

Whitley Parish Council

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

2.0 Open Public Forum(OPF) 14th January 2025

2.1 There were no members of the public in attendance at 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 14th January 2024 at Whitley & Eggborough Primary School Building – 07/25

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

4.0 Apologies for absence:

4.1 Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Humphrey and Cllr Barber.

5.0 Disclosure of interest:

5.1 There were no other interests registered.

6.0 Minutes of the Whitley Parish Council Meeting held on 19th November 2024:

6.1 It was resolved the minutes were a true record of the Whitley Parish Council meeting held on 19th November 2024.

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

7.0 Matters for information and action as required:

7.1 Grant Application Gale Common Community Fund:

Cllr White reported on an application submitted to the Gale Common Community Fund, which offers grants to local communities on a quarterly basis. In the absence of alternative proposals, Cllr White has requested funding for a noticeboard to be installed at the Nature Reserve, like the one in Daffodil Park.

The proposed noticeboard would provide information about the reserve's history and details about local flora and fauna. It was noted that the application is under review and a response is expected within 6 to 8 weeks

Actions: Cllr White to update the Parish Council once the response is received.

7.2 **Oak Tree at Lee View Park:** The Clerk reminded Parish Councillors of the quotation received from local tree surgeon Renato Bio for the management of trees in Daffodil Park, Lee View, and Blackthorn Close:

- £470 to fell two severely leaning trees in Daffodil Park due to their risk of falling.
- £280 to reduce the branches of an Oak Tree at Lee View overhanging a resident's summer house. The tree is sound and free of defects.

- £580 to tidy up and crown clean Oak Trees in the Blackthorn Close play area. All trees are in good condition.

Councillors agreed that obtaining an additional quotation from alternative tree surgeons is necessary to ensure competitive pricing.

Actions: Clerk to obtain an additional quotation from an alternative tree surgeon for Councillors to review and compare quotes at the next meeting of the Parish Council. Prior to consideration of the nature of the tree management, if any, that will be commissioned.

7.3 Grass Cutting Schedule for 2025: The Clerk presented a summary of the three quotations received for grass cutting in parks and verges during the 2025 growing season. Quotations were assessed based on two cuts per month over a six-month period from April to October.

7.3.1 George Fillingham: £485 per cut, totalling £5,820 for the season.

7.3.2 Danny Curnow: £680 per cut, totalling £8,160 for the season.

7.3.3 Bedford Mowing: £833 per cut, totalling £10,000 for the season.

It was resolved that the Parish Council accept the quotation from George Fillingham with whom the contract for the grass cut of verges and parks will be placed for the 2025 growing season.

Actions: Clerk to advise all suppliers of the decision of the Council and confirm the engagement of George Fillingham as the preferred contractor.

7.4 Christmas Lights and Tree: Councillors revisited the long-discussed project of providing Christmas lights in the village. Cllr Cole reminded members of previous investigations into the practicalities and costs, including:

- Conversion of lamp posts: Estimated at £350 per lamp post, with an initial plan to convert 6 lamp posts, totalling £2,100.
- Hire of light fittings: Estimated at £150 per fitting, resulting in an annual cost of £900 after installation.

It was agreed that the project requires detailed planning and additional information to evaluate the feasibility of success. Critical to the process will be:

- Updating the costs for lamp post conversion and Christmas light hire.
- Investigation of the approach taken by nearby Parish Councils (e.g. Burn and Eggborough) regarding the funding of festive lights.
- Assessment of the scale of Christmas light provision in neighbouring communities to determine appropriate standards and scope.
- Clarification of the appetite for the provision of Christmas Lights by residents of Whitley.

Action: Cllr Cole to obtain updated costs for lamp post conversion and Christmas light hire. Cllr White to investigate funding methods and festive lighting practices in neighbouring Parish Councils.

7.5 YLCA Training Dates: The Clerk advised that details of the latest training programme offered by the Yorkshire Local Council Association for the quarter from January to March 2025 has been published. Included in the programme is the two-part course delivered online via Zoom, aimed at new councillors, in addition to several other subjects that may be of interest to Councillors.

Action: Clerk to forward copies of the programme schedule offered by YLCA to all Parish Councillors.

7.6 Application for the acquisition of Land. The Clerk informed Councillors of an email received from the owner of a traveling amusement operation seeking engagement with the local community regarding a proposal to acquire land at the north end of Whitley

Parish, adjacent to Templar Close on the southbound carriageway. The intended use of the land would be for the winter storage and repair of amusement equipment and facilities.

In response, the Clerk invited the operator to attend the January 2025 Parish Council meeting. However, no reply has been received to date.

Issues for clarification were discussed:

1. Given that the land lacks any connection to utilities, how would electricity supply and waste disposal be managed?
2. Would there be plans to establish living accommodation on the site?

Councillors expressed interest in engaging with the operator to understand the long-term plans and objectives of the operation.

