

## WITTON – LE – WEAR PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the ordinary meeting of Witton le Wear Parish Council held on **Monday 10<sup>th</sup> February 2020** in the Community Centre, Witton le Wear commencing at **6.15pm**

**Present:** Councillors P. Cowan (Chair), M. Henderson, B. Henderson, E. Swift, S. Brabban

**Also Present:** A. Dixon (Parish Council Clerk),

**Apologies:** O. Wilson, K. Quigley, E. Todd

**Declaration of interest:** None

**12/20 Minutes of the Ordinary meeting held 13<sup>th</sup> January 2020.**  
Minutes agreed as being accurate and correct.

**13/20 Matters arising from the previous minutes.**

**1. Speeding traffic**

Nothing to report at this time.

**2. Lights for the Village Green**

Electricity feeder box is due to be installed during the first week of March.

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

This is a difficult problem to resolve as the gates to the Nature Reserve are locked at 4:30 pm and there have been reports of cars being locked in. Photographic evidence to be sent to Durham County Council showing cars parked in the layby.

**4. Website**

Nothing to report at this time.

**5. Witton Park Bridge**

Nothing to report at this time.

**6. Church path**

Chair asked Tim Atkins whether anything can be done to make the Church path safer to walk on and was told that he had been informed by the contractors that installed it, it was fine.

**It was resolved:**

Clerk to contact Durham County Council to ask for advice as the path is on common land.

**7. Untaxed van**

Durham County Council have written to the owner of the van requesting that the van be removed from the layby within 7 days or it will be removed by the Council.

**8. Trees, bird boxes and bee hotels**

Awaiting feedback from Durham Wildlife Trust.

## 9. Registering land as Village Green

A resident has written to the Parish Council asking whether the cricket field, the row of trees next to the railway line and the path along the river can in some way be protected for use by residents. Councillor Cowan informed members that the land needs to have been used freely, without consent by residents for 20 years before village green rights could be applied for.

### **It was resolved:**

Parish Council to try and get evidence as to how long the cricket field has been used freely by residents.

## 14/20 Representation by Residents

None

## 15/20 Financial Statement and Report

Balance of Current Account, Deposit Account and Cash £5,426.35 as at 31st January 2020.

A Receipt and Payments Account can be found on the Parish Council website. Councillors agreed payment of invoice 288 - 291 as follows:

288 –	Mr A. Dixon (Clerk Salary February 2020)	£ 172. 60
289 –	HMRC PAYE	£ 38. 40
290 –	Eli Press	£ 133. 20
291 –	ICO	<u>£ 40. 00</u>
	Total	<u>£ 384. 20</u>

### **It was resolved:**

All financial matters agreed as being correct. Councillors agreed to transfer £1000 from the Deposit Account to the Current Account. Clerk to send a letter to Yorkshire Bank requesting this transfer.

## 16/20 Planning Matters

Councillors discussed the following planning applications:

DM/19/03141/FPA – 9 West End

Comments have previously been submitted for this application and no further comments need to be submitted.

DM/19/03901/OUT – Pennywell

Planning application has not changed significantly.

DM/19/02407/FPA – Land to the east of Spru-Scot, Cemetery Road

November minutes previously stated that this application had been rejected but it was withdrawn.

17/20

**Clerks Correspondence**

Clerk asked Councillors to consider having a separate email address for Parish Council purposes. He also asked Councillors to consider the possible purchase of a cheap tablet that could be used solely for the Parish Council to store emails and view minutes and agenda. This could reduce the amount of paper that is wasted.

He also informed Councillors that he needs to complete his CiLCA qualification within a year.

Clerk and Councillor Wilson to attend the Planning Training at County Hall on 24<sup>th</sup> February.

**It was resolved:**

Clerk to contact Steve Ragg to get advice and report back at the next meeting regarding the need for separate email addresses. Councillors agreed the purchase of a cheap tablet would be a good idea especially if each Councillor made a contribution toward the cost. Purchasing 8 tablets is currently not financially feasible for the Parish Council. These changes are necessary in order for the Parish Council to be more GDPR compliant although some Councillors do have reservations.

18/20

**Neighbourhood and Parish Plan.**

There is a significant amount of work required to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan. There is a grant available of £9000 but councils tend to spend more than that as a Neighbourhood Plan is planning focused. It would require a large number of volunteers.

**It was resolved:**

Councillors felt it was a good idea not to go ahead with a Neighbourhood Plan as Witton le Wear does not have a lot of development sites, it could incur costs above the £9000 grant and would not have a result that residents could see. There has also been no pressure to undertake a Parish Plan. An Action / Development plan to be added to the Annual Report to show residents the village services and facilities the council will seek to develop, improve and maintain.

The decision about whether to go ahead with a Neighbourhood Plan to be made at next month's meeting when more Councillors are present.

19/20

**Members Reports**

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

Residents have given good feedback on the work carried out by SE Landscaping. Residents are happy to see the footpaths and drains cleared of leaves.

Someone has put notices up in the village advertising Hamsterley Fayre without getting permission.

**VE Day Celebration**

Councillor M Henderson informed Councillors that plans are underway for VE Day celebrations.

20/20

**Chairman's Report**

Chairman said she would prepare a notice about the annual meeting of the Parish Council, which will take place on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> May at 7pm, for insertion in the next Witton Word.

The Community Association are looking for new committee members.

**21/20**

**Any other business**

None

**22/20**

**Date and Time of the next Meeting**

The next Ordinary meeting of the Parish Council is on Monday 9<sup>th</sup> March **2020** in the Community Centre, Witton le Wear commencing at 6:15pm.

The meeting finished at 7:51 p.m.