

Whessoe Parish Council

MINUTES of the Meeting of Whessoe Parish Council held at Whessoe Parish Centre on Monday 24th July, 2017, at 7.00 pm

Present:

Councillor D Cummings (Chair)	Councillor S Robinson
Councillor S Dawson	Councillor L Foster
Councillor S Goldfinch	Councillor A Macnab
Borough Councillor P Cruddas	Parish Clerk - Ms J Bell
One member of the public	

Absent:

Borough Councillor G Cartwright	Borough Councillor M Knowles
Borough Councillor G Lee	Borough Councillor D Lyonette

MINUTE NO.	ITEM	ACTION
2860	<p><u>Apologies for Absence</u></p> <p>No apologies for absence were received.</p>	
2861	<p><u>Declarations of Interest</u></p> <p>There were no declarations of interest.</p>	
2862	<p><u>Minutes of Annual Meeting of Whessoe Parish Council – 22nd May, 2017</u></p> <p>The Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Whessoe Parish Council meeting held on the 22nd May, 2017 were presented.</p> <p>The Parish Council RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Whessoe Parish Council held on the 22nd May, 2017 be approved.</p>	
2863	<p><u>Matters Arising</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Transparency Code Requirements: Draft Minutes of the 22nd May meeting had been posted on the Council’s Website. Minutes of future meetings will also be posted on the website. The Asset Register has yet to be posted. Details of Transparency Code Grant Funding were circulated to Councillors on 29.5.17. 2 Bank Mandate/On Line Banking: An application for on Line Banking was forwarded to Lloyds Bank on 21st July. 3 Hall Booking Survey: Councillor Cummings has forwarded a hall survey document to the Clerk. Distribution to recent users of the Parish Centre has yet to be actioned. 4 Facebook: The Parish Council felt that the Council’s Facebook page should remain as a closed group. 5 Budget Statement 16-17: Councillor Macnab previously advised that access to Gov.uk website portal was required for setting future year budgets. Councillor Macnab to provide the Clerk with link to relevant section. 6 Grass Cutting Tender: The Clerk requested advice from the contractor regarding treatment of potholes on 3.6.17. A response has not yet been 	<p>JB</p> <p>JB</p> <p>AM</p>

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	<p>received. The Clerk to check on progress.</p> <p>7 Local Plan: The Chair has contacted Darlington Borough Council regarding the Parish Council's involvement in the Local Plan. Further information is provided under Minute No. 2872.</p> <p>8 Correspondence: Councillor Foster does not yet have access to the calendar. Councillors Cummings and Goldfinch to assist. Councillor Macnab encouraged Councillors to read feedback from the LGC/NALC Supplement Survey – What Next for Localism? The survey link was forwarded to Councillors on 29.5.17.</p> <p>9 Hall Bookings: The booking form has been amended to reflect the requirement for payment in advance/via bank transfer. The checklist for opening/closing procedure was awaiting completion. An up-date on the use of the hall by a pre-school group is provided under Minute No. 2876.</p> <p>10 Annual Return 16-17: Publication of notice of inspection of draft accounts and submission of draft accounts to the external auditor was actioned on 4.6.17.</p> <p>11 Financial Statement 17-18: Expenditure items over £100 for 16-17 have been posted on the Council's website. Details of 17-18 items will be posted after each Council meeting. Arrangements to pay rates to Darlington Borough Council via Direct Debit have yet to be made.</p> <p>12 Budget Statement 17-18: Re-claim of VAT for 16-17 has been submitted to HMRC.</p> <p>13 Neighbourhood Development Plan: Councillor Robinson to arrange for Margaret Ellington to attend the Parish Council Meeting on 25th September, 2017.</p> <p>14 Risk Management Plan & Policies: Up-dated policies have been posted to the Council's website and regular users have been forwarded hire agreements as part of annual renewal requirements. A risk assessment by Councillor Robinson has yet to be undertaken.</p> <p>The Parish Council RESOLVED to note the report on matters arising and the actions required.</p>	<p>JB</p> <p>DC/SG</p> <p>JB</p> <p>JB</p> <p>SR</p> <p>SR</p>
2864	<p><u>Parish Councillor Vacancy</u></p> <p>When notifying Darlington Borough Council of the intention to co-opt to the vacant Councillor post, it was highlighted that the post, vacant since 2015, had not been officially advertised. The vacancy will, therefore, be officially advertised on 24th July, 2017, and Rule 5(2) of the Local Elections (Parishes and Communities) (England and Wales) Rules 2006 will apply. The Rule allows 10 electors for the parish in which the casual vacancy exists to request the Returning Officer to hold an election to fill that vacancy. That request must be made in writing within 14 working days of the date of the vacancy notice, i.e. no later than midnight on Friday, 11th August, 2017. If such a request is made the necessary arrangements for an election will be made and the vacancy must be filled by election. If written notice is not received from 10 electors within the above timeframe the Parish Council is able to fill the vacancy by co-option as soon as practicable after the 11th August deadline.</p> <p>The Chair has provided an up-date of the situation to those who expressed an interest in the role.</p> <p>It was also highlighted that Register of Interest forms were not held by Darlington Borough Council for Councillors Foster and Macnab. The Clerk will forward relevant forms for completion by those Councillors when received from Darlington Borough Council.</p>	<p>JB</p>

