

WITTON – LE – WEAR PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the ordinary meeting of Witton le Wear Parish Council held on Monday
21th March 2022 at Witton le Wear Community Centre commencing at **6.15pm**

Present: Councillors P. Cowan (Chair), H. Murray-Leslie, L. Docherty,
S. Morehead, P. Parsons, O. Wilson, S. Brabban, C. Cooke

Also Present: P. Young, A. Oswald, E. Short, S. Short (Residents) A. Dixon (Parish Council Clerk),

Apologies: None

Declaration of interest: None

12/22 Minutes of the Ordinary meeting held 24th January 2022.
Minutes agreed as being accurate and correct.

13/22 Matters arising from the previous minutes.

1. Speeding traffic (speed signs)

Awaiting feedback from Michelle McIntosh, Traffic Assets Department at Durham County Council.

2. Village History Information Boards

No further update.

3. Witton word

The next edition will be a Jubilee Special. It will have the same content as normal but will include an insert for the Jubilee such as newspaper articles from previous Jubilee's. Friday 13th May is the date of the next edition. Content is good this month.

It was resolved: Councillors agreed to put an article in the Witton Word about the Jubilee edition.

Village green / fence on the village green

Chair informed the Parish Council meeting that this matter started with the village fence requiring repairing and an offer from DCC to plant a hedge. Councillors felt a hedge might look good aesthetically. Mr Short, a resident, felt the village green has been the same for over 100 years and should remain so. A fence was erected as part of Jubilee celebrations in the early 1900's. Residents who attended the meeting feel that it is better to maintain the fence rather than planting a hedge and questioned safety issues which Councillors had raised following feedback on event safety from the Safety Advisory Group, who consider it a rail not a fence. Another issue raised by residents was possible injury to sledging children and rubbish collecting at the base of a hedge.

It was resolved: Parish Council to pause plans for hedge planting and maintain the fence as it is for the time being.

No Mow May – this has been suggested by residents as part of the Climate and Nature Working Group as an initiative the Parish Council could support.

Councillor Murray-Leslie has contacted Durham County Council to discuss what the options might be to manage green spaces in the village in a way that supports biodiversity but progress is slow. Discussion took place with residents who attended the meeting regarding what might be acceptable. The Jubilee event planned for early June was raised as a concern as they felt the green could look untidy. Glyphosate spraying was also discussed as it creates unattractive brown patches and Mrs Short volunteered to trim these if we can reduce spraying.

It was resolved: The Parish council will promote No Mow May to residents but due to Jubilee celebrations and lack of feedback from Durham County Council this will not affect the management of the green this year. Further fact finding and consultation with residents is required before this could go ahead in the future.

5. Traffic Junction near the Dun Cow

Councillor Wilson has spoken to County Councillor Shuttleworth who offered to get someone from DCC to come and look at the junction. Several Councillors offered to make themselves available to meet with Councillor Shuttleworth. Councillor Wilson read a letter from a resident complaining about traffic problems at this junction.

6. Witton le Wear Primary School

It was resolved: Councillors agreed to wait for an update from the School.

7. Electric car charging points

No further update on electric car charging points.

8. Dog bins

Residents have complained about the removal of the dog bin in Castle View.

It was resolved: Councillor Parsons to contact Durham County Council Clean and Green Team.

9. Queens Platinum Jubilee

Councillor Parsons informed Councillors Jubilee celebrations are still a work in progress. Celebrations will be spread across the bank holiday weekend. Organisations within the village have joined together to celebrate in a number of different ways. Residents are able to hold street parties if they want. There will be Jubilee Church service on Sunday morning. Volunteers to help with this would be greatly appreciated

10. Environmental plans

Councillor Murray-Leslie informed members it is hoped to have another Great Big Green Week at the end of September involving local groups and businesses.

It was resolved: Councillors agreed to consider purchase of sachets of wild flower seeds for residents to be given away at the plant sale or possibly stapled to the May Edition of the Witton Word.

11. Defibrillator training

Councillor Docherty to organise defibrillator training as a joint event which could be carried out at the School.

It was resolved: It was agreed to put another article in the Witton Word to offer Defibrillator training.

12. Dumpy bags

Dumpy bag still outside number 16 St James Gardens.

It was resolved: Clerk to contact Believe Housing as the dumpy bag is on their land.

