

Whalton Parish Council

Draft Minutes of the Meeting held at 7.30pm on Wednesday 27 September 2023

- 1) **Present:** Parish Councillors Andy Shaw, Anne Lennard, Nicola Robson, Martin Grix and Stephen Trobe
- 2) **In attendance:** Peter Ware (Clerk)
- 3) **Apologies for absence:** Marlene Young, County Councillor Lyle Darwin
- 4) **The Chair's opening remarks:** Cllr Shaw took the Chair and thanked Cllr Lennard for her previous efforts. Acting Chair at the next meeting is scheduled to be Cllr Grix.
- 5) **Public Questions & Participation:** none
- 6) **Declarations of interests and the grant of dispensations:** none, apart from at item 11)a)
- 7) **Report from the Police:** none
- 8) **Report from the County Councillor:** Nothing received, Cllr Shaw and clerk to follow up.
- 9) **Minutes of the meeting held on 13th July 2023** were agreed as a true record and was signed by the previous Chair.
- 10) **Any matters arising from the minutes if not minuted elsewhere:**
 - a) Parish Noticeboard – Cllr Trobe confirmed large noticeboard will be erected in the next month or so. Capheaton PC's offer to buy the small noticeboard was rejected, so will be stored until a buyer can be found.
 - b) Whalton defibrillator – Cllr Shaw confirmed Stuart Nevin has bought replacement pads, invoice to be submitted for payment.
- 11) **Planning Matters**
 - a) 23/02897/FUL Whalton Village Hall – Cllrs Robson & Trobe declared an interest and briefly left the room. The remaining members discussed the application, and no objections were raised to the proposals.
 - b) 23/01801/FUL Close House Whalton – application gone to appeal; the Council raised no objections when originally consulted.
 - c) 22/04617/FUL West House Farm Cottages, Shilvington – application gone to appeal, the Council were between clerks when originally consulted.
 - d) Window frames at Fox Wood - clerk asked occupier whether they had permission to change the colour, resident said their property was outside the Whalton Conservation Area, without providing any supporting evidence. Clerk to follow up.
- 12) **Highway Issues:**
 - a) Cllr Lennard reported she has still been unable to arrange a site visit with a highway inspector to discuss the problems of flooding and potholes on the U9057 and the noise and nuisance caused by vehicles using the BOAT. Clerk to chase again and raise with County Cllr Darwin also.
 - b) The effectiveness of the 'Fix My Street' App was queried when it only seems to generate automated responses, rather than any positive news about work actually done, or about to be done. Clerk to follow up.
 - c) There was a discussion about the increasing speed, quantity and type of vehicles driving through Whalton. Cllr Shaw reported that the flashing 20mph signs often don't function during periods of inclement weather / at night. Clerk to query the maintenance schedule for flashing signs, perhaps batteries need replacing, and criteria for getting a traffic count, road safety assessment etc carried out. It may be an item to consider for next year's LTP submission.

d) Cllr Trobe mentioned lots of standing water on the Ogle to Ogle Hill Head Road that may need attention.

13) Environmental Matters:

a) Caretaker works identified: to assess the condition of all the white posts around Whalton, with photos of defective ones, along with a survey of all the chains and the handrails down to the school, to determine condition and to identify any works needed to bring up to scratch. Cllr Trobe suggested using larch or oak replacement posts for longevity.

b) Grass cutting maps for Whalton and Ogle had previously been circulated. Cllr Lennard asked for the junction on the Ogle Road and Bonas Hill Road to be cut as well, to improve traffic visibility.

14) Ogle Broadband: no progress to report

15) EV Charging Points: No progress, clerk still to work through the Toolkit application process.

16) Community Resilience: The Northern PowerGrid Foundation is now open to new applications. NPg are unable to give on site advice and point users to their website. Clerk suggested Rochester Village Hall may offer a useful insight, as they were early adopters with various different heating systems installed. Cllr Lennard to follow up.

17) Correspondence & information items: all NALC, CAN and NCC e-letters were all noted.

18) Finance:

a) Internet banking: Cllr Robson confirmed the second mandate form, signed by Cllr Lennard, was progressing with Lloyds Bank.

b) The clerk gave a report of this year's spend to date, with a Finance Summary circulated, showing a balance of £11,637.02 after today's payments were authorised.

c) Payments were authorised for July's Hall hire, the Caretaker's August invoice, clerk's salary for August and September and laptop & software reimbursement at a total cost of £719.34.

d) The new laptop & software has been set up, with files transferred from the old laptop, and is now being used by the clerk.

e) Previous Clerk overpayment: The 'seven-day notice' letter was ignored, so the details were submitted to the MCOL (Money Claims Online Service) service. The court served the claim on 26 September 2023 and the defendant (previous clerk) has until 10 October 2023 to reply.

19) Any other business: none

Date and time of next meeting: 7.30pm on Wednesday 15th November 2023 at Whalton Village Hall

_____ **Chairman**

_____ **Date**