

Whitley Parish Council

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

2.0 Open Public Forum(OPF) 15th October 2024

2.1 There were no comments or questions raised by members of the public attending the meeting.

2.2 The Chair closed the public forum and proceeded to the conduct of the Parish meeting.

Minutes of the Whitley Parish Council Meeting held on 15th October 2024 at Whitley & Eggborough Primary School Annex Building – 05/25

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

4.0 Apologies for absence:

4.1 All members of the Council were present at the meeting.

5.0 Disclosure of interest:

5.1 There were no other interests registered.

6.0 Minutes of the Whitley Parish Council Meeting held on 17th September 2024:

6.1 Subject to some minor amendments to the contents of the minutes it was resolved the minutes were a true record of the Whitley Parish Council meeting held on 17th September 2024.

Action: The Clerk to affect the minor amendments to the minutes and present to the Chair for signature.

7.0 Matters for information and action as required:

7.1 **Park Land behind Tunstall Healthcare:** Cllr Thompson informed the Council that a meeting has been scheduled with the landowners for Thursday, 17th October, to discuss the proposed land transfer to the Parish Council. Key points to be clarified include the exact boundaries of the land being offered, whether a formal legal transfer is intended, anticipated maintenance costs, and whether the landowner will provide any financial contributions toward upkeep. Councillors discussed potential cost implications, including landscaping, and noted the importance of understanding the owners' plans for the remaining land in their possession.

7.2 **HGV Movements on Gravel Hill Lane:** Councillors reviewed a quotation from North Yorkshire Highways for installing a speed hump on Gravel Hill Lane, priced at £4,500. Due to the high cost and lack of available grant funding, the Council decided not to pursue this option at this stage. Cllr White presented recent data from the speed camera on Gravel Hill Lane, which confirmed that only a small percentage of vehicles exceeded 35 mph. Councillors agreed to seek residents' views on potential traffic-calming measures before considering further actions, such as speed cameras. A leaflet drop to gather residents' opinions will be considered for next year.

Action: Councillors to discuss the idea of a leaflet drop to residents of Gravel Hill Lane during the Parish Council Meeting in January 2025.

7.3 Gale Common Community Fund: The Clerk reported the receipt of £900 from the Gale Common Community Fund to finance a new notice board at Templar Close. Cllr White volunteered to coordinate with the Eggborough Power engineering team to handle the installation upon delivery. He also informed Councillors of a pending application to the Locality Fund of North Yorkshire County Councillor John McCartney for an additional £1,070, which, if granted, would be allocated toward further community facilities. Cllr White noted that the Gale Community Fund is currently accepting applications for Autumn funding, and he proposed submitting a request for support with tree maintenance in Whitley. Councillors were encouraged to suggest additional projects to potentially benefit from these funding opportunities.

7.4 Oak Tree at Lee View Park: Cllr Patley and Cllr White met with residents of Lee View to discuss concerns regarding an Oak Tree located at the rear of their property. While the tree did not show any immediate signs of damage or disease, observations from the residents' garden highlighted the risk posed by high branches overhanging their property. Although the residents value the Oak Tree's age and significance and are not requesting its removal, they asked the Council to consider trimming branches in the upper canopy to mitigate potential risks. It was confirmed that there is no Tree Preservation Order (TPO) on any trees in Lee View.

Action: Clerk to engage a tree surgeon to inspect the Oak Tree and provide recommendations. In addition, tree surgeon to inspect the tree's in Blackthorn Close Play Area particularly the Oak in the ground for any damage or disease.

Action: Clerk to consult the Yorkshire Local Council Association regarding the Parish Council's responsibilities in managing trees within its jurisdiction

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

8.1 Emails and postage.

8.1.1 Clerk presented the following details of emails or correspondence by mail relevant to the affairs of Whitley Parish Council:

8.1.1.1 An email from the planning inspectorate advising of the intention of a Developer to make an application for Development Consent for a Scoping Opinion concerning the construction of a Next Generation Power Station at Ferrybridge. Noted without comment.

8.1.1.2 An email from Area 7 Selby promoting a series of Workshops organised to share updates. Action: Copy of emailed to be sent to Parish Councillors.

8.1.1.3 An email from the office of the Police, Fire, Crime and Commissioning extending invitation to submit comments to a regional consultation on strategic priorities in the area for the next four years. Copy to be shared with Parish Councillors.

