

WARK PARISH COUNCIL

Contact: clerk.wark@gmail.com

Meeting held on 23rd June 2025 at 6pm in Westacres Community Centre

DRAFT MINUTES

1. Welcome and Apologies for Absence:

Present: Councillor Lisa Lorraine (LL), Councillor Steve Batey (SB), Councillor Sean Miles (SM), Councillor Judith Weir (JW), Councillor Jason Riches (JR) Councillor Brenda Murray (BM)

Apologies: Councillor Edward Jeffrey (EJ),

SB was chair for meeting.

2. Notification of Other Business – LL raised issue from member of the public re housing, agreed to send letter of support from Parish Council, **LL** to arrange. Proposed by JW seconded by BM.

3. Appoint Anne Hutchinson as RFO until New Clerk is appointed. Agreed Annie Hutchinson (AH) appointed. Proposed by SB seconded by JR.

4. Appoint PC to take minutes for the meeting. SM agreed to undertake for meeting. Suggestion to consider support offered by Phil for next meeting. **SB** to investigate availability. Proposed SB Seconded JW.

5. Declarations of Conflicts of Interest - None

6. Welcome and Report from County Councillor –None, no County Councillor present or report provided.

7. To consider and agree any actions from the Internal Auditor. AH presented the report. It was agreed that after the close of the next public meeting the PC would hold a confidential meeting to discuss actions required from the internal audit report. Proposed SB Seconded BM

8. To approve the Annual Governance Report (AGAR) AH presented the report which was discussed and agreed in the meeting. Proposed SM Seconded JR

9. To Approve the Accounting Statement and Explanation of Variances AH presented the report only one variant item 6 (All other payments) above 15% variant, which is believed to be due to the cost of speed signs and material for Stonehaugh observatory. It was agreed to review the details of the variant at the next meeting as part of the confidential section of the meeting, **AH** to provide further detail. Proposed BM Seconded JR.

10. To confirm and approve the Certificate of Exemption. AH presented, the exemption certificate was

approved. Proposed JW seconded SB

11. **To confirm dates for Public Rights to include 02/07/2025.** AH presented, this was agreed to be posted on notice boards on 24th June. Actions by **BM** for Stonehaugh and **SM** for Wark. (Wark as no key available so will to attached to the glass). Proposed BM seconded SM.
12. **To approve appointment of Internal Auditor for 2025-2026** Agreed for Susan Sanders to undertake after her excellent review for 2024/2025. Proposed BM seconded SB
13. **Trees on riverside footpath – Ash Die Back**, AH had discussed with Forestry, they suggested that we leave to die back naturally and only undertake work on the trees if become dangerous. SM questioned if the trees were our responsibility as we believe the land is County Council not PC. Further investigation required on ownership, agreed to wait till Clerk appointed so we can set up an account with the Land Registry to formalise ownership. Proposed SM seconded SB
14. **Composting Toilet – arrange a date for councillors to attend instruction meeting.** Needs roof repaired. EJ and JR will attend instruction, awaiting **EJ** to confirm date.
15. **Recruitment of Clerk- Chairman & 4 Councillors to attend date to be agreed.** Agreed that Chair plus two PC to interview. Interviewers will be EJ, SB and SM with JR as reserve. Interviews are week commencing 6th July. **AH** to send advert to NALC and SLCC and Job centre in Hexham. **SM** to ask if we can place advert in Wark shop. Proposed BM seconded LL
16. **Close Public Meeting/ Agree Date for Next Meeting.** Meeting closed at 1852 hours. Next Meeting 21st July 2025 – AGM 6pm. Followed by a closed confidential meeting. Location -Stonehaugh village Hall BM to book Hall.

Clerk to Wark Parish Council