

WITTON-LE-WEAR PARISH COUNCIL MINUTES – MAY 2025

Minutes of the ordinary meeting of Witton le Wear Parish Council held on **Monday 12th March 2025** at Witton le Wear Community Centre commencing at 18-40.

Present: Councillors Murray-Leslie (Chair), L Docherty, M Campbell, L Langstaff-Wood

Also present: M McLaren (Parish Council Clerk) L Bentley and C Hall.

25/22 Cllr Murray-Leslie welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked the Councillors who have continued in their roles and for their support electing her back as chair. Cllr Murray-Leslie also thanked Olive Wilson, Sarah Morehead and Paul Parsons who after extended periods working as Parish Councillors have decided to stand down.

25/23 Apologies received from Cllrs: C Cook, P Parsons, O Wilson, S Morehead
Residents: A Yuill.

25/24 Declarations of interest. None declared. Councillors advised that Notification of Pecuniary and Other Interest forms have been emailed to them and need to be returned to the Clerk asap.

25/25 Minutes of the regular meeting held on Monday 10th March were accepted and signed by Cllr Murray-Leslie.

25/26 Electronic decisions:

- £500 microgrant to Witton le Wear Village Voices agreed.
- Up to £250 funding approved for costs to supply compost and plants as required to furnish village green hanging baskets, troughs and gardening.

25/27 Representation by Residents - None

25/28 Actions from previous minutes – Working Groups

A68 traffic working group.

Cllr Campbell reported back that a report had been compiled and sent to Mr John Hewitt Chief Executive at DCC, Cllr Anita Savory and John Shuttleworth, Rt Hon Sam Rushworth MP, Joy Allen County Durham PCC a month ago, to date there have been no replies.

Traffic Engineer Ellis Dunn from DCC has been to site and met several of the councillors to better understand the concerns. Two main issues were raised with examples given to support them. The first one being the numerous serious accidents, collisions and near misses on the A68 along as it runs adjacent Witton le Wear. The speed limit along this section of the road has not been reviewed since 2011. It was noted the information held by DCC and the Police regarding this section of road appears flawed / at odds and did not represent the true situation.

The second issue concerns the existing road infrastructure through the village and the existing 30 mph speed limit. Due to the width and construction of the roads and the size /type of vehicles using it, the need for residents to park curb side that the speed limit and signage needs to be urgently reviewed. Situation ongoing.

Cllr Campbell asked that through the local media available to us we ask the residents of Witton le Wear to report any traffic incidents, near misses, accidents etc so that we can ensure DCC and Police are better informed.

Witton Word

Cllr Morehead has been working closely with South West Durham News who are able to achieve a much higher standard of printing, in colour, at a cost similar to that paid now to Eli Press. Examples were shown of the proposed layout of the paper and the Cllrs voted in favour of the change. The Clerk has been tasked with contacting the various groups who would like to feature in the paper.

Parish Plan

This is ongoing work with Paul Parsons.

25/29 Correspondence Report

Village Transport

An email received from a resident regarding the lack of public traffic serving the village was discussed. The Parish Council have brought this up with DCC and have had a reply from Jonathan Mitchell the Network Planning supervisor. Historically, up until October 2012, Witton-Le-Wear was served by a DRT service 88 operating up to 4 trips during a Monday to Saturday daytime.

Upon a service review at that time, the service 88 was reduced in scale operation due to low demand. Currently, this provides 2 trips per day during a Monday to Friday to maintain Student access to Bishop Auckland College.

The Durham County Council Link2 service and Access Bus as part of Integrated Passenger Transport also provides a service during Monday to Friday daytime. More information is available on Durham County Councils website [Link2 Dial-a-Ride bus service - Durham County Council](#)

Litter Picking

We were advised that some litter picking equipment was available f.o.c. to Witton le Wear Parish Council from Durham Wildlife Trust. The equipment has since been received and the Cllrs wished to convey their thanks to Durham Wildlife Trust but more importantly to the residents who work tirelessly keeping our village tidy from litter.

25/30 Strimming and Clearing Paths

An order has been placed to have paths 30, 119, 129, 132, 133, 134 and 156 strimmed and tidied.

Lynda Bentley advised on the state of some of the paths and the type of works required.

Details of the paths can be found on www.durham.gov.uk/definitivemaps.

Trimming the trees adjacent the junction adjacent the Dun Cow was discussed but does not fall into the Parish Council remit.

25/31 – The AGM was accepted

25/32 – The financial report was considered in the AGM

WITTON-LE-WEAR PARISH COUNCIL MINUTES – MAY 2025

25/33 – Planning – No plans affecting Witton le Wear have been submitted to DCC

25/34 – Facebook – All present in discussion felt Facebook could be put to better use to advertise Parish Council activities and general activities in the village. Cllr L Langstaff-Wood is taking the lead on this work.

25/35 – Members Reports

There were no additional reports

25/36 – Parish Councillor Co Opted.

Laura Langstaff-Wood (proposed HML seconded LD) and Lynda Bentley (proposed HML seconded MC) were both co-opted and are now Parish Councillors.

Meeting closed at 19-45

Next ordinary meeting of the Parish Council – 14th July 2025, 18-15, at WLW Community Centre

Signed by the Chair H Murray-Leslie Date..... 14/7/25