13. Seat for the railway line

It was noted that young people have been congregating on the previously installed seat. The new seat has been ordered and will hopefully be delivered by the end of the month.

14. Maintenance of stiles on Public Rights of Way

SE Landscaping have been delayed in carrying out this work due to recent storms.

15. Emergency use of Community Centre

A working group has been setup to find what can and can't be done and will engage with Angelina Madison at Weardale AAP regarding additional support. Chair wished to offer thanks to those people who have given their help with the working group.

It was resolved: Clerk to write to Angelina Maddison to ask her to attend a meeting with a working group who can then give feedback to a Parish Council meeting. Weardale Action Partnership may also be able to offer grant funding. Chair to write to Richard Holden to ask what he can do for the village.

16. Railway sign

Railway sign is still broken and some of it has disappeared.

It was resolved: Councillors agreed to look at repairing what is left of the sign without replacing the train part.

17. Social Media Policy

It was resolved: Councillors agreed to defer discussing the Social Media Policy until the next meeting.

14/22 Representation by Residents
See 13/22 4.

15/22 Financial Statement and Report
Balance of Current Account, Deposit Account and Cash £8,094.74 as of 28th February, 2022.

A Receipt and Payments Account can be found on the Parish Council website. Councillors agreed payment of invoice 383 - 386 as follows:

383 - Mr A Dixon (Clerk Salary – March 2022)	£ 258. 65
384 - E-On Next	£ 36. 36

385 - Eli Press	£ 175. 00
386 - SE Landscaping	<u>£ 540. 00</u>
Total	£1010. 01


It was resolved:

All financial matters agreed as being correct. Councillors agreed to Clerks annual pay rise.

16/22

Planning Matters

There were no objections to the following planning applications:

Single storey rear extension 

5 Witton Tower Gardens Witton-le-Wear Bishop Auckland DL14 ODJ

Ref. No: DM/22/00588/FPA | Received: Fri 25 Feb 2022 | Validated: Mon 28 Feb 2022 | Status: Pending Consideration

Erection of detached dwelling 

Land North East Of Pennywell Cemetery Road Witton-le-Wear DL14 OAR

Ref. No: DM/22/00228/FPA | Received: Thu 27 Jan 2022 | Validated: Thu 27 Jan 2022 | Status: Pending Consideration

Crown reduction, thin of up to 15% of the inner crown and pruning back to previous points to T1. Lime

19 The Paddock Witton-le-Wear Bishop Auckland DL14 OGA

Ref. No: DM/22/00185/TPO | Received: Mon 24 Jan 2022 | Validated: Tue 25 Jan 2022 | Status: Decided

17/22

Clerks Correspondence

Walking route board

Walking route board situated outside the Community Centre needs to be repaired.

It was resolved: Clerk to get a quote for this work

Caravan on land north of Low Lane.

Clerk made Councillors aware of complaints from residents regarding the disposal of waste from the caravan and also about animal welfare. This has been reported to DCC planning department.

Annual Meeting

The Clerk reminded Councillors that the Annual Meeting normally takes place in May.

It was resolved: Chairman to start preparing for the Annual meeting

18/22 Neighbourhood and Parish Plan.
Nothing further to report

19/22 Members Reports
Councillors have been asked by residents to report on the following matters :-

Salt bins

Some salt bins have been removed from St. James Gardens. Clerk has spoken to Durham County Council about this and is awaiting feedback.

Broken guttering on the Methodist Chapel

It was resolved: Councillor Brabban to contact Brewis Henderson to ask about the broken guttering.

Strimming

A resident has asked whether the land near the railway station could be strimmed by the Parish Councils contractor. Clerk informed Councillors that he had been in contact with SE Landscaping to discuss this extra work.

Gate post near cricket field

The gate post at the entrance to the cricket field needs repairing.

It was resolved: Councillor Brabban to contact the Cricket Club

Hanging baskets / Planters

It was resolved: Councillors Docherty and Murray-Leslie to liaise about compost and plants.

20/22 Chairman's Report

Traffic Working Group

Councillors Brabban and Cooke to fact find with the help of a resident once the meeting with Durham County Council has taken place.

21/22 Any other business
None

22/22 Date and Time of the next Meeting
The next Ordinary meeting of the Parish Council is on Monday 11th April **2022** commencing at 6:15pm.

The meeting finished at 8:37 p.m.