

Witton le Wear Parish Council

Minutes of the ordinary meeting of Witton le Wear Parish Council held on Monday 11th March 2024 at Witton le Wear Community Centre Commencing at 18.15

1. Welcome and Introductions

Present: Cllr Murray-Leslie (Chair), Cllrs- P. Parsons, L. Docherty, O Wilson, C. Cook, J. Tremewan (Clerk)

Residents: L. Charles, P. Topping, C. Hall

NB: All individuals present agreed to the meeting being recorded.

2. Apologies

Cllr Cowan

3. Declaration of interest

None declared

4. Minutes of the meeting held on 8th January 2024

Minutes of Jan 24 were approved by councillors without amendment.

5. Electronic Decisions

- Repair of Newby Lowson Tomb (email from resident C Hall) C.Hall discusses concerns with the state of the tomb and asks who is responsible? J. Tremewan advises on details around ownership and tenure (as discussed with councillors following the email) and agrees to investigate potential repair.
- No other electronic decisions since last meeting.

Action: HM-L to discuss including a tidy-up with Blooming Witton group

6. Parish Councillor Appointment/Structure

- Cllrs acknowledge and accept Cllr Cowan's resignation.
- Cllrs agreed to wait until the next application period ends before recruiting for both vacant posts.
- Agreed sub group for recruitment consisting of Cllrs Parsons, Wilson and Murray-Leslie would aim to meet 8th April 2024 for interviews.

Action: J.Tremewan organise Notice of Vacancy via DCC.

Action: J.Tremewan to contact community centre to arrange room hire.

7. Matters arising from previous minutes

None were raised.

Witton Word

- Ownership of Witton Word. Cllrs discussed how we progress with the publication moving forward. Cllrs agreed we would continue with our current system for the next edition.
- Cllr Parsons agreed to support with distribution and Cllr Murray-Leslie agreed to edit submitted articles.
- Moving forward Cllrs agreed to explore the option of outsourcing.

Action: J.Tremewan to send an automated reminder to regular contributors

Climate and Nature Group

- Resident L. Charles gives an update on the forum attended regarding the Local Nature Recovery Strategy - a Statutory document that will affect future development. DCC are the responsible body for this initiative and are carrying out a consultation to enable local residents to identify areas of particular value to local nature. This will support the prioritisation of investment from future development to make best use of resources generated.
- Cllrs were advised of the open consultation (until 16th April 24) and requested to view and comment by visiting www.durham.gov.uk/consultation

Action: Cllr Murray-Leslie to share this information via Witton Word

Emergency Response Working Group

- Cllr Wilson queried how emergency packs would be distributed.

Action: J.Tremewan to request update from Cllr Cowan

Local Paths

- no update

Memorial for Queen Elizabeth

- Cllr Cook advises she would like to arrange a plaque, improve access to the bench and complete with planting. It was agreed that we should obtain quotes for a path to be installed.

Action: Cllr Cook obtain 3 quotes for relevant works

Salt Bins

- It was agreed that this would be removed from standing items.

Benches on the Village Green

- Cllr Cook advised that the benches would be ready to be reinstated w/c 18th March 2024.

Correspondence

- Cllr Murray Leslie advises that County Durham Association of Local Councils (CDALC) are sending regular updates on matters that might concern Parish Councils so we can encourage residents to get involved.

Representation by Residents*

- None further (see electronic decisions)

Financial Statement and report

- To follow

Risk Assessment Updates

- none

Planning applications to be considered by the Parish Council

- none

Parish Plan / Neighbourhood Plan

- it is unclear what the current status of Neighbourhood Planning is.

Action: Cllr Murray-Leslie will contact CDALC to clarify.

Correspondence Report

- Cllr Wilson notes her attendance at the inauguration of the new Parish Vicar
- Cllr Murray Leslie reiterates item 12.

Members Reports

- Cllr Cook advises the Slow sign on the entrance on the village will soon be covered by shrubs. Action- Cllr Wilson will contact the Council to request maintenance.

Action: suggest that Cllrs address this as part of the proposed Blooming Witton action day.

- Cllr Cook also mentions parking hazards at Low Barns. Individuals are parking on the road side which is dangerous.

Action: Cllr Wilson will contact the Council to request support.

- Cllr Murray-Leslie fed back that the Blooming Witton meeting held in January 2024 did not establish a new constituted group, however there is still interest in volunteering around hanging baskets and planters, and suggested Cllrs support this by promoting a morning of community activity in spring / early summer. This could include planting around the QE bench and other general tidy-up. A budget of up to £300 was agreed and a provisional date suggested Saturday 15th June 10.30.

Action: Cllr Murray-Leslie to promote via Witton Word.

- Cllr Wilson advises the AAP are looking for a new base as a result of the restructure of the Local Council. Cllr Cook suggests Wolsingham Sports Centre.

Chairman's Report

- none

Date and time of next meeting

- The next meeting of Witton Le Wear Parish Council is on Monday 13th May 2024.
- NB the Annual General Meeting commences at 6pm followed by an Ordinary Meeting at 6.15pm.