

# **Whitley Parish Council**

1. The meeting was opened at 7.00 pm by the Chairman Cllr Humphrey.

## **2. Open Public Forum(OPF) 8<sup>th</sup> September 2020**

2.1. There were no members of the public present during the virtual meeting. Cllr White took the opportunity during the public forum to advise the Council that the Whitley Allotment Association has now 12 people on the waiting list; 3 from Whitley the remainder from Eggborough.

2.2. The Chair closed the public forum.

## **Minutes of the Whitley Parish Council Virtual Online Meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> September 2020 - 05/20**

3. **Present:** Cllr Humphrey, Cllr Blackburn Cllr Cole, Cllr White, Cllr Broadbent, Cllr Woodhead and Clerk to the Council J Hunter, Selby District and North Yorkshire County (SD&NYC) Cllr McCartney.

### **4. Apologies for absence:**

4.1. Apologies for absence were received by Cllr Walton.

### **5. Disclosures of interest:**

5.1. It was noted that Cllr T Woodhead, Cllr S Cole and Cllr D Broadbent are members of the Gale Common Action Group. A community group campaigning against the Gale Common Ash Extraction planning application that is due for consideration by the North Yorkshire County Council planning committee.

5.2. There were no other interests registered.

### **6. Minutes of the virtual video conference meeting held on 28<sup>th</sup> July 2020 of Whitley Parish Council:**

6.1. The Council agreed that the minutes of the Whitley Parish Council meeting held on 28<sup>th</sup> July 2020 are a true record and accordingly were approved for signature by the Chair Cllr Humphrey.

**Action:** Clerk to deliver a copy of the minutes for signature by Cllr Humphrey.

### **7. Opening matters for information and action as required:**

7.1. **Devolution for North Yorkshire:** The Chair and the Clerk provided a briefing covering a recent online presentation hosted by the Chair of Selby District Council Mark Crane and the Chief Executive Janet Waggott into the proposed bid to Central Government that is in the course of preparation pursuant of the greater devolution of power, financial and administrative from Whitehall to Unitary Authorities. The Selby District were supporting an approach that envisaged the amalgamation of the present district authorities operating within North Yorkshire into two regions: East and West Yorkshire. Selby District would combine with York, Ryedale and Scarborough in partnership to form an authority supporting a population of 465,000 in the East sector. The West Sector would comprise Harrogate Hambleton, Richmondshire and Craven supporting 363,000. The proposal anticipated the

appointment of a Mayor who would serve to integrate the East and West authorities and be responsible for the management of a financial budget of £25m to cover strategic development for the whole region covering such issues as transport infrastructure.

The proposal contrasts with an alternative bid that will be delivered by North Yorkshire County Council details of which were introduced during an earlier online presentation by the Chief Executive of NYCC Richard Flinton. The NYCC bid / proposal involved the integration of some 731 Parish Councils and 6 District authorities coming together to achieve a unitary authority within the stipulated time limits.

It is worth noting that both the Selby and NYCC proposals wish to encourage the contribution and involvement of the various stakeholders in the design of the proposal and have indicated they will continue to keep all parties informed as their proposals are developed.

The proposals are due for completion for submission in time for evaluation and decision in early Spring 2021. The anticipated implementation period will be 18 Months with the new authority due to be up and running by April 2023.

SD&NYC Cllr McCartney shared his observations and comments on the status of the various proposals. Whilst personally in favour of unitary authorities Cllr McCartney considered that any successful proposal should be assessed against its benefit to the local community nor should the implementation be rushed. The Devolution White Paper has yet to be published and until this and the following legislation is in place nothing can be progressed. He suggested that while the North Yorkshire bid may offer a simpler solution its implementation would not necessarily benefit the residents in the south of the region and cited as an illustration the impact on planning. All planning would be managed in Northallerton not only for minerals and waste but also for residential homes and commercial developments. At present York City Council are in shortfall in their requirement for residential development; it has limited green space. The concern is that under the regime of the Unitary Authority this shortfall would be taken up with increased developments in Ryedale and Selby.

He contrasted, however, the issue of Social Service in adult and child care that would better be served in his opinion by a fully integrated County Council Service for the whole of North Yorkshire.

