

At a Meeting of  
**WHORLTON AND WESTWICK  
PARISH COUNCIL**  
On Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> May 2024 at 6:30pm

**Present:** Cllr George Stastny (Chair), Cllr M. Saville, Cllr I. Pollock,  
Cllr S. Dickinson, Cllr T. Honeyman,

**Also Present:** C Simpson, B Ramsey, M Lockyear, A Long (Residents)

**Clerk:** Alan Dixon

**27/24 Representation by residents**

Amanda Long notified Councillors that the Vicar will advertise the cemetery in the church e-letter and suggested an advert on the church noticeboard. Amanda has spoken to John Richardson about the track leading down to the Village Garden and a letter from Mr Richardson was received by the Clerk. She informed Councillors that Mr Richardson had offered to donate snow drops and primroses to plant in the cemetery. The grass in the cemetery has been cut nearly every week. Chairman thanked Amanda and her father for their work in maintaining the cemetery.

Cherry Simpson made Councillors aware that she had written to the Clerk and wished to raise a number of concerns including she believed that the Parish Council should be more aware of which properties fall within the boundaries of Whorlton and Westwick Parish Councils. A planning application had been missed dated January 2022 at East Shaws. Miss Simpson gave Councillors a brief history of the track going down to the Village Garden and stated that she did not believe a public right of way should be made through the village garden area but thought the current right of way could be improved. Cherry also raised concerns about the netting being used by the contractors repairing Whorlton bridge as it might be harmful to birds and bats and asked whether any checks were being made.

RESOLVED: Clerk to create a poster to advertise the Parish Council cemetery to be placed on the church noticeboard. The Clerk to provide a map showing the boundaries of the Parish Councils showing the individual properties. Clerk to forward weekly planning application email from Durham County Council to Councillors stating whether there are any relevant planning applications each week.

**28/24 Apologies & Interests**

Apologies: Cllr N Fox

Interests: Councillor Pollock declared an interest in the second planning application. Councillor Saville declared an interest in the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> planning applications.

**29/24 Minutes of Meeting 21st March 2024**

RESOLVED: that the minutes be approved.

**30/24 Whorlton Parish Council Cemetery update**

Two further burial plots have been reserved since the last meeting. The Clerk has been informed by the Neighbourhood Warden that signs have been installed around the cemetery asking walkers to pick up after their dogs.

Clerk made Councillors aware that he had asked for quotes to produce a webpage to advertise the cemetery and had also asked that the cemetery be included on the list of cemeteries run by the County, Town and Parish Councils within County Durham.

Amanda Long mentioned that there may be old timber available from the repair of Whorlton bridge and this could be used to make a bench which could be placed on the wall next to the play area.

RESOLVED: Clerk to liaise with Amanda Long about the purchase of bulbs for the cemetery if a grant from DCC is available. Clerk to contact Volker Laser to see if any timber is available to create a seat.

**31/24 Repair of Whorlton bridge**

Chairman reported that scaffolding has been taken down but felt progress was extremely slow.

[Whorlton Bridge refurbishment updates - Durham County Council](#)

**32/24 Speeding traffic**

Chairman informed Councillors that the traffic calming work has now been completed. Mr Lockyear, a new resident to the village who lives opposite the junction at the end of the road coming from Westwick felt that the new traffic calming measures are ineffective and a change in the speed limits would be better. Several traffic calming measures have been investigated in the past but have been turned down by the Highways Department at Durham County Council.

RESOLVED: Chairman asked the Clerk to contact the Highways Department to thank the County Council for their effort but it is disappointing that the outcome of the traffic calming measures is ineffective.

**33/24 Signs Mount Eff Road.**

Clerk has contacted DCC asking for an update and was told it is with the Roads and Highways Team. They may be waiting for signs to be ordered in. Clerk stated that the signs need to be installed as a matter of urgency as large busses are using the road and get stuck at the junction in Westwick.

RESOLVED: Chairman asked the Clerk to follow this up.

**34/24 Grass cutting – parish paths**

The grass cutting on the village has been delayed due to the amount of rainfall during April. There has been very little time for the grass to dry out so it can be cut without leaving large clumps of grass on the green. The grass has now been cut twice. The new contractor is also cutting / strimming the path from St Marys Church diagonally across the field.

The Chairman informed Councillors about a problem with the footpath going across the field which is part of Grafts farm. As this path is sometimes overgrown due to crops the Clerk was asked to look into the cost of getting the path diverted. The cost of diversion would be approximately £3000 which could not be funded by the County Council as it is the responsibility of the landowner to keep the path clear. Councillor Dickinson informed Councillors that part of the Teesdale Way, the path that goes past Grafts farm has fallen away

and is no longer viable. The previous Parish Council Clerk Jonathan Dickinson has been in contact with Durham County Council to make them aware of this. Some sections are less than 1m wide and are only passable with care.

RESOLVED: Councillors agreed to wait to hear the outcome of the communications between Mr Dickinson and the County Council which should be communicated to the Parish Council.

**35/24 Tenders for works. Monitoring of the work. Costs and quality verses the quote**

Mark Tully informed the Clerk that at the time the difference in the price between the 200l water butt and the 110l slimline water butt was £6 and was discussed with the Parish Council Chairman. The 200l water butt would have covered too much of the path and the water butt also covers the manhole cover.