8.1.1.4 An email from Northern Power confirming that arrangements have been put in place for the branch pruning of trees located in the Nature Reserve whose branches overhang the power lines. The

pruning will be conducted by contractors following the end of the nesting season. Noted without comment.

8.1.1.5 An email from Sarah Ward the police liaison officer for North Yorkshire Police enclosing the October 24 NYP Newsletter for the Osgoldcross Ward.

8.1.1.6 An email from the Local Government Boundary Commission advising of a consultation on division boundaries for North Yorkshire inviting reasoned views on the boundaries inviting the submission of evidence-based proposals. Noted

8.1.2 Social Media

8.1.2.1 Cllr. Humphrey shared several updates on social media regarding local issues, which prompted community feedback. Cllr White had posted about the Parish Council's efforts to secure zebra crossings on the A19; however, North Yorkshire Highways declined the request due to cost which is in the region of £30,000 and planning restrictions. This post generated comments from residents expressing frustration about having to navigate traffic while walking through the village. Cllr White requested feedback on the condition of the underpass near Templar Close, noting that the fencing has deteriorated over the years and suggesting that it be reinstated. Additionally, he shared updates from Highways England regarding A1 construction work, although this post had not yet received comments but served to inform residents about ongoing traffic impacts in the village.

Cllr Humphrey highlighted that, while social media comments are not formal feedback, they offer insight into residents' concerns and sentiments regarding community issues, as some posts prompt questions and others generate general commentary.

8.1.2.2 Cllr Humphrey led a discussion on restructuring the Parish Council's social media presence. It was agreed to organise the social media platforms into three distinct pages:

- **Whitley Community:** The official Parish Council page, functioning as a notice board to broadcast information related to the Parish Council and local affairs.
- **Whitley Public:** Formerly known as the Whitley Community Group, this public page is accessible to members within a 10-mile radius of Whitley.
- **Whitley Local News:** A private page restricted to members residing within a 2-mile radius of Whitley. Membership is limited to Parish residents and local businesses serving the Whitley community.

This restructuring aims to enhance communication by tailoring access and content relevance to different community groups.

8.1.2.3 Cllr Humphrey reported on his communication with Vision ICT the host of the Parish Council website and their proposals in the migration of the present pages into the updated version of the site. The cost of the project would be £650.00

9.0 Planning matters: The Clerk provided a summary of the planning applications made in the month for review and consideration by the Council.

9.1.1 There were no new applications submitted for approval.

10.0 Council Finance & Administration:

10.1 RFO Report as at 15/10/2024:

Bank/Account	Income since 1st April 2024	Expenditure since 1st April 2024	Current Balance	Notes/Comment
Santander Deposit	94.29		15,486.77	Interest paid monthly
Santander Current Account (Cash Book)	14,941.67	7,699.17	9,127.37	No interest
Total Bank Balances			24,614.14	
Less following funds:				
Allocated Funds		Surplus from Crossing Drainage Daffodil Field Notice Board Templar Close	1,798.71 8,000.00 900.00	
Total Allocated funds			10,698.71	
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.	13,915.43	
VAT due for reclaim			3,396.65	
Total Unallocated Parish Funds			17,312.08	

The Clerk presented a cash flow summary analysing, month by month, the actual receipts and payments up to March 2025. Receipts in the month included the second tranche of the precept from North Yorkshire Council of £6,250 and a donation of £900.00 from the Gale Common Community Fund towards the cost of a new notice board at Templar Close. It was noted the balance held on unrestricted reserves as of 15th October was £13,915.43.

Cllr Watson requested approval of funds for Christmas Gift Parcels for residents over 80 years of age, at a cost of £25 per recipient. With 20 identified recipients, the Council resolved to approve a total expenditure of £500 for the Over 80's Christmas Hampers.

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

Cheque No.	Payable to:	Amount: £
	Simon Humphrey – reimbursement of cost of repairs to Play Equipment	25.32
	George Fillingham Cut No 9 – 9 th September 2024	522.00
	J R Hunter – Clerk Salary Month 4, 5 & 6	494.50
	HMRC – PAYE Month 4, 5 & 6	123.40
	J White – cleaning materials for the community payback team	12.00

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 Management of the Nature Reserve: Cllr Cole reported upon ongoing path-clearing work in the Nature Reserve, which Cllr Cole, Cllr Walton, and a local resident have been conducting every Thursday from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Due to extensive overgrowth of brambles, the clearance effort is expected to take considerable time. Cllr Cole proposed that a call for additional volunteers be posted on the Council's social media pages to assist with the work.