Action: Clerk to continue communication with the operator to arrange attendance at the February Parish Council meeting.

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 Engagement Team of York & North Yorkshire Office for Policing Fire, Crime and Commissioning, seeking public views before the Major for North Yorkshire Council sets the budget allocation for North Yorkshire Police and North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service. **Action:** Cllr White on behalf of Whitley Parish Council complete the online survey to outline the perspectives and requirements of the Parish as a rural community.

8.1.1.2 An email from North Yorkshire Council Parish Liaison Team, notifying and extending an invitation to local communities of the forthcoming Parish Liaison Meeting, to be held in Selby Town Hall, The Town Hall, York Street, Selby on 30th January 2025, between 7.00pm and 9.00pm. **Action:** The invitation to be circulated to all Councillors.

8.1.1.3 An email from the Office of Keir Mather MP, concerning the reluctance of North Yorkshire Police to permit the installation of fixed speed cameras throughout the County. Keir's team are seeking to canvas the views of Parish Councils and gain local insights and understandings of how the potential introduction of fixed speed cameras might impact the locality. **Action:** Cllr White to share with the MP's Office the speed camera information. Clerk to copy Councillors with the email from Keir Mather MP.

8.1.1.4 An email from Sarah Ward attaching the NPT Community Newsletter for January 2025 covering crime and police activity during December. **Action:** Newsletter to be posted onto social media.

8.1.2 Social Media

8.1.2.1 Cllr. White updated the Council of various comments and issues raised on the social media pages. Positive and appreciative comments were shared about the Christmas parcel distribution to the Over 80's in the community. Questions were expressed about the history and the progress of the sale of the Church which promoted the proposed purchaser to explain that completion of the sale was pending the results of the planning application for the residential development of the property. The potential donation of land to the community by Tunstall in conjunction with Harron Homes generated some negative comments from a local resident.

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 ZG2024/1308/PPP, the application for a lawful development certificate for a proposed erection of a single storey side extension, Auton House, Silver Street. Noted with no comments.

10.0 Council Finance & Administration:

10.1 RFO Report as at 14/01/2025:

Bank/Account	Income since 1 st April 2024	Expenditure since 1 st April 2024		Current Balance	Notes/Comment
Santander Deposit	121.28			15,513.67	Interest paid monthly
Santander Current Account (Cash Book)	15,071.67	10,513.47		8,064.27	No interest
Total Bank Balances				23,577.94	
Less following funds:					
Allocated Funds		Surplus from Crossing Drainage Daffodil Field Notice Board for 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.		12,879.23	
VAT due for reclaim				3,396.65	
Total Unallocated Parish Funds				16,275.88	

The Clerk presented a cash flow summary analysing, month by month, the actual receipts and payments up to March 2025. Total anticipated income for the year, including a sum of £1,070 allocated by North Yorkshire Council from the locality budget of North Yorkshire Councillor J McCartney, was £20,633.17. This compares with total costs of £11,667.07. This generates a balance at the end of the year of £26,402.24 out of which were grants from North Yorkshire Council and community funds contractually specified for specific projects amounting to £11,768.71. The balance of unrestricted reserves available to the Parish Council were £14,633.33.

The Clerk presented an update on the expenditure budget for the year to March 2026. Anticipated overhead costs of known expenditure, including grass cutting and park maintenance amounted to £11,758. Discretionary expenditure to cover Events and Donations were estimated at £600 and potential costs to cover unpredictable expenditure for maintenance and management of the recreational open spaces in the village was £2,200. This yielded total projected costs of £14,558.

Councillors reflected on the precept requirement given these total projected costs and reflected on the upward pressure on overheads to which the Parish continues to be exposed. The cost of grass cutting will increase by over £1,000; the website will require update necessitating an upgrade cost of £650, and the village speed camera is now out of warranty and the Parish may face additional repair costs on the equipment. Councillors therefore considered it was prudent to seek a modest increase in precept for 2025/26.

It was resolved that the Whitley Parish Council precept be set at £13,000 an absolute increase of £500 on the precept received in 2024/25.

The impact on the band D equivalent household council tax would be:

Band D charge:	£32.20 up from £31.07
% change in Whitley Council tax:	3.63%
£ change in Whitley Council tax in the year:	£1.13

Action: Clerk to submit an application setting the Parish Precept for Whitley Parish Council at £13,000.

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

Cheque No.	Payable to:	Amount: £
	J R Hunter – Clerk Salary quarter to Dec 2024	494.30
	HMRC – PAYE on salary quarter to Dec 2024	123.60
	J White – reimbursement of cost of hedge cut in Daffodil Park	50.00

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: Cllr White reported that the grant initially designated for drainage improvements in Daffodil Park can legitimately be redirected to other projects benefiting open spaces in Whitley, following discussions with North Yorkshire Council. The Clerk advised that the **annual playground health & safety inspection** is now due. Councillors noted that a rope swing had been erected by the hedges at the rear of Daffodil Park. Upon review, Councillors determined there is no health and safety concern posed by the swing at this time.

