

Whalton Parish Council

Draft Minutes of the Meeting held at 7.30pm on Wednesday 10 May 2023

- 1) **Present:** Parish Councillors Nicola Robson (Chair), Andy Shaw, Anne Lennard, Martin Grix and Marlene Young
- 2) **In attendance:** Peter Ware (Clerk)
- 3) **Apologies for absence:** County Councillor Lyle Darwin, Stephen Trobe
- 4) **Election of Chair and Vice Chair:** Cllr Robson tendered her resignation so members agreed to rotate the Chair on a meeting-to-meeting basis for the foreseeable future. Cllr Lennard was elected Chair for the next meeting with Cllr Trobe presumed to continue as Vice-Chair, in his absence, to enable Council business to continue. Clerk to follow up.
- 5) **Public Questions & Participation:** there were none
- 6) **Declarations of interests and the grant of dispensations:** there were none
- 7) **The Annual Governance and Accountability Return for 2022/23**
 - a) Members noted the comments of the Internal Audit Report
 - b) Members approved the Annual Governance Statement
 - c) Members approved the Accounting Statement and the Explanation of Variances for 2022/23
 - d) Members confirmed and approved the Certificate of Exemption
 - e) Members confirmed the bank reconciliation as at 31st March 2022/23
- 8) **Report from the Police:** No report received; however, Cllr Shaw agreed to follow up the new contact details, given a recent spate of farming Sat Nav thefts in the surrounding areas.
- 9) **Report from the County Councillor:** No report received; however, County Cllr Darwin contacted the Clerk so he could get up to speed on parish matters.
- 10) **Minutes of the meeting held on 15th March 2023** were agreed as a true record and was signed by the Chair.
- 11) **Any matters arising from the minutes if not minuted elsewhere:**
 - a) Parish Noticeboard – Clerk to contact Cllr Trobe to get update on progress.
 - b) Whalton defibrillator – Clerk to contact Cllr Trobe about getting hold of the defibrillator owner manual or model number, so that it can be checked weekly.
- 12) **Planning Matters**
 - a) 22/04724/FUL Beresford Arms South Side Whalton – members were originally consulted on 10th January 2023 (without comment, in the absence of a clerk) and the application is now due to be heard at the Local Area Council – Castle Morpeth on 15th May 2023. Members were generally supportive of the application and had no objections. Clerk to feedback comments to the CMLAC via County Cllr Darwin.

In addition, whilst searching through old e-mails the clerk confirmed

- b) 22/03365/FUL Cluanie Whalton, ground floor extension with replacement windows – permission granted 23rd December 2022
- c) 23/00562/FUL Close House B6542 North Trewick Junction to Whalton, 2 storey extension and roof alterations – consulted on 17 February 2023 (Without comment, in the absence of a clerk) and application refused 21st April 2023
- d) 23/00242/LBC Beanley Cross Whalton, erect porch to gable of main house and construction of barn on site of previous field shelter – consulted on 27 January 2023 but the record no longer appears on the NCC planning portal.

e) 22/00401/PREAPP Former Goodwills Wood Shavings & Haulage Yard, Whalton - Chair advised that she had written to Planning Enforcement at NCC and awaited a response. Clerk to follow up.

13) Highway Issues:

a) Cllr Lennard raised the problem of flooding and potholes on the U9057 in the area known as Bonas Hill. Clerk to follow up.

b) Some residents reported noise and nuisance caused by motorcycles and 4x4 vehicles using a track that leads from the west end of Ogle village near Ogle Mill to a point on the main Newcastle to Belsay road about 200 yards north of the old Highlander pub. Cllr Lennard asked whether warning signs forbidding such usage could be installed. Clerk to follow up.

14) Environmental Matters: There are no new issues for the caretaker, and outstanding invoices are now paid, although there were concerns about uncut grass around the phone box.

15) Finance:

a) The Chair reported that she had visited Lloyds Bank at Cramlington and things are moving. The mandate forms are printed and have the required signatories to return to the bank. Hopefully, a card/card reader with access will be authorised and sent out soon so the Chair can authorise and add/remove people from the account as needed.

b) The penultimate clerk made payments for the NALC subscription and website fees 2023/24, the Internal Auditor fee, Clerk salary and a Defibrillator Software update, a total of £597.95. Current clerk circulated an incomplete Finance Summary and will update when able to do so.

c) Clerk confirmed he had written to the previous clerk, Jayne Clayton, seeking recovery of the salary overpayment.

d) Donation requests - item deferred again until the next meeting.

e) Asset Register and Financial Risk Assessment – members reviewed the amended documents and agreed to adopt them.

16) The General Power of Competence – eligibility no longer applies as most members were co-opted onto the Council and not elected. Donations and grants are limited under Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972. For 2022/23 this was £8.82 multiplied by the number of electors in the parish.

17) Correspondence & Information items: NALC, CAN and NCC e-newsletters were all noted

18) Barnesbury Cycling Club centenary race: Clerk confirmed that races have been rearranged for 16th July 2023 and will circulate relevant information.

19) Any other business:

a) EV Charging points: - Cllr Lennard and Cllr Shaw followed up a previous discussion by proposing the Council apply for the next round of funding, and other members agreed. Clerk noted the deadline for submissions was 28 February 2023, so will monitor and advise when the next round of funding starts.

b) Clerk referred to NALC's April e- newsletter that offered training courses such as *Finance for Councillors* and *Internal Controls for Councillors* and suggested circulating his course notes from *Introduction to Local Councils Briefing for Councillors and Clerks* for information.

Date and time of next meeting: 7.00pm on Thursday 13 July 2023 at Whalton Village Hall

_____ **Chairman**

_____ **Date**