

PLENMELLER WITH WHITFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Annual Parish Meeting on

Monday, 16th May 2022

at Whitfield

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Following the slow winding down of the pandemic it was good to be able to start to return to normal with regular meetings held face to face in person.

The main noteworthy points to record during the year were as follows:

1. Haltwhistle & District Joint Burial Board:

The Council in principle supported the withdrawal of Melkridge Council from the Burial Board if this was legally permissible and cost free other than the resulting percentage share increase for our Council of the Burial Board precept, which was thought to be a total of c. £50-£100.

2. Local Transport Plan:

- a. The promised widening of the C322 from the junction at Fell House to the Haltwhistle turn off seemed to be in some doubt due to the estimated cost of £1M. Councillors were still keen to see this work done even if this had to happen in stages over a number of years.
- b. Some re-surfacing of the road from Whitfield village to the school has been carried out.
- c. Highways agreed to a slow sign being positioned before the corner below The Laws but are delaying this until the resurfacing has been carried out.

3. Financial:

The financial affairs of the Council have remained satisfactory during the year. The Precept was increased to £2,750 for 2022-23.

Some issues with malfunctioning of the speed signs were experienced during the year and Unipart serviced all 3 at a cost of c. £350 + VAT.

e. Records:

The Clerk kindly scanned three boxes of Council Minutes and deposited the originals at Woodhorn County Archive.

f. The Duke of Edinburgh:

A condolence card from the Parish was sent to HM The Queen following the death of The Duke of Edinburgh and £50 donated to The Duke of Edinburgh Charity Scheme. On a happier note Councillors agreed to purchase, along with other local parishes, Jubilee mugs to commemorate Her Majesty's Platinum Jubilee. These will be handed out to the children at Whitfield School.

g. Vacancy:

There remains a vacancy for a Councillor to replace Councillor Marion Sowler.

Lastly as always, very many thanks to Councillor Hutchinson for all his help and support to the Parish and many thanks too to our Clerk Susan Saunders for her continuing efficiency in keeping us up and running so effectively.

4. Risk Assessment and Internal Audit Assessment:

The assessments were carried out with no alterations required.

5. Planning:

During the year Councillors supported an application for a single storey wooden structure in the Spinney next to Whitfield school for outdoor learning for the pupils. There were various other applications during the year none of which were considered contentious.

6. Other Matters:

Amongst the other matters considered by the Council during the year the most noteworthy were:

a. Motor Cycles:

The police had come out during the year and carried out speed testing but only during the week and not at weekends when bike numbers were significant. It was felt that bike numbers had dropped off somewhat during the year and it was agreed that if they increased Councillor Hutchinson would request a police presence.

b. Plenmeller Speed Limit:

This was requested during the year but has not yet been agreed by NCC. In the meantime Councillor Hutchinson has kindly promised to provide a flashing speed sign to help slow traffic down through the village.

c. War Memorial:

After discussion amongst themselves and consultation with Whitfield with Ninebanks PCC, Councillors voted to take on responsibility for insuring and maintaining the Parish War Memorial at Holy Trinity Church.

d. Parish Repairs:

The Parish bench at The Elk's Head is in need of repair and quotes are being sought by the Clerk. The noticeboard will be repainted during the summer.