Action: Clerk to request a full health and safety inspection of the playground equipment and facilities. Councillors to consider potential projects for utilisation of the grant funds in the improvement of open spaces.

11.1.2 Nature Reserve: Cllr Cole outlined the significant work undertaken by staff from Monaghan Mushrooms to manage vegetation and restore the open space in the Nature Reserve. Key efforts included:

- Extensive cutting back of overgrowth using mowers and strimmer's, revealing existing pathways.
- Clearing large amounts of rubble, debris, and rubbish dumped in the area.
- Retention of blackberry bushes for public berry picking during the growing season.

Cllr Cole outlined future improvements that Monaghan Mushrooms have offered the Parish Council aimed at enhancing of the facilities in the reserve. Such structural features include the provision of a children's swing, two new benches, picnic tables and replacement fencing located to maximise car parking space. The vegetation will also be improved with sowing of flower seeds to expand the wildflower areas.

It will be important as public access is facilitated due to clearance work that the Parish Council promote an emphasis on respecting the reserve's purpose as a wildlife haven. To that end, the community will be encouraged to collect and dispose of litter in the bin provided at the entrance to the reserve. Also, dog walkers will be reminded to keep dogs on leashes to ensure controlled access and protection of wildlife.

The restoration and planned improvements will significantly enhance the Nature Reserve's accessibility and appeal while preserving its purpose as a wildlife sanctuary.

Action: Councillors to consider the purpose and objective of the Nature Reserve and in that context assess the proposals for improvements offered by Monaghan Mushroom.

Cllr White noted that Northern Power had identified certain trees in the Nature Reserve for pruning to address their encroachment on power lines. However, there has been no visible progress on the work so far.

Action: Clerk to contact Northern Power to inquire about the schedule for the pruning of the identified trees.

11.1.3 Planter: Cllr White remarked that the Parish is awaiting the growth of bulbs planted in the planters, expected to bloom in spring. He also raised a concern

regarding the height of a Yucca plant, which could potentially obstruct the line of sight for cars exiting the nearby junction onto Doncaster Road.

Action: Council to monitor the growth of the Yucca plant and assess any potential obstruction to visibility at the Doncaster Road junction.

11.1.4 Community Payback Team: Councillors noted that the Community Payback team had undertaken verge cutting along Doncaster Road prior to Christmas. There is potential for their return this coming Sunday. Discussions focused on arrangements for a meeting with the team supervisors to agree on the upcoming work schedule.

11.1.5 Verge cutting: Councillors confirmed their resolution to contract with George Fillingham for the grass cutting of the recreational open spaces at the rate as quoted of £485 per cut. The anticipated programme will be for 12 cuts to be delivered every two weeks within the months of April to October.

11.2 Other issues or matters to report: Cllr White reported that a total of £1,970 in grants has been received to fund the provision of a new notice board on Templar Close. A quotation from Greenbarnes Ltd for £1,451.26 (plus VAT of £290.25) falls within the grant allocation and includes the cost of posts and delivery. It was also noted that the Gale Common Team from Eggborough Power has committed to installing the notice board.

It was resolved: the quotation for the notice board be accepted.

Action: Cllr White to place the order with Greenbarnes Ltd for the new notice board for delivery to the home address of Cllr Walton with the purchase invoice to be emailed to the Clerk.

12.0 A19 Safety:

12.1 Cllr White referred to feedback from a member of the Area 7 Highways Team, who had assessed the traffic on Gravel Hill Lane in summer 2024. The team member provided an estimate of £4,500 for the installation of rubber speed bumps. Following this, Cllr White inquired about the feasibility of plastic speed bumps as an alternative. The Area 7 representative confirmed that they would provide a cost estimate for this option.

Action: Councillors to review the cost comparison and feasibility of rubber versus plastic speed bumps at a future meeting.

13.0 A.O.B.

13.1 Cllr Cole raised concerns about the welfare of vulnerable residents during extended power outages, referencing a recent lengthy power cut in the village. It was noted that many homes, particularly the bungalows on Whitefield Lane, rely solely on electricity for power. Councillors discussed the need to explore potential support measures for vulnerable residents in the event of prolonged outages.

The issue requires further investigation to identify practical support mechanisms and any external resources or organisations that may assist during power outages.

13.2 Cllr White proposed the production of a community newsletter during 2025. The newsletter would serve to inform residents about available support, key developments, and other information relevant to the community. Councillors recognised the value of a newsletter in fostering communication and engagement with residents.

13.3 Cllr White noted that resurfacing work on Selby Road, covering the stretch from the canal to the Selby Crossing, had been successfully completed.

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

Next Parish Council Meeting: Tuesday 25th February 2025 at 7pm at Whitley & Eggborough Primary School.

Closure of meeting: 9:02 pm