

## DRAFT

# Whessoe Parish Council

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### MINUTES of the Meeting of Whessoe Parish Council held at Whessoe Parish Hall on Monday 27<sup>th</sup> November 2023, at 7.00 pm.

**Present:** Councillor S Goldfinch (Chair)                      Councillor S Patterson  
Councillor F Minay    Councillor T Musson  
Councillor D Woodley    Councillor A Blanchard

Borough Councillor R Lawley  
Parish Clerk – B Goldfinch

MINUTE NO.	ITEM	ACTION
49.23	<p><b><u>Introduction</u></b> <b><u>Apologies for Absence</u></b></p> <p>Apologies were received and accepted from Councillor C Stewart and from Borough Councillor Crudass.</p>	
50.23	<p><b><u>Public Participation</u></b></p> <p>Councillor Goldfinch thanked Borough Councillor Lawley for the funding he provided to sponsor the Children’s Christmas Party on 2<sup>nd</sup> December and the community summer event scheduled for July.</p>	
51.23	<p><b><u>Declarations of Interest</u></b></p> <p>Councillor Goldfinch declared an interest in item 7 – the Staffing Committee update.</p>	
52.23	<p><b><u>Minutes of the Meeting of Whessoe Parish Council – 25<sup>th</sup> September 2023</u></b></p> <p>The Minutes of the Meeting of Whessoe Parish Council held on the 27<sup>th</sup> September 2023 were presented.</p> <p>The Council <b>RESOLVED</b> that the Minutes of the Meeting of Whessoe Parish Council held on the 25<sup>th</sup> September 2023 be approved.</p> <p><b><u>Action Points</u></b></p> <p>39.23 – Parish Council Vacancy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Councillor Goldfinch has provided Councillor Blanchard with a WPC email address, links to the website and the Facebook page.</li></ul>	

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	<p>40.23 – Staffing Committee</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Staffing Committee has now met and will be updating this meeting on their progress.</li> </ul> <p>43.23 – Correspondence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Council has promoted the campaign message from Hedgehogs R Us.</li> </ul> <p>All other actions are covered in the Agenda.</p>	
<p><b>53.23</b></p>	<p><b><u>Planning</u></b></p> <p><b>Planning Applications Log</b> The Council <b>RESOLVED</b> to note the planning applications log.</p> <p><b>Planning Application 23/01026/FUL</b> The Council considered this application for the erection of an extension with ancillary work at 34 Beaumont Hill and <b>RESOLVED</b> to raise no objections. The Clerk will notify Darlington Borough Council’s (DBC) planning department accordingly. POST MEETING NOTE: Done 30<sup>th</sup> November 2023.</p> <p><b>Traffic Issues on Burtree Lane and Noise on A167</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As the development at Berrymead Farm was underway, the Council <b>RESOLVED</b> to wait and assess the situation. As such, this will remain a standing item on future agendas.</li> </ul> <p><b>Dog Bin at Trevone Way</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Council noted that the area around this dog bin was muddy and potentially there was a risk of slipping and falling. The Clerk will contact Street Scene (copied to Borough Councillor Lawley) to see if there is anything that could be done to remedy the situation.</li> </ul>	<p>Clerk</p>
<p><b>54.23</b></p>	<p><b><u>Parish Councillor Vacancy</u></b></p> <p>There are no vacancies currently.</p>	
<p><b>55.23</b></p>	<p><b><u>Clerk &amp; Responsible Finance Officer</u></b></p> <p><b>Staffing Committee</b></p> <p>An update was provided by Councillor Patterson.</p> <p><b>Membership</b> – Councillor Woodley had stepped down and Councillor Blanchard had joined Councillors Minay and Patterson. Councillor Patterson had been elected chair.</p> <p><b>Terms of Reference</b> – a draft was discussed, and amendments suggested. The Clerk will make those changes and review with Councillor Patterson.</p>	<p>Clerk/SP</p>

