

Whitley Parish Council

1.0 The meeting was opened at 7.00 pm by the Chair Cllr Walton.

2.0 Open Public Forum(OPF) 21st April 2026

2.1 Residents requested an update on the progress of the planning application lodged by Harron Homes. Councillors advised that details of the status and actions taken will be discussed in the first item of the agenda.

2.2 A resident expressed concern about the regular parking of a motor home blocking the entrance to the Nature Reserve. Questions were raised about the reason for the siting of the vehicle and whether action can be taken to prevent unauthorised parking.

Action: The clerk to make enquiries with North Yorkshire Council to ascertain the legal authority of the Parish Council to restrict access to parking on the Nature Reserve Land and the practicality of posting a suitable sign notifying the prohibition.

Action: No wider corroborated issues identified through parish council channels; matter to be progressed via MP's office. Clerk to provide the resident with contact details for the constituency office to enable direct communication.

2.3 Residents made observations on the state of the Daffodil Park commenting on the deterioration of the paths, fencing and general condition of the area. Councillors emphasised with the sentiments of the residents and outlined some of the actions that have taken and the challenges faced in maintaining the facilities.

2.4 The Chair closed the open public forum.

Minutes of the Whitley Parish Council Meeting held on 21st April 2026 at Whitley & Eggborough Primary School Building – 10/26

3.0 **Present:** Cllr Walton (Chair), Cllr J White (Vice Chair), Cllr Humphrey, Cllr Cole, and Clerk to the Council J Hunter.

4.0 Apologies for absence:

4.1 Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Barber

5.0 Disclosure of interest:

5.1 There were no declarations of interest for items to be discussed at the meeting.

6.0 Minutes of the Whitley Parish Council Meeting held on 24th March 2026:

6.1 It was resolved the minutes were a true record of the Whitley Parish Council meeting held on 24th March 2026.

Action: The Clerk to present to the Chair for signature.

7.0 Matters for information and action as required:

7.1 **Harron Homes:** Councillors received a detailed update on ongoing engagement with the planning authority regarding the proposed 85-home development. It was noted that North Yorkshire Council currently lacks a five-year housing land supply, placing it under pressure to approve developments deemed sustainable under the national planning

framework. The developer is seeking to classify the site as “grey belt,” potentially strengthening their position.

Key concerns raised include the shortfall in proposed affordable housing provision, significant objections from Yorkshire Water on public health grounds relating to wastewater capacity, and highways safety issues, particularly for children accessing local schools. It was acknowledged that, despite these concerns and the Parish Council’s formal objection, there remains a strong likelihood that the application could be approved, subject to conditions.

Councillors discussed the ongoing parallel process of engaging, on a without prejudice basis, in discussions regarding Section 106 mitigation. This includes determining appropriate financial contributions and identifying local priorities, particularly in relation to open space provision and potential improvements to Daffodil Park. It was noted that current developer proposals fall short of required open space provision.

Further discussion covered the methodology for calculating Section 106 contributions, with concerns raised regarding the use of outdated baseline figures. The need to present a clear and evidence-based schedule of requirements was emphasised. Councillors also highlighted the importance of maintaining a robust evidence trail to support any future challenge or complaint regarding the decision-making process.

It was agreed the Parish Council maintains its objection to the development but will continue to engage in the planning process on a without prejudice basis to influence Section 106 outcomes. Preparation of a detailed schedule of mitigation requirements is a priority.

Actions:

- Clerk to circulate correspondence from the planning officer and draft response for councillor review.
- Councillors to contribute to the development of a prioritised schedule of Section 106 requirements, including improvements to open space such as Daffodil Park.
- Continued engagement with the planning officer to progress both objection points and mitigation discussions.
- Consideration to be given to providing an update to residents on the current position.

7.2 Nature Reserve: Cllr Cole provided an update on the ongoing management of the nature reserve. Installation of the benches by Mushroom Farm staff remains outstanding. An on-site meeting has been arranged with a contractor to review requirements for cutting back brambles, dog roses and other overgrown vegetation in specific areas. Councillors also discussed gathering historical information about the Common from long-standing residents, with a view to incorporating this into a new information board within the reserve. The potential use of the Community Payback team to assist with vegetation clearance was considered, subject to the completion of appropriate risk assessments.

Actions:

- Follow up on installation of benches.
- Proceed with contractor engagement to plan vegetation management works.
- Collect historical information from residents for inclusion on the information board.
- Undertake necessary risk assessments to enable potential use of the Community Payback team

7.3 Parish Council Newsletter: Councillors discussed the production of the annual newsletter, which will include key information and contact details for North Yorkshire Council alongside updates on current Parish Council activities and priorities. The

newsletter will also include a call-to-action encouraging residents to become more involved in supporting local projects, under the theme “Your Community Needs You.”

