

WITTON – LE – WEAR PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the ordinary meeting of Witton le Wear Parish Council held on Monday
10th October 2022 at Witton le Wear Community Centre commencing at **18.15**.

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

Also Present: Christina Haworth

Apologies: Councillors S. Brabban and O. Wilson

Declaration of interest: Cllr. Cook declared an interest in the item relating to the installation of the bench at West End (Item 48/22 Point 8)

45/22 Minutes of the Ordinary meeting held 11th July 2022.
Previously approved electronically

46/22 Electronic Decisions made since the last meeting
Full list appended to the end of these minutes.
Councillors approved the list presented to the meeting.

47/22 Action Log
The Action Log was reviewed and updated.

Cllr Parsons to organise repair of the map board outside of the Community Centre. Councillors agreed to set a budget of £100 to repair the board. Christina Haworth mentioned that the map board is upside down (north marker on the board is actually pointing south). Councillors agreed to consider this if the board ever needs re-printing.

48/22 Matters arising from the previous minutes.

1. Speeding traffic

Ivy has been removed from the wall at the junction near the High Street to improve visibility.

Cllr. Parsons agreed to convene a meeting of the working group before Christmas to look into the issues of parking and speeding in the village.

2. Witton Word

Cllr. Brabban had previously e-mailed Councillors to confirm that there were no issues to raise and had provided some suggestions for articles for the next edition.

3. Railway Sign

Repair has now been carried out.

Cllrs. expressed their thanks to John and Ian Simon for storing the broken section of the sign and organising the repair.

Future work may be necessary to brace the sign due to its weight.

4. Climate and Nature Group

Cllrs. Murray-Leslie provided an update on the Great Big Green Week event had to be re-scheduled and takes place on 13th October. Interest in the event has been positive.

The Parish Council received funding for this event of £300. If there is a short-fall the under-spend will need to be paid back to the Great Big Green Week.

Liz Charles, who sits on the working group, has made some progress getting a contact at DCC to discuss grounds maintenance.

5. Emergency Response Group

Meeting of the group has been arranged.
Funding available from Northern Powergrid for grants of up to £20,000 to promote community resilience. Cllrs. expressed thanks to Shaun McKnight for sharing this opportunity.
Area Action Partnership is keen to finalise an emergency response plan for the village. The next stage of which will be to organise a meeting of interested residents to discuss how we would like to be able to respond in the event of an emergency.
Full update to be provided at the next meeting.

6. S.E. Landscaping

SE Landscaping has not responded to contact from the Parish Council.
DCC has provided a list of other contractors that could do this work and the Parish Council will have to re-procure this service.
Cllr. Parsons asked if it was ok for Councillors to do volunteer work, as this may be possible to address this on a short-term basis.

7. Tree Survey

Clean and Green Team at DCC has agreed to carry out the required work.
Cllrs. to monitor if this work has been done.

8. Bench at West End

A resident has offered the Parish Council a Marmax bench that they have acquired but discovered that it is too heavy for use in their garden.
Cllrs.' discussed whether this could be a memorial bench for the Queen.
However, Councillors felt this needed further consideration.

The last bench that the PC acquired from Marmax cost the Parish Council £488.40 in total.

Comparable prices have been obtained which are detailed below

Gladstone - £531 and £574
Wybone- £514 and £454
Marmax- £454.80

Cllrs agreed to pay up to £300 for the bench providing that we first obtain advice from CDALC to ensure that this is acceptable.

Cllr Cook. to contact Darren Hunt to try to arrange installation of the bench.

The Parish Council had received a thank you card following the installation of the bench along the multi-user path.

49/22

Representation by Residents

Christina Haworth raised an issue with the web-site as comments raised do not seem to be reaching the PC. Cllr. Cowan advised that we have looked into this and the web-site appears to be set up correctly and should direct e-mails to the correct e-mail address.