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	<p><b>Annual Appraisal Form</b> – the Clerk will complete the form and return it to the Staffing Committee with the intention of them carrying out an appraisal in January.</p> <p><b>Pay Award</b> – The Council discussed the pay award for 2023-24 agreed by the National Joint Council for Local Government Services. Effectively it raises the hourly rate by £1. The Council <b>RESOLVED</b> to agree to the award, backdated to 1 April 2023 and to be paid at Quarter 3. The current budget for salary/PAYE is sufficient to meet the award.</p>	Clerk																																																												
56.23	<p><b>Finance</b></p> <p><b>Bank Reconciliation September and October 2023</b></p> <p>Councillors Patterson and Minay reconciled the bank account against the cashbook on 16<sup>th</sup> November. There was not a reconciliation for September while the Clerk was away.</p> <p><b>Financial/Budget Statement to 31<sup>st</sup> October 2023</b></p> <p>The Clerk presented the Financial Statement for the period.</p> <p>Receipts totalled <b>£12,072</b> of which £7,200 came from the precept. The Council spent <b>£11,312</b> to the end of the period.</p> <p>The Council noted that the budget analysis is suggesting a shortfall of between £1k and £2k for the year. This is a reduction from the analysis at the end of June. Two main factors are the summer months and consequent reduction in fuel costs and the reduction in the Clerks hours.</p> <p><b>Payments more than £100 are as follow.</b></p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; margin-top: 10px;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="text-align: center;">Date Paid</th> <th style="text-align: center;">Transaction Detail</th> <th style="text-align: center;">Total</th> <th style="text-align: center;">Payee Name</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">05/04/2023</td> <td>Cleaning March</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£ 105.00</td> <td>Jo Relton</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">20/04/2023</td> <td>Gas March</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£ 202.81</td> <td>EDF</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">24/04/2023</td> <td>CDALC/NALC Subscription</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£ 199.24</td> <td>CDALC</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">05/05/2023</td> <td>Cleaning April</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£ 135.00</td> <td>Jo Relton</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">05/05/2323</td> <td>Insurance</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£ 666.73</td> <td>Zurich Municipal</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">09/05/2323</td> <td>Coronation Live Band</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£ 300.00</td> <td>Heather Bianchi</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">15/05/2023</td> <td>Donation</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£1,258.50</td> <td>St Teresa’s Hospice</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">19/05/2023</td> <td>Gas April</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£ 210.84</td> <td>EDF</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">31/05/2023</td> <td>Accounting Software Subscription</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£ 181.64</td> <td>Rialtas Business Solutions</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">05/06/2023</td> <td>Cleaning May</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£ 120.00</td> <td>Jo Relton</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">05/06/2023</td> <td>Internal Audit</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£ 100.00</td> <td>Kevin Pearce</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">19/06/2023</td> <td>Gas May</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£ 107.11</td> <td>EDF</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">28/06/2023</td> <td>Online Booking System Subscription</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£ 238.80</td> <td>Hallmaster</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">30/06/2023</td> <td>PAYE 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£ 435.20</td> <td>HMRC</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Date Paid	Transaction Detail	Total	Payee Name	05/04/2023	Cleaning March	£ 105.00	Jo Relton	20/04/2023	Gas March	£ 202.81	EDF	24/04/2023	CDALC/NALC Subscription	£ 199.24	CDALC	05/05/2023	Cleaning April	£ 135.00	Jo Relton	05/05/2323	Insurance	£ 666.73	Zurich Municipal	09/05/2323	Coronation Live Band	£ 300.00	Heather Bianchi	15/05/2023	Donation	£1,258.50	St Teresa’s Hospice	19/05/2023	Gas April	£ 210.84	EDF	31/05/2023	Accounting Software Subscription	£ 181.64	Rialtas Business Solutions	05/06/2023	Cleaning May	£ 120.00	Jo Relton	05/06/2023	Internal Audit	£ 100.00	Kevin Pearce	19/06/2023	Gas May	£ 107.11	EDF	28/06/2023	Online Booking System Subscription	£ 238.80	Hallmaster	30/06/2023	PAYE 1 <sup>st</sup> Quarter	£ 435.20	HMRC	
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	30/06/2023	Clerk's Salary 1 <sup>st</sup> Quarter	£1,741.00	Bill Goldfinch
	03/07/2023	T V Licence	£ 159.00	T V Licencing
	06/07/2023	Cleaning June	£ 105.00	Jo Relton
	06/07/2023	Entertainer Summer Fete	£ 230.00	S W Enterprises
	20/07/2023	Replacement Notice Board	£ 747.60	Noticeboards Online
	24/07/2023	Five-year electrical test	£ 168.00	M H Gorman
	03/08/2023	Cleaning July	£ 120.00	Jo Relton
	15/08/2023	Replacement Ink cartridges	£ 132.07	Viking Direct
	19/09/2023	Cleaning August	£ 120.00	Jo Relton
	29/09/2023	PAYE 2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter	£ 362.60	HMRC
	29/09/2023	Clerk's Salary 2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter	£1,450.90	Bill Goldfinch
	<p>The Parish Council <b>RESOLVED</b> to note the financial/budget report to 31<sup>st</sup> October 2023.</p> <p><b>Budget Allocation for 2024-25</b></p> <p>The Council discussed in considerable detail the projected income and expenditure for next year. There are three clear issues.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) For the last two years the Council has failed to generate sufficient income to cover expenditure. Consequently, the general reserve has fallen from £16k on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020 to £6k on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023. The Council expects to use a further £2k to fund this year's expenditure. A general reserve of £4k is a significant risk to the future running of the Council and the Parish Hall.</li> <li>b) Costs have increased during the last year far quicker than the Council expected. Particularly salary and utilities.</li> <li>c) Income from users of the hall has not met expectations. Following the COVID pandemic a few users either left the hall or reduced their use due to the lack of interest in their classes. Although prices were increased by 25% this did not offset the loss of regular users.</li> </ul> <p>The Council <b>RESOLVED</b> to set a balanced budget for next year and try not to use any of the general reserve. Estimates for the hall usage have been reduced significantly from previous years and any expenditure that is not considered necessary has been removed.</p> <p>The Council <b>RESOLVED</b> to seek a precept of £11,880. The Clerk will notify DBC accordingly. POST MEETING NOTE: Done 1<sup>st</sup> December 2023.</p>			
57.23	<p><b><u>Policies</u></b></p> <p>No action.</p>			