Cllr Cole noted that the overgrowth has obscured the existing bench in the reserve, preventing its exact location from being identified. Following the path clearance, a community litter pick would be beneficial to remove debris, and volunteer participation would be welcomed. Cllr White shared that staff from the Mushroom Farm have offered to assist the community team with these efforts

Action: Cllr Humphrey will post an invitation on social media inviting residents to participate in the Nature Reserve maintenance efforts. Interested volunteers are encouraged to contact Cllr Cole directly via email or mobile.

Cllr White reported that managers of the Mushroom Farm have confirmed that two benches have been ordered for installation in the Nature Reserve and will deploy them in due course as requested.

Councillors acknowledged that path clearance in the Nature Reserve will require ongoing maintenance rather than a one-time effort. Regular management of bramble overgrowth will need to be incorporated into the site's routine upkeep, with funding allocated as part of the precept budget.

Cllr White proposed elevating the Nature Reserve's status as a point of interest within the village. He suggested installing an information notice board, like the one in Daffodil Park, to provide visitors with details about the history of the reserve and enhance its visibility and appeal to the community.

The Council commended Cllr Cole, Cllr Walton and the local resident for their dedicated work in maintaining and clearing paths in the Nature Reserve.

11.1.2 Planters: Cllr Cole and Cllr Patley confirmed their commitment to the ongoing maintenance and management of the village planters. They will be preparing the planters and planting bulbs in anticipation of spring blooms.

11.1.3 Parks Maintenance: Cllr White informed the Council that he has placed an order with a contractor for path spraying in Daffodil Park, which will be completed shortly. With the end of the nesting season, focus is also shifting to managing hedge growth along the park's perimeter.

11.1.4 Community Payback: Cllr White expressed frustration regarding the limited support from councillors in coordinating with the Community Payback Team, which has visited the Parish over the past three weeks.

During the recent weekend, the Payback Team worked in the park, clearing overgrown shrubbery—which Cllr White suggested could be removed and replaced with grass to reduce maintenance needs. The team also trimmed hedges around the playground, tidied the war memorial, and performed additional weeding.

Future tasks were discussed, including clearing vegetation at the other end of the Templar Close underpass, trimming verges near the pub, and work in the Nature Reserve, though the latter would require power cutting equipment.

Councillors were asked to consider additional tasks to ensure the team remains engaged. To facilitate quick communication, it was agreed to create a WhatsApp Group for Councillors.

Action: Cllr Thompson will set up a WhatsApp Group to improve responsive communication among Councillors regarding coordination with the Payback Team and other matters.

11.1.5 Verge Cutting: The Clerk advised Councillors that approaches had been made to an alternative grass cutting contractor to provide quotations for the 2025 growing season, for comparison with quotations from the existing contractor. Cllr White requested that confirmation be sought from the North Yorkshire County Highways Verge Maintenance Department that grass cutting in the village meets specified requirements.

12.0 A19 Safety:

12.1 Cllr White reported his ongoing efforts to obtain information from North Yorkshire Highways regarding a proposed roundabout installation at Balne Cross Roads. Additionally, he noted that he had shared updates on social media about National Highways' plan to deploy a speed camera van in the village to address the increased traffic flow due to roadworks at Wentbridge.

13.0 A.O.B.

13.1 Cllr Thompson referred to her ongoing communication with both Calor Gas and Northern Energy in attempts to establish the party responsible for the maintenance of the vegetation and hedges in the Gas Enclosure at Daffodil Field.

13.2 Cllr. Cole confirmed that arrangements for the promotion of the Remembrance Day Event is in progress.

13.3 Cllr. White made mention of new Councillor training and enquired about the intentions of councillors to register for the induction courses available through the Yorkshire Local Council Association.

13.4 Cllr White reported that the speed gun has been sold for £90.00 and reflected on other physical assets in possession of the Parish Council that could be sold, for example the Beacon currently stored in the George & Dragon Pub.

13.5 Cllr White highlighted the availability of various funding sources accessible to Parish Councils through grant applications and encouraged councillors to actively seek and identify these opportunities. He noted that the Council currently holds £8,000 initially allocated for Daffodil Park drainage, and a suitable project needs to be identified for the use of these funds.

14.0 Confirm the date, time and place of next meeting:

Next Parish Council Meeting: Tuesday 19th Nov 2024 at 7pm at Whitley & Eggborough Primary School.

Closure of meeting: 9:00 pm