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	The Parish Council RESOLVED to note the requirement to advertise the vacant post and await the outcome on 11 th August to confirm requirements for filling the vacant post.	
2865	<p><u>Community Governance Review</u></p> <p>In response to a request by Councillors to confirm any statutory limit to the number of Councillors within a Parish, the Council has been advised that, although there is no statutory maximum, any change to the current number of Councillors would require a Community Governance Review. Such a review could take up to a year to conclude and the cost of undertaking a review would need to be met by the Parish Council. It was also noted that a Community Governance Review had been held as recently as 2015.</p> <p>The Parish Council RESOLVED that a Community Governance Review would not be requested at this time and that the Chair would contact those interested in the vacant Councillor role to advise them of the decision.</p>	DC
2866	<p><u>Annual Return 2016-17 – External Audit Outstanding Points</u></p> <p>External Audit raised two points following submission of the Annual Return 16-17 as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amendment of the Annual Return was required to show Council Tax Support Grant of £1,027 received in 2016-17 under “Total Other Receipts” rather than “Precept or Rates & Levies”. • Explanation for level of balance of reserves was requested. <p>It was confirmed that the Council Tax Support Grant ended effective from 1.4.17, therefore, the amendment to the 2016-17 Annual Return was required and that lower than expected expenditure in 16-17 contributed to the level of balances held. Balances were required to fund modernisation of the Parish Centre and development of a Neighbourhood Development Plan. The budget would be reviewed as part of budget setting 2018-19.</p> <p>The Parish Council RESOLVED to amend the Annual Return to reflect the split of Precept and Council Tax Support Grant and provide reasons for the level of balances as detailed above to the External Audit by the deadline of 31st July, 2017. The Chair initialled amendments to the Annual Return as required.</p>	JB
2867	<p><u>Financial Statement 17-18</u></p> <p>The Clerk presented the Financial Statement 2017-18, detailing the income and expenditure position as at 17th July, 2017.</p> <p>Income totalled £21,403.40 and expenditure totalled £1,909.28 giving a balance of £19,494.12. Items of expenditure over £100 since the last report included Utility Costs (Gas), Grass Cutting services (2 months) and Training Costs for Clerk.</p> <p>The Parish Council RESOLVED to note the financial report.</p>	
2868	<p><u>Budget Statement 2017-18</u></p> <p>The Clerk presented the Budget Statement 2017-18 as at 17th July, 2017. The forecast for 2017-18 shows estimated income of £24,296 and estimated expenditure of £6,640 giving a forecast year end surplus of £17,655.</p>	

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	<p>The forecast reflects a number of assumptions, for example, continued use of the hall by regular users. Increased costs due to installation of broadband have been offset by credits received for utility costs (gas) from 2016-17. The budget will be monitored and up-dated as the year progresses.</p> <p>The Parish Council RESOLVED to note the financial report.</p>	
2869	<p><u>Bank Reconciliation 17-18</u></p> <p>The Parish Clerk presented the Bank Reconciliation Statement as at 30th May, 2017. The variance of £49.00 between the Parish Council Treasurer’s Account and the Bank Account is due to two cheques (cheque nos. 932 £40.00 and 933 £9.00) not yet cleared at the bank.</p> <p>The Parish Clerk circulated the bank statements for April and May 2017 for signature by Councillors present.</p> <p>The Parish Council RESOLVED to note the financial report.</p>	
2870	<p><u>Planning Applications – Log of Applications Received</u></p> <p>Details of planning applications received and progress regarding submission deadlines and outcomes were presented.</p> <p>The Parish Council RESOLVED to note the up-date.</p>	
2871	<p><u>Planning Applications – Burtree Lane and Berrymead Farm</u></p> <p>The Parish Council were notified of additional information received relating to the above planning applications, with a deadline for return of views of 25th July and 26th July respectively.</p> <p>The following summarises the issues and concerns discussed by the Parish Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of communication with and notice given to residents. • Lack of clarity in the additional documentation of the changes made to original proposals. • Both developments consider infrastructure in isolation – the cumulative impact should both planning applications be approved does not appear to have been assessed. • Environmental considerations - it was noted that an Environmental Plan would need to be submitted to show that the impact on wildlife and the environment had been considered. • Darlington Borough Council’s proposal relating to Brafferton New Road (Highways England) and the potential impact on the Parish depending on options taken forward. • Development Limits – It was noted that Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE) were submitting objections to both applications on the basis that the developments are outside Darlington Borough Council’s Local Plan Development Limits. • Provision of affordable housing within the borough of Darlington. • Use of S106 contributions to support infrastructure requirements. 	