RESOLVED: The water butt is adequate and is being used. Councillor Honeyman felt that the Parish Council should learn from this and in future pay more attention to the detail. The Parish Council now uses various sites to get quotes so that reliance is no longer placed on one contractor to carry out whatever work is needed.

**36/24 Access to Village Garden**

A lease was agreed between Mr Richardson and the Parish Council in 2010 for access to a caravan on the Village Garden. Once the caravan was removed access was no longer required and the lease was no longer needed after 2013.

RESOLVED: Chairman to look at documents relating to the Village Garden so that the letter from John Richardson can be responded to.

**37/24 Redevelopment of Whorlton Hall**

Councillors discussed the proposed change in the application which is the preferred option of the County Council. Councillors agree that it is not an improvement on the original planning application.

RESOLVED: Councillors agree with the application in principle but consider the new proposed layout far too mean and a terrible design. Clerk to make a further comment to Durham County Council.

**38/24 Grant for bulbs**

Clerk contacted Durham County Council to ask whether any grants are available to buy bulbs for the entrance to the village an or the cemetery and is awaiting a reply.

**39/24 Round bench on the village green**

Gravel has been spread to stabilise the legs on the bench.

RESOLVED: Councillors agreed that further work may be needed to stabilise the bench in the future.

**40/24 Diversion of the footpath at Grafts Farm**

Chairman informed Councillors about a problem with the footpath going across the field which is part of Grafts farm. As this path is sometimes overgrown due to crops the Clerk was asked to look into the cost of getting the path diverted. The cost of diversion would be approximately £3000 which could not be funded by the County Council as it is the responsibility of the landowner to keep the path clear. Councillor Dickinson informed Councillors that part of the Teesdale Way, the path that goes past Grafts farm has fallen away

and is no longer viable. The previous Parish Council Clerk Jonathan Dickinson has been in contact with Durham County Council to make them aware of this. Some sections are less than 1m wide and are only passable with care.

RESOLVED: Councillors agreed to wait to hear the outcome of the communications between Mr Dickinson and the County Council which should be communicated to the Parish Council.

#### **41/24 Gazebo for Village Association open gardens day 9<sup>th</sup> June**

RESOLVED: Councillors agreed to allow a gazebo to be erected on the village green for the day.

#### **40/24 Planning applications arising at late notice.**

##### **Replace 2 no. windows to front**

7 Grange Terrace Whorlton Barnard Castle DL12 8UY

Ref. No: DM/24/00600/LB | Received: Mon 04 Mar 2024 | Validated: Wed 10 Apr 2024 | Status: Pending Consideration

##### **Alteration to roof line and single storey extension**

Beckridge Whorlton Barnard Castle DL12 8XQ

Ref. No: DM/24/00563/FPA | Received: Thu 29 Feb 2024 | Validated: Mon 08 Apr 2024 | Status: Pending Consideration

##### **Installation of air source heat pump and solar panels to roof**

Close Cottage Westwick Road Westwick Barnard Castle DL12 8UP

Ref. No: DM/24/00654/LB | Received: Mon 11 Mar 2024 | Validated: Fri 26 Apr 2024 | Status: Pending Consideration

##### **Installation of air source heat pump and solar panels to roof**

Close Cottage Westwick Road Westwick Barnard Castle DL12 8UP

Ref. No: DM/24/00568/FPA | Received: Thu 29 Feb 2024 | Validated: Fri 26 Apr 2024 | Status: Pending Consideration

RESOLVED: Councillors neither agreed with nor objected to the above planning application.

#### **41/24 Financial Statement and report**

A Receipt and Payments Account dated 30<sup>th</sup> April, 2024 was reviewed by Councillors. The Clerk informed Councillors that he has submitted Form 126 to reclaim VAT to HM Revenue & Customs. Clerk informed Councillors that Allen Sykes had agreed to act as Internal

Auditors in relation to AGAR.

Payment of the following invoices was agreed by Councillors:-

250 – Clerk Salary – April 2024	£ 293. 33
251 - Clerk Salary – May 2024	£ 293. 33
252 - Whorlton VHA	£ 108. 00
253 - CDALC	£ 42. 07
254 - SLCC	£ 76. 00
255 - Zurich Insurance	£ 419. 85
256 - A R Toward	£ 310. 00
257 - ICCM	£ 100. 00
258 - Wordpress	<u>£ 19. 20</u>
Total	<u>£1661. 78</u>

RESOLVED: All financial matters agreed as being correct. Councillors approved the 2023/24 Annual Governance Statement and Accounting Statements, and they were signed by the Clerk and Chairman. Councillors agreed to continue using Zurich as the Parish Council Insurer. In line with the new financial regulations the bank statements have been checked against the accounting statements by a Councillor other than one of the cheque signatories. Councillors asked whether the amounts relating to the Cemetery should be shown separately and requested the Clerk contact the external auditor regarding this matter

#### **42/24 Clerks correspondence**

##### **Check of playground equipment by RoSPA**

Clerk informed Councillors that the playground will be checked in June by RoSPA which is required for insurance purposes.

#### **43/24 Members Reports**

##### **Broken manhole cover**

Councillor Honeyman asked the Clerk to contact BT about a broken manhole opposite his house.

##### **Date for the next Parish Council Meeting:**

RESOLVED: The date of the next ordinary meeting is 18<sup>th</sup> July 2024.

There being nothing further to discuss, the meeting closed at 8: 08 pm.

18<sup>th</sup> July 2024, Chairman .....