Chapel and Chapel house remains unoccupied and unmaintained. The building is showing some deterioration in places. Residents have had to report problems in the past. Cllrs agreed to approach the Chapel to understand what their intentions are for the building.

Christina also raised a question about the responsibility of the maintenance of the benches on the village green. Cllr. Cowan advised that the benches will be the responsibility of the group the acquired and installed them. Cllr Cook to ask Darren Hunt if the Clean and Green team would arrange to clean the benches on the village green or if we need to source a different contractor.

50/22 Financial Statement and Report

Balance of Current Account and Cash £11,878.40 as of 30th September 2022. An additional £40 is held in the Yorkshire Bank Account which needs to be closed and transferred to the current account.

Cllrs. discussed that we need to better understand funding priorities and have a clearer plan for residents to understand.

Councillors ratified the payment of invoices as follows up to 30th September 2022:

Mitchells Grievson (audit fee)	300.00
Premier Traffic Management	630.00
Electricity Charges	25.64
Electricity Charges	102.92
Witton Word	262.50
WI Donation for memorial bench	100.00
Bank Charges	18.00
Total	£1,439.06

Upcoming payments include the acquisition of flowers and the Remembrance Day wreath.

Councillors agreed to pay Cllr. Cook's expenses claim of £35.70 to cover the compose that was acquired for the Hanging Baskets.

Councillors agreed to pay £150 to cover the expenses that were incurred as part of the Queen's Jubilee celebrations.

It was resolved:

All financial matters agreed as being correct.

51/22 Planning Matters

- 1) Planning Application for works to Trees at Ashburton House – Cllrs raised no objections
- 2) Planning Application for installation of Solar Panels at Thompsons Wholesale Meats. Cllrs responded positively to this application.

52/22 Neighbourhood and Parish Plan.

Funding streams have been investigated, however, it doesn't look like there are any current opportunities.

DCC has advised that there might be an opportunity for a representative from DCC to provide the Parish Council with some guidance on this.

53/22 Correspondence

Parish Council has received an e-mail from Mike McLaren, who looks after our defibrillator. The defibrillator requires an upgrade which has been arranged with the company that installed it. The defibrillator may be off-line for a couple of days while this happens, but it will be taken of 'The Circuit' while this is the case. Mike also confirmed that he was happy to help the school with their defibrillator too. Cllrs. expressed thanks to Mike for his continued support with the defibrillator.

A comment has been raised by a resident about quad bikes and the track that is establishing at the Lido. Councillors to ask DCC planners if any consent is required.

A resident has approached Councillors about poorly parked cars on Station Road. Cllrs to report problem vehicles.

A resident has contacted the Parish Council about rubbish that is being dumped between Enginemans Terrace and Howden-le-Wear. Cllrs agreed that the resident should contact the County Council directly and come back to the Parish Council if they do not receive assistance.

The Parish Council has been contacted about the access gate to the multi-user path. Cllr. Cowan to put an article in the Witton Word to ask residents to shut the gate to ensure safety of users with children and dogs.

The Parish Council has been notified that the electricity supplied to the village green kiosk will be increasing in price.

CDALC are offering some budgeting training. Cllrs. agreed that Cllrs Cook and Cowan could attend. The cost is £10 per attendee.

54/22

Members Reports

Cllr. Brabban had previously asked if support for Oil Heating could be raised at this meeting. There are potential savings from companies such as 'Oil Can'. There is ambiguity about whether there is any government support for oil users. Cllrs to draft an article for the Witton Word and social media platforms.

Cllr. Docherty asked if we could look into the provision of dropped curbs in the village. There provision is inadequate around the school. Cllr Cook to raise with DCC.

Cllr. Murray-Leslie raised funding availability for warm spaces in Co. Durham. Various locations were considered. It was thought that it might be difficult to implement in certain locations. No current action was agreed however Councillors were willing to re-visit this.

55/22

Chairman's Report

Nothing Further to report

56/22

Date and Time of the next Meeting

14th November 2022 at 18:15

The meeting finished at 19:46.