Cllr Humphrey outlined the proposed format as a two-sided A4 leaflet, with standing information and contact details on one side and community updates on the other. Key topics identified for inclusion include the Harron Homes development, public spaces, George and Dragon, Gale Common, the precept and council expenditure, traffic management, recruitment of new councillors, and the work of the Community Payback team.

Actions:

- Draft newsletter to be prepared and circulated to all councillors.
- Councillors to contribute brief text for inclusion in the newsletter.

7.4 Development of the Website: The Clerk reported ongoing efforts to engage with Vision ICT to agree a timetable for upgrading the Parish Council website to the latest version of their application. Frustration was expressed regarding difficulties in contacting customer support by telephone.

Actions: Clerk to continue efforts to contact Vision ICT and progress arrangements for the website upgrade.

7.5 Ward Councillor: Councillors discussed the level of engagement with the County Councillor and noted that there is no formal requirement for attendance at Parish Council meetings. It was acknowledged that communication is typically conducted via email or social media, although some councillors expressed a preference for more direct and occasional face-to-face engagement. The importance of establishing clear communication channels and expectations was highlighted, particularly in relation to key local issues such as highways, planning and other county-level matters.

Councillors considered whether a more structured approach to communication would be beneficial, including setting out specific requests or issues when contacting the County Councillor, rather than general correspondence.

Actions:

- Consider writing formally to the County Councillor to clarify preferred communication methods and expectations.
- Ensure future correspondence is focused on specific issues requiring input or support.

8.0 Correspondence received: The Clerk summarised the details of correspondence received by email or post.

8.1 Emails and correspondence.

8.1..1 Email from Eggborough Parish Clerk requesting any information concerning clearance activity on land adjacent to the entrance of Templar Close.

- Social media: Cllr White provided an update on activity on the Parish Council's social media pages.

8.1..1 Cllr Humphrey commented on responses following a posting by Cllr White on the work of the Community Payback Team. Cllr White commented on the positive responses that had been received from a resident who had replied to his request for volunteers to participate in activities for the community.

9.0 Planning matters: The Clerk provided a summary of the planning applications made in the month for review and consideration by the Council. There were no planning applications to consider.

10.0 Council Finance & Administration:

10.1 RFO Report as at 21/04/2026:

Bank/Account	Income since 1st April 2026	Expenditure since 1st April 2026	Current Balance	Notes/Comment
Santander Deposit	12.32		15,722.11	Interest paid monthly
Santander Current Account		476.00	12,253.15	No interest
Total Bank Balances			27,975.26	
Less following funds:				
Allocated Funds		Surplus from Crossing Drainage Daffodil Field Notice Board for Templar Close CIL – Larth Close Eggborough Power Fund	1,798.71 8,000.00 518.74 7,067.46 878.00	
Total Allocated funds			18,262.91	
Parish Council Bank Funds		-Future Development and facility provision –Buildings, ROS & Nature Reserve -Public Liability Insurance -Clerk Remuneration -Donations -Management costs -Repairs -Unexpected/unforeseeable expenditure.	9,712.35	
VAT due for reclaim			5,268.54	
Total Unallocated Parish Funds			14,980.89	

The Clerk presented a cash flow summary, detailing actual receipts and payments up to April 2026 for the new financial year. Based on budget expectations and planned expenditure, the estimated year-end balance was noted to be £14,709.87 subject to the accuracy of ongoing budget assumptions. Councillors reviewed the anticipated expenditure for the forthcoming year noting the key items of costs particularly related to the management of the open spaces with grass cutting and the maintenance of trees.

The Clerk advised that an additional CIL payment of £4,942.08 will be made by North Yorkshire Council covering the levy due on the development within Larth Close outstanding since 2023/24.

10.2 Accounts Payable: The following payments were approved for settlement by cheque.

Cheque No.	Payable to:	Amount: £
	Yorkshire Local Councils Association	476.00

10.3 Accounts Payable retrospectively: The following retrospective payments made by bank transfer since the last council meeting were approved.

Cheque No.	Payable to:	Amount: £

11.0 Recreational Open Space in Whitley:

11.1 Parks and Verges: The following observations concerning various matters appertaining to the Open Spaces in the Village.