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	<p>It was proposed that:</p> <p>The Parish Council contact residents to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • advise residents of the latest proposals and how to feedback their views. • inform residents of what actions Whessoe Parish Council is taking in relation to the planning applications. <p>To meet Darlington Borough Council’s current deadlines for receipt of views, the Parish Council would respond to the Borough Council to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raise formal objection to both proposals. • Re-state the objections submitted relating to the original proposals. • Re-confirm the Parish Council’s view that there has not been sufficient or timely communication with the Parish Council and residents to co-ordinate a meaningful response within the current deadlines. • Request that changes to the original proposals be highlighted and developers provide a summary of these changes to enable the Parish Council to understand the changes and consult with residents on those changes. • Request an extension to the consultation process to allow sufficient time to consult and respond on the changes. <p>The Parish Council contact both developers to arrange a meeting with developers to discuss the proposals.</p> <p>The Brafferton Road Plans be included on the Agenda for the next Whessoe Parish Council Meeting on 25th September.</p> <p>The Parish Council RESOLVED to note and action the above proposals.</p>	<p>JB</p> <p>JB</p>
<p>2872</p>	<p><u>Darlington Local Plan 2016 to 2036</u></p> <p>The Chair advised he had contacted the Local Planning Steering Group regarding the Council’s involvement in the Local Plan. Darlington Borough Council advised that they will contact the Parish Council when they are in a position to engage with the Council.</p> <p>Councillor Macnab advised that Middleton St George Parish Council have established a Planning Working Group to help plan a way forward for the infrastructure of the village in light of the significant developments proposed. It was also noted that road shows and workshops were being arranged for other Parish Councils. As Whessoe Parish Council is experiencing similar issues, it was proposed that the Parish Council set up a Planning Working Group involving Darlington Borough Council and the developers.</p> <p>The Parish Council RESOLVED that the Chair should contact Darlington Borough Council regarding further engagement with the Borough Council and developers.</p>	<p>DC</p>
<p>2873</p>	<p><u>Neighbourhood Development Plan</u></p> <p>It was noted that a planned training workshop by the Campaign for the Protection of Rural England had not yet been arranged. Councillor Robinson advised that Low Coniscliffe had started developing its plan and had received grant funding to support the set up. Low Coniscliffe had circulated details of its wants to residents, held a community meeting and has begun a draft report. It is likely to take 2-3 years</p>	

