

## WITTON – LE – WEAR PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the ordinary meeting of Witton le Wear Parish Council held on **Monday 13<sup>th</sup> January 2020** in the Community Centre, Witton le Wear commencing at **6.15pm**

**Present:** Councillors O. Wilson (Chair), M. Henderson, B. Henderson, P. Cowan, E. Todd, E. Swift,

**Also Present:** A. Dixon (Parish Council Clerk), Mrs A. Yuill, Mr J. Kirton, Mr M. McLaren

**Apologies:** K. Quigley

**Declaration of interest:** None

**1/20 Minutes of the Ordinary meeting held 11<sup>th</sup> November 2019.**  
Minutes agreed as being accurate and correct.

**2/20 Matters arising from the previous minutes.**

**1. Speeding traffic**

Nothing to report at this time.

**2. Gate on public footpath near Little Marshall Green Farm**

The stile has now been removed and the new gate has been rehung.

**It was resolved:**

Councillor Todd agreed to lubricate the hinge on the gate.

**3. It's Your Neighbourhood grant.**

Bulbs have been planted by 16 volunteers along the church path, around the notice boards, at the railway platform and at West End

**4. Lights for the Village Green**

Nothing further to report at this time.

**5. Witton Park Bridge**

Nothing further to report at this time.

**6. Problems reported to Durham County Council and Environment Agency**

Clerk updated Councillors about 1 problem reported to the Parish Council by residents.

- **Narrow bridge on road just off A68.**

A "road narrows" sign has been installed by Durham County Council.

**7. Parking on the road outside Low Barns Nature Reserve**

There have been complaints from motorists coming out of the Nature Reserve being unable to see oncoming traffic because of vehicles parked in the layby.

**It was resolved:**

Councillors agreed to send photographic evidence to be sent to Lee Mowbray at Durham County Council with a request that the Highways Department investigate this problem.

## 8. Website

Clerk informed Councillors that Derek Bradley has said he will ask children going to the Youth Club to take photographs of the village, the best ones to be put on the website.

3/20

### Representation by Residents

Mr McLaren asked why the cost of installing the electricity feeder box had risen so much from the initial estimate of £2500. He was informed that the Parish Council were initially told that the feeder box would be placed on the Village Green but then later found out from Durham County Council that this was no longer possible. There have also been further costs relating to traffic management to enable the feeder box to be installed. Councillors felt that the long-term benefits such as an electricity supply for village events, Christmas lights and for a possible traffic speed sign meant the project was still worth going ahead with.

Mr Kirton also asked about the black path and who is responsible for maintaining it. Clerk informed Mr Kirton that this path is a public right of way and it has been reported to the Public Right of Way department at Durham County Council.

#### It was resolved:

Clerk informed Councillors that there is approximately £780 left of the P3 grant which the Parish Council uses to maintain Public Rights of Way. Clerk to contact DCC to find out if this money can be used to tidy up footpaths within the village. Clerk to get quotes to maintain the worst footpaths and gutters within the village.

Mr M McLaren asked Councillors about the path around the back of the church. He felt that the path was unsafe. Parish Council were previously informed that the path was safe by Rev.T Atkins.

#### It was resolved:

Chairman to speak to T Atkins about the path and find out if anything more can be done to make the path less hazardous.

Mr McLaren offered to look after the defibrillator and the books within the telephone box. He also informed Councillors that the Parish Council notice board near the school needs updating to state that the nearest defibrillator is outside the School.

#### It was resolved:

Councillors agreed to accept Mr McLaren's offer to look after the books and be responsible for carrying out and reporting on the required checks to the North East Ambulance Service. The acceptance of this offer to be reported in the Witton Word. Defibrillator notice to be updated.

Mrs A Yuill informed Councillors of the Heritage Groups progress in their aim to complete the four projects by the end of March. These projects are being funded by a Northern Heartlands Grant.

She also asked about arrangements for VE Day celebrations within the village. There will be a bank holiday on Friday 8<sup>th</sup> May to celebrate the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of VE Day. She hoped that there could be a street party. The main problem would be the cost of the road closure.

#### It was resolved:

Clerk to find out who to contact to get permission to site story boards on the Village Green. Parish Council to consider giving a grant to the Heritage Group to cover the VAT on the purchase of the story boards.

**4/20 Financial Statement and Report**

Balance of Current Account, Deposit Account and Cash £7,124.85 as at 31st December 2019. Clerk has prepared a budget to show how the 2020/21 will be spent which includes earmarked funds for ongoing projects.

A Receipt and Payments Account can be found on the Parish Council website. Councillors agreed payment of invoice 285 - 287 as follows:

285 –	Mr A. Dixon (Clerk Salary December)	£ 172. 40
286 –	HMRC PAYE	£ 38. 60
287 –	CDALC	£ 54. 00
	Total	<u>£ 265. 00</u>

**It was resolved:**

All financial matters agreed as being correct. Councillors agreed to keep the annual Precept request at £6,600.

Councillors agreed to get a quote to tidy the village and the area around the railway platform. This work would need to be done two or three times per year. Councillor Swift suggested spending some of the Precept on looking after the trees on the Village Green as the County Council do not seem to be doing this work. Councillor Brabban suggested trying to encourage wildlife by installing bee hotels or bird boxes on the trees.

**5/20 Planning Matters**

None

**6/20 Clerks Correspondence**

**Dog fouling**

Clerk informed Councillors that a resident had complained the Parish Council were not proactive enough as regards dog fouling.

**It was resolved:**

Councillors believe that nothing further can be done as regards dog fouling. Dogs bins and bags are already provided.

**7/20 Neighbourhood and Parish Plan.**

Nothing further to report at this time.

**8/20 Members Reports**

Councillors have been asked by residents to report on the following matters :-

**Public Rights of Way near Cricket Field**

John and Ian Simon have offered to do work to open up the path down to the Cricket Field by installing a gate and installing handrails next to the steps. The Public Rights of Way Officer has offered to fund 50% of this work.

**Van parked in the layby near the railway platform**

This vehicle has been reported as parked in the layby for over a month. It has not been taxed for over 3 months and has been registered as SORN.

**It was resolved:**

Councillors agreed to contact Durham Police to ask if this vehicle can be removed.

**Planning Training Session**

Councillors Todd and Cowan summarised what they learned after attending the Planning Training Session.

**Parish Council Meeting Monday 13<sup>th</sup> April**

Councillors agreed to move the meeting date to Monday 20<sup>th</sup> April as the previous Monday is Easter Monday.

**9/20 Chairman's Report**

**Christmas light bowls provided by the Youth Club**

Councillors agreed to put an article in the Witton Word to thank them for providing these lights.

**10/20 Any other business**

None

**11/20 Date and Time of the next Meeting**

The next Ordinary meeting of the Parish Council is on Monday 10<sup>th</sup> February **2020** in the Community Centre, Witton le Wear commencing at 6:15pm.

The meeting finished at 8:00 p.m.