11.1..1 Parks & Playground Maintenance: Councillors reviewed the condition and maintenance requirements of Daffodil Park. While the overall condition of the park was considered satisfactory, a significant safety concern was raised regarding a gap between the entrance gate and adjacent fencing, which could allow children or animals to access the A19. The need for a suitable barrier was emphasised, with options such as additional fencing or alternative solutions to be explored.

The fencing around the Calor enclosure was noted to be in poor condition and no longer serving a clear purpose, with agreement that it should be removed, potentially with assistance from the Community Payback team.

Councillors discussed wider maintenance issues, including the condition of pathways and drainage, noting that more substantial improvement works may be required but could be deferred pending any potential Section 106 funding linked to the Harron Homes development.

A dumping area within the park was considered, with mixed views on whether removal was necessary; it was generally agreed to monitor the situation, recognising some ecological value. Additional matters included blocked access to a rear gate due to parked vehicles, mole activity within the park and surrounding verges, and the status of previously identified funding for playground improvements.

Actions:

- Obtain quotations for installing a barrier or fencing to address the gap at the park entrance.
- Arrange removal of the Calor enclosure fencing, potentially using the Community Payback team.
- Monitor the waste/dumping area and consider future management options.
- Consider signage to prevent obstruction of the rear access gate.
- Review options for addressing mole activity where appropriate.

- Progress plans for playground improvements using allocated funding and liaise with North Yorkshire Council as required

11.1..2 Community Payback Team: Cllr White reported that the Community Payback team has attended on two occasions and plans are in place for further work at the nature reserve. It was noted that the type of work they can undertake is limited, generally to low-risk tasks such as clearing, moving materials, and basic maintenance, with activities requiring specialist equipment or working at height not permitted.

Councillors discussed the need to liaise with the probation service to confirm suitable tasks, with emphasis on engaging directly with team leaders who allocate work. Potential tasks identified included painting the notice board on Silver Street, cleaning benches (including at Blackthorn), and other general maintenance activities.

Cllr White indicated a willingness to hand over liaison responsibilities to another councillor if required.

Actions:

- Liaise with the probation service to confirm scope of suitable work and arrange future sessions.
- Identify and prioritise appropriate tasks for the Community Payback team.

11.1..3 Verge cutting: Cllr White commented on the initial quality of the ground's maintenance work, noting that it appeared satisfactory at this stage. It was acknowledged that this represents an early assessment and that performance should continue to be monitored over time.

Actions: Review the quality of grounds maintenance over the coming year and consider whether any adjustments to contractor arrangements or expenditure are required.

12.0 A19 Safety:

Cllr White reported concerns regarding road safety, including previous issues raised about vehicle speeds on Gravel Hill Lane, noting that a road sign had been repositioned.

It was also reported that a road sign on the A19 had been damaged following a collision involving two vehicles, both of which left the scene. The incident has been reported to North Yorkshire Council Highways.

Actions: Monitor response from North Yorkshire Council Highways regarding repair or replacement of the damaged road sign.

13.0 A.O.B:

13.1 Councillors noted correspondence confirming that ownership of Gale Common has transferred from Eggborough Power to a new company, which has expressed an interest in meeting with the Parish Council. A meeting has been arranged to discuss ongoing management and the associated community grant scheme. It was also reported that there has been no further update regarding the ongoing legal matter, although contact has been made with a neighbouring parish council to share background information.

13.2 Cllr White advised that a meeting has been arranged with North Yorkshire Council regarding the reinstatement of the waste bin at Templar Close, with the possibility that the Parish Council may need to fund installation.

13.3 Councillors were informed that the George and Dragon pub has been taken over by a local resident, with discussion around supporting the pub as a community asset. It was suggested that a defibrillator training/refresher session could be arranged at the venue, led by a qualified professional, with a small budget allocated for refreshments. The idea of holding a Parish Council social event at the pub was also proposed to show support.

13.4 A request was made for council minutes to be finalised promptly following meetings.

Actions Arising:

- Attend meeting with new Gale Common owners to discuss future plans for the management of the development and community grant scheme.
- Cllr White to meet with North Yorkshire Council regarding Templar Close bin reinstatement.
- Cllr Cole to liaise with the ambulance service to explore arranging defibrillator training at the George and Dragon.
- Councillors to consider organising a Parish Council social event at the George and Dragon.
- Clerk to aim to finalise and circulate meeting minutes in a timely manner.

14.0 Confirm the date, time and place of next meeting: Next Parish Council Meeting:

Tuesday 19th May 2026 at 7pm at Whitley & Eggborough Primary School.

Closure of meeting: 09:10 pm