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<b>58.23</b>	<p><b><u>Correspondence</u></b></p> <p>Clerks and Councils Direct was passed to Councillor Patterson.</p> <p>The Council discussed the approach from Zero Hour asking the Council to join the support for the Climate and Ecology Bill. After a short discussion the Council <b>RESOLVED</b> to support the bill on its passage through Parliament.</p>	Clerk
<b>59.23</b>	<p><b><u>Events and Training</u></b></p> <p><b>Events</b> The Council noted the events log.</p> <p><b>Training</b> Councillor Blanchard had attended a Finance for Councillors course and the Clerk had joined the webinar discussing changes to the model Financial Regulations.</p>	
<b>60.23</b>	<p><b><u>Marketing and social media</u></b></p> <p>A newsletter has been produced and was circulated at the Summer Fete held in August. The Council agreed to review and update the newsletter and circulate it at all Council run events including quiz nights and the Christmas party.</p>	SG/Clerk
<b>61.23</b>	<p><b><u>Whessoe Parish Hall Committee</u></b></p> <p>The Hall Committee met on 6<sup>th</sup> November 2023.</p> <p>An update was provided by Councillor Goldfinch.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grant funding will have to be sought to implement the results of the condition survey.</li> <li>• Full payment has been received for the replacement noticeboard.</li> </ul> <p><b>Contracts</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There have been no changes to contracts since the last meeting.</li> </ul> <p><b>Hall bookings</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There have been no changes to regular hirers since the last meeting.</li> <li>• The Council noted the latest hall opening and closing Rota for one-off hires. The Clerk will recirculate the updated Rota. Post Meeting note: Done 1<sup>st</sup> December 1, 2023. Councillor Stewart is opening on 13<sup>th</sup> December, Councillor Musson 16<sup>th</sup> December and Councillor Goldfinch on 17<sup>th</sup> December.</li> </ul>	Clerk

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	<p><b>Budget 2024-25</b></p> <p>The Committee is budgeting for income of £13,000 including a grant of £6,000 with the rest coming from hall hire.</p> <p>Expenditure is estimated at £16,675 which includes £6,000 for building maintenance (paid for by a grant). The Committee will not be renewing the TV Licence as it has not been used during the last two years.</p> <p>The shortfall will have to be met from the precept to meet the resolution (Minute 56.23 above) to set a balanced budget.</p>															
<b>62.23</b>	<p><b><u>Whessoe Parish Social Committee</u></b></p> <p>The Social Committee met on 13<sup>th</sup> November 2023.</p> <p>An update was provided by Councillor Minay.</p> <p><b>Finance</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The Committee is on track to be self-sufficient for this financial year, generating its own income from grants (see minute 50.23 above) and proceeds from quiz nights.</li><li>• The Committee plans to be self sufficient for next year and will not seek support from the precept.</li></ul> <p><b>Events 2023-24</b></p> <p>Quiz night hosts for the rest of the calendar year were allocated as follows:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="400 1335 1275 1447"><thead><tr><th>DATE</th><th>HOST</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>12<sup>th</sup> January 2024</td><td>Suzanne</td></tr><tr><td>8<sup>th</sup> March 2024</td><td>Bill</td></tr></tbody></table> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The Christmas party will take place on 2<sup>nd</sup> December between 3.30 and 5.30pm. Detailed arrangements have been made and the Committee asked for some assistance in setting it up (from 3pm) from other Councillors.</li></ul> <p><b>Events 2024-25</b></p> <p>Quiz Nights are scheduled as follows:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="400 1807 1275 1955"><thead><tr><th>DATE</th><th>HOST</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>26<sup>th</sup> April 2024</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>7<sup>th</sup> June 2024</td><td>Fiona</td></tr><tr><td>26<sup>th</sup> July 2024</td><td></td></tr></tbody></table>	DATE	HOST	12 <sup>th</sup> January 2024	Suzanne	8 <sup>th</sup> March 2024	Bill	DATE	HOST	26 <sup>th</sup> April 2024		7 <sup>th</sup> June 2024	Fiona	26 <sup>th</sup> July 2024		
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<b>63.23</b>	<p><b><u>Date and Time of Next Meeting</u></b></p> <p>Dates for meetings were agreed as follows:</p> <p><b>Meetings of Whessoe Parish Council:</b></p> <p>Parish Council Meeting – Monday, 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2024 – 7.00 pm          Parish Council Meeting – Monday, 25<sup>th</sup> March 2024 – 7.00 pm          Annual Meeting – Monday, 13<sup>th</sup> May 