Questioned about the management of housing stock he speculated that such services would likely be maintained as presently established within each district. The key savings emerging from the unification and devolution would be derived from the restructuring of top-level management. Second tier management and below would necessarily and practically be retained on a regional basis.

He also expressed concerns that these proposals are being drafted by the Executives of the Councils without due input and consultation with the District and County Councillors. Ultimately, he considered that the decision would be largely political with the involvement of the regional constituent MP's.

Cllr Humphrey concluded that based on his understanding the status of Parish councils would remain unchanged under either proposal whether NYCC or East / West. He expressed his own concerns that both unitary approaches would serve to place critical services of planning and schools even more remotely from the regions in the south to the detriment of local residents. Cllr White echoed these concerns and questioned in what manner and when representations should be made by Parish Councillors. SD&NYC Cllr McCartney advised that in the absence of a Devolution White Paper it is not possible to be clear of any deadlines. It was concluded that any questions or concerns should be made directly to the Executive teams in both Selby District and North Yorkshire County Council.

- 7.2. **Safer Streets Scheme:** Mail shots have been sent out from the project team managing the Safer Streets initiative on behalf of North Yorkshire Police. Current registration with the scheme and take up of the offer of home security surveys is somewhat disappointing; in total to date 62 residents across the region have registered with only 12 registrations from Whitley residents. It was noted that not all Councillors have received a copy of the mailing however, this is likely because there were two mailshots planned one 1<sup>st</sup> Sept the other two weeks later on 15<sup>th</sup> September. Given the commitment of the Parish Council to support the campaign it was agreed posters would be distributed throughout the village promoting the scheme.

**Action:** Safer Street Posters to be distributed throughout the village.

- 7.3. **Gale Common Extraction Proposal:** The Clerk summarised the status of the planning application. The NYCC planning committee have several virtual meetings scheduled extending from September into the New Year however no date has been set for the consideration of the Gale Common Application. SD&NYC Cllr McCartney informed the meeting that the planning officers report on the application has been prepared and the document is with the legal department for technical review. There is yet no indication of when the planning committee will schedule the application for decision.

It is noted that Nigel Adams MP has lodged a representation with the planning committee concerning the application and Cllr Woodhead reported that Dr Ferguson of the MP's office has expressed considerable interest and support in the progress of the case and objections made by the local community.

- 7.4. **Christmas Lights:** The Clerk outlined details of a proposal commended by Cllr Cole which involved the fitments of solar powered Christmas Lights in the village. At a total cost of £1,200 ten Christmas lights could be deployed along the A19. The particular display is a half section of a Christmas Tree with lights, set in a half tub that would be affixed to selected lampposts. Installation would be at the end of November with switch on scheduled to coincide with the Christmas Tree lighting ceremony set for early December. The fitments must be approved by the North Yorkshire County Council with the insurance risk borne by the Parish Council.

The Councillors considered the proposals and concluded on balance that this option presented insufficient value for money to be progressed. However, it was recognised that rather than abort any idea of the provision of Christmas Lights in 2020 with a view to revisiting the idea in 2021, other options may be brought for considered to the next Council meeting in October.

Cllr Cole informed the meeting that in anticipation of the Christmas Tree lighting event she would consult with the administration staff of the primary school extending an invitation to pupils to suggest songs and carols to be included in the event.

**Action:** Councillors to consider positive alternative solutions to the provision of Christmas Lights in the village. Cllr Cole consult with staff of Whitley & Eggborough Primary School in the preparation of a song list.

- 7.5. **Memorial to Cllr J Watson:** Cllr Humphrey advised the meeting that he now has in his possession the Oak Tree that is proposed to be planted as a lasting memorial to Cllr Watson. At just over 1 metre in height it is ready to be planted in an appropriate location in Daffodil Park. Having discussed the matter with the wife of the Late Cllr Watson a suitable position for the tree and plaque has been identified details of which Cllr Humphrey will circulate to Councillors for information and observations. Subject to agreement plans will then be put in place to organise the tree planting ceremony.