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	<p>before final sign off. Councillor Robinson agreed to invite Margaret Ellington to the next Whessoe Parish Council Meeting to share her experiences and advice.</p> <p>Councillor Robinson also agreed to contact Gillan Gibson, CPRE, to chase progress on the proposed workshop on Development Plans.</p> <p>Councillor Macnab advised that Darlington Borough Council's "call for sites" map has been circulated to developers and land owners and that planners are working through the site map to look at areas suitable for development. Councillor Macnab expected that feedback available for public viewing would be available in September.</p> <p>The Parish Council RESOLVED that the Councillor Robinson invite Margaret Ellington to the next Meeting of Whessoe Parish Council and contact Gillan Gibson on progress for a Development Plan workshop.</p>	<p>SR</p> <p>SR</p>
<p>2874</p>	<p><u>Correspondence</u></p> <p>Clerks and Councils Direct publication for July was circulated, together with a promotional letter from Seafarers UK and information about the Financial Services Compensation Scheme from Lloyds Bank.</p> <p>Where possible correspondence received has been circulated to Councillors via email. Other correspondence and additional information on previously e-mailed correspondence included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Came & Company Insurance: Request that Councillors advise of issues that may require amendment to the Council's current insurance policy. • Internal Audit: Introductory discussion with CB Admin Solutions who offer an internal audit service. Details to be retained on file pending any review of internal audit requirements. • NALC – Grants & Funding Bulletin: This included grants for Neighbourhood Planning. It was noted that claims would be required by 1.10.17 and expenditure incurred by 31.12.17. • Streetscape: Introduction to Services - YouTube Video of Play, Sport and Outdoor Equipment – Councillors to advise Clerk if they are interested in receiving details. • Darlington Association of Parish Councils: Agenda for meeting on 19.7.17. • Hardwick in Partnership: Legal Briefing LO4-17 Reform of Data Protection Legislation. It was noted that this legislation is due to take effect on 25.5.18 and has potential significant resource requirements for some Councils. The Clerk to review details and feedback to Councillors. <p>The Parish Council RESOLVED to note the details.</p>	<p>JB</p>
<p>2875</p>	<p><u>Hall Maintenance</u></p> <p>Car Park: The potential to improve the access and the need to confirm land ownership, planning permission requirements and the cost involved was discussed at the last meeting. It was suggested that this may be an area for discussion with developers and the Borough Council should the proposed planning developments go ahead.</p> <p>Cleaning: It was noted that the cleaner was on holiday w.c. 26.6.17. Kellen Dance Academy raised an issue with the cleanliness of the hall when attending their</p>	

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	<p>session on 10.6.17. The Chair advised that the hall was left as found when last used on the day of the general election.</p> <p>Broadband: Has now been fitted and was being provided by Utility Warehouse. The Chair will now progress quotes for Hive and Nest.</p> <p>Electricity Provider: The contract with npower is due to expire on 2.11.17. Notice to leave would be required by 3.10.17. The gas contract is due to end 23.7.18. Clerk to look at options for supply at contract end.</p> <p>Shrubs/Bushes: Clerk to contact the probation service to arrange tidy up of shrubs/bushes.</p> <p>Pressure Washing of Pavements: Chair has received a quote for works. Further prices to be sought.</p> <p>Hall Improvements: A number of repairs and maintenance tasks were required to the Hall. It was agreed to form a sub-committee to review requirements and to inform budget setting. It was proposed that the sub-committee members be Councillors Foster and Goldfinch. Councillor Goldfinch agreed to draft Terms of Reference.</p> <p>The Parish Council RESOLVED to note the details and to establish a sub-committee to review requirements for improvements to the Parish Centre.</p>	<p>DC</p> <p>JB</p> <p>JB</p> <p>JB</p> <p>SG</p>
<p>2876</p>	<p><u>Hall Bookings</u></p> <p>A schedule of hall bookings was presented detailing regular and non-regular bookings. It was noted that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No further parties had been booked after 26.7.17. The Chair agreed to look at promotion of the hall on Facebook and the Borough Council's "Council Together" magazine. • The NA Group had ceased regular use of the hall. • Return of annual booking renewal forms was awaited from two of the regular users. <p>Pre-School Group –Tees Valley Rural Community have advised that details on the Hall's constitution or deeds should inform the basis of allowable use of the hall. The Clerk to check details held on the Land Registry website before contacting Freeman & Johnson Solicitors for release of the deeds. The Council would await feedback before contacting the pre-school group.</p> <p>The Parish Council RESOLVED to note the details and actions required.</p>	<p>DC</p> <p>JB</p>
<p>2877</p>	<p><u>Communications</u></p> <p>Website: The current website allowed only 62 uploads to site and this maximum has now been reached. The Chair advised he has received quotes from two web providers. The Chair to forward details to the Clerk pending receipt of a third quote.</p> <p>Facebook: Use of Social Media was a topic at the SLCC Workshop held on 19.7.17. The Clerk to provide summary details. Use of social media for greater community engagement and links to more community groups was discussed.</p>	<p>DC</p> <p>JB</p>

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	<p>Notice Boards: The Chair had obtained quotes from 3 providers for a replacement notice board. The Chair to confirm that the quotes were still valid and to circulate details of the graphic to confirm that Councillors were happy with the proposed design before progressing. It was agreed that, due to vandalism, the notice board at Harrowgate Farm would not be replaced and the Chair would arrange for removal.</p> <p>The Parish Council RESOLVED to note the details and actions required.</p>	DC
2878	<p><u>Date and Time of Next Meeting</u></p> <p>The Parish Council RESOLVED that the next meeting will be the Parish Council Meeting to be held on Monday, 25th September, 2017 at 7.00 pm in the Meeting Room at Whessoe Parish Centre.</p>	

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