinkburn & Hesleyhurst and Whitton & Tossion PCs setting out their concerns about the late arrival of this information. No response as yet received.
- vi) Notice of Election has been posted on the PC Notice Board.

12. **Annual Parish Council Meeting Arrangements 15th May 2025**. The same format as previous years to be followed with the Annual meeting preceding the PC meeting.

13. **BT Digital Roadshow 17th April 2025**. A drop-in session from BT to be held on 17th of April between 10:00 and 16:00 at the Jubilee Hall to help residents with questions about the Digital Switchover.

14. **Mobile Phone Coverage Survey**. A survey was being conducted by the iNorthumberland team into mobile phone coverage across the County: <https://nland.uk/mobile25>. The mast on Ryehill had yet to be connected to mains electricity.

15. **Any Other Business**

- i) **Parish Representatives on the Northumberland National Park Authority (NNPA)**. Noted.

16. **Date of Annual Parish Council Meeting followed directly by the next Parish Council Meeting: Thursday 7.00 p.m. 15th May 2025 in the Rothbury Parish Rooms.**

Meeting closed at 8.13 p.m.

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