**Action:** Cllr Humphrey to circulate details of the proposed location in Daffodil Park of the memorial tree.

- 7.6. **Training:** The Clerk advised that the September online training programme offered by the Yorkshire Council Association had been received and will be forwarded to Councillors for their review and consideration.
- 7.7. **Community Fund Application:** Cllr White advised the meeting that in time for the closing date for receipt of applications that he has submitted a grant fund request to North Yorkshire Police's under their initiative supporting Community Led Road Safety Projects. As outlined in a recent email he informed Councillors that he had applied for funding to cover the cost of an addition crossing point on the A19 and for a larger bus stop/shelter at the southern end of the village by Silver Street.
- 7.8. **Footpath:** SD&NYC Cllr McCartney assured the meeting that the public path diversion has been agreed and the new route will be implemented in due course. The Clerk informed the Councillors that having discussed the matter with the Definitive Map Officer of North Yorkshire Council he was informed that the diversion has been agreed details of which are with the legal department for review. Once approved the order for diversion will be authorised by affixing of the County Seal with signature and notified in the local press after which the new route will be signposted.
8. **Correspondence received:** The Clerk summarised details of correspondence received by email and post.
- 8.1. Correspondence received other than communications that are included under the specific agenda items was as follows:
- 8.1.1. An email advising that the pad's affixed to the Defibrillator located at the George and Dragon are due for replacement in the next few months. Noted
- 8.1.2. An email from Citizens Advice Hambleton thanking the Parish Council for their donation to the Charity. Noted
- 8.1.3. An email from Wentvale Skips confirming collection of the skip from Whitefield Lane who kindly provided FOC the skip for the removal of the old bench. Noted
- 8.1.4. An email from contracts team leader offering free A4 sized anti-litter posters for display in the village. Noted
- 8.1.5. An email from Selby Planning Enforcement providing a copy of a Planning Contravention Notice to the operators of Gale Common Motor Cross requiring them to supply information within 21 days on how the track had been used for each date they had been opened in 2020. Noted.
- Action** Clerk to monitor the situation and responses and to provide Planning Enforcement with the details of the dates of operation of the track as logged by Cllr Blackburn.
9. **Planning matters:** The Clerk provided a summary of the planning applications made in the month for review and consideration by the Council.
- 9.1. **2020/0815/HPA** - C Barnes, 1 Downes Court, Formation of new vehicle access from Selby Road and creation of off street parking. Noted with no objections or comments.
- 2020/0877/HPA** – D Green, 7 Cathcart Close, First Floor extension. Noted with no objections or comments.

**2020/0898/HPA** – Mr & Mrs Dearing, 21 Yew Tree Park, erection of single storey garage within garden. Noted with no objections or comments.

**9.2.** There were no planning applications granted approval during the month.

**10. Council Finance & Administration:**

**10.1. RFO Report as at 08/09/2020:**

<b>Bank/Account</b>	<b>Income since 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020</b>	<b>Expenditure since 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020</b>	<b>Of which is 106 expenditure</b>	<b>Current Balance</b>	<b>Notes/Comment</b>
Santander Deposit	138.32	2,000.00	Nil	71,054.41	Interest paid monthly
Santander Current Account (Cash Book)	6,830.00	8,155.12	2,550.00	806.60	No interest
<b>Total Bank Balances</b>				<b><u>71,861.01</u></b>	
<b>Less following funds:</b>					
Protected 106 funds		3 x Play areas/ROS and the Tree Lines.		47,675.50	
Other protected funds		A19, Defibrillator fund		2,644.65 <u>69.60</u> 2,714.25	
Total Protected funds					
PC Reserve Funds		Legal Action and Complaints against the Council. Future Development and Facility Provision –Buildings. Future Development and Facility Provision – ROS. Future Development and Facility Provision -Nature Reserve. Unexpected/unforeseeable expenditure.		12,401.40	
<b>Total protected/reserve funds</b>				62,791.15	
<b>Balance:</b>					
<b>Unprotected funds available to the Council</b>		Current account balance + 106 Funds available to transfer		<u>9,069.86</u>	Includes cheques payable in 10.2

The Clerk presented his report on the financial position of the Parish Council with reference to detailed income and expenditure statements providing details of receipts and payments for the period from 1<sup>st</sup> April to 8<sup>th</sup> Sept 2020. In addition, the clerk presented details of the Parish Balance Sheet showing the value off capital assets held in the Parish and its total financial resources.

## Review and status of VAT claim

The Clerk presented full details of the value of outstanding VAT to claim amounting to £1,212.02. The Clerk reminded the Council that although the annual VAT claim can now be raised he was continuing to delay submission of the claim until after completion of the purchase of the Vehicle Activated Sign so that the VAT element included in the purchase invoice for the equipment can be recovered within the Councils 2020 claim rather than it being held over until July 2021.

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

Cheque No.	Payable to:	Amount: £

- 10.3. Accounts Payable retrospectively:** The following retrospective payments made by cheque since the last council meeting were approved.

Cheque No.	Payable to:	Amount: £
22468	Craig Bennett	200.00
22469	J R Hunter – reimbursement of material for bench	63.19

- 10.4. Online Banking Options:** The Clerk outlined alternative options to affect payments from the Parish Councils current account aimed at expediting payments to suppliers. To make online payment transactions a new account would have to be opened having a single individual with the authority to initiate online payments. The Responsible Finance Officer could assume this roll with sums being transferred from the main deposit account as and when necessary to cover the value of payments that would be made for the new account. However, during the period of the Covid crisis Santander have suspended the opening of all new bank accounts.

An interim approach would be, rather than cheques being generated and signed, for payments to suppliers to be listed on an account transaction form detailing, the amount, the account names, sort codes and bank account numbers of suppliers to be paid in any given period. The form having been signed by two cheque signatories in compliance with the bank mandate when then be faxed to Santander Business Banking in Liverpool. The customer service team based in Liverpool would then affect the appropriate bank transaction in compliance with the request.

## 11. Recreational Open Space in Whitley:

### 11.1. Parks and Verges:

- 11.1.1. Parks & Playground Maintenance:** Cllr White briefed the Councillors on his meeting with a potential garden subcontractor and outlined the nature of the maintenance work to be undertaken on an ongoing basis for such areas as, the shrubbery, the War

Memorial and tree line. The contractor's hourly rate is £15 for an anticipated period of 6 hours per month which equates to approximately £100 per month.

**Proposed** by Cllr White that the contractor be appointed to undertake an agreed programme of garden maintenance in the Daffodil Park subject to a review of the position and future requirements in January 2020. **Seconded by** Cllr Humphrey. **Carried** unanimously.

11.1.2. **Park improvements:** Cllr White outlined the progress to date of a sub-committee of Cllr White, Cllr Humphrey and Cllr Cole supported by the Clerk investigating the addition of play and gym equipment in Daffodil Park for early teens and adults. Cllr White was seeking agreement in principle by the Parish Council for engagement with potential contractors inviting proposals for the installation and supply of appropriate park equipment. Cllr White suggested that funding applications could be made to suitable sources including the national lottery following a clear specification of requirement and benefit.

**Action:** Sub-committee approach potential contractors with the object of the formulation of a specification of the appropriate equipment to update the Council at the next meeting.

11.1.3. **Management of Trees on Daffodil Park and Lee View:** The Clerk provided details of recommendations and quotations from George Fillingham the Garden Contractor in the management of the trees at various locations. A deep cut back to 4 feet of the hazel trees near the play area at the border of the Daffodil Park and adjoining property on Whitefield Close, in addition to the trimming of low hanging branches of the trees in Daffodil Park at a price of £280. The cut back of hazel trees in the open ground by the football pitch and play area of Lee View at a price of £200. In addition, the contractor recommended the removal of trees bordering the Lee View pitch and the properties on Lee View and replacement with Hazel bushes. This will offer a much more manageable collection of boundary trees.

A couple of trees in Daffodil Park are leaning heavily and are in danger of being uprooted in heavy winds. Their removal is recommended to avoid collapse.

**Action:** Tree cutting work to be ordered for completion as soon as practical. A second opinion regarding the leaning trees to be obtained for the newly appointed park garden contractor.

11.1.4. **Nature Reserve:** The Clerk summarised the recommendations of George Fillingham in the management of the bramble and fern undergrowth in the nature reserve. A selective herbicidal spray be applied to a 2-metre-wide strip each side of the footpath in the Reserve at a price of £200. In addition, excessive growth of brambles around the signage of the reserve to be trimmed.

**Action:** The herbicidal application to be ordered for completion as soon as possible.

11.1.5. **Verge cutting:** The Clerk reported that grass cutting, and verge maintenance continues in accordance with the routine schedule. The bunds and the land between Rosslyn and Garnsway that had not been included in the regular programme of cuts have been strimmed and will be cut on an intermittent basis as warranted by the extent of vegetation growth.

11.2. **Other issues or matters to report:** The Clerk updated the Council on the repair and work to be undertaken by HAGs on the Play Areas. Originally, this work was planned for completion in July and has been constantly delayed. In a recent communication from the

project team of HAGS they have given an undertaking to expedite the completion of the work within the next month.

**Action:** The Clerk to progress and chase up the completion of the work.

## 12. A19 Safety:

12.1. **Purchase of additional Vehicle Activated Signs (VAS):** Cllr White advised that due to backlogs because of the Covid restrictions installation of the sign will be delayed until later in the year. The earliest dates being during October.

12.2. **Speeding on the A19:** There were no other matters to report.

## 13. A.O.B.

13.1. SD&NYC Councillor McCartney provided an update on the status of the Gale Common Motor Cross Planning Application. The latest application has been withdrawn which now opens the operator to enforcement action for any breaches to the planning conditions to which the site is currently subject. The withdrawal followed the submission of an objection to the application by a landscape consultant on the grounds that the erection of a bund would adversely affect the green belt.

13.2. SD & NYC Cllr McCartney advised that there has been considerable delay to the commencement of the major civil engineering works on the A19, the repair of which will potentially be at a substantial at an estimated cost of £6.5 million. The progress of the primary contractor Balfour Beatty has been hampered by several factors. The causeway upon which the road surface is laid required ground radar surveyance that took several weeks to complete; the redirection of the underground gas main was delayed until late September 2020 and the movement of the telephone cable has yet to be commenced. It is worth noting that the extent of the problem and the true cost will only become clear when the road surface is removed, and the underlying causeway examined. The delay clearly is having a significant impact on the economy in the region.

13.3. Cllr Blackburn enquired about the location of the Gale Common Protest banner that had been sited on a resident's fence. Cllr Woodhead advised that the banner was now in his possession and it was his intention to affix it to the fence at his own property.

13.4. Cllr Humphrey noting that resurfacing of Learning Lane had been completed the contractors had left road furniture and a spoil heap of the residue of surfacing material.

**Action:** Clerk to notify Highways of the spoil heap and request removal of surplus material and equipment from the roadside.

13.5. Cllr White observed that the village signs have now been cleaned by Mr Slater a resident of the village using the recently purchased jet wash system and suggested that a letter of thanks from the Parish Council be posted to Mr Slater.

**Action:** Cllr White prepare a letter of thanks to be signed by Cllr Humphrey.

13.6. Cllr White reported that Mr Slater had volunteered to undertake necessary repairs to the Silver Street Notice Board.



**Action:** Cllr White to liaise with Mr Slater in sanctioning the repairs to the Notice Board.

13.7. Cllr White noted that the litter bin by the underpass is in need of replacement and should be included in the budgets for the new financial year. Cllr Humphrey also, commented upon the poor state of the underpass and its need for refurbishment. He expressed the view that this is an issue that the Parish Council should pursue with the appropriate departments within the North Yorkshire authority.

13.8. Cllr White sought an update on the position adopted by the administration team at Whitley & Eggborough Primary School concerning when the school would be open to facilitate the recommencement of the Parish Council physical meetings. The Clerk advised that the school is not yet prepared to enter into any discussion of when the school or the annex would be available to accommodate public meetings. Cllr White suggested that the Clerk may wish to consult and seek advice from the Yorkshire Local Council Association regarding recommended practice.

13.9. Cllr White requested clarification concerning the holding of the Annual General Meeting of the Council. The Clerk advised that emergency legislation had been passed enabling all local authorities including Parish Councils not to hold their Annual Meeting and that appointments that would be dealt with at the meeting will continue until the next annual meeting of the authority.

13.10. Cllr Blackburn pointed out double yellow lines on Whitefield Lane and Learning Lane have completely faded.

**Action:** Clerk to advise Area 7 Highways of the shortfall in the road markings and request action.

#### **14. Confirm the date, time and place of next meeting:**

**14.1. Next Parish Council Meeting:** Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> October at 7pm via “Zoom” video conference.

**15. Closure of meeting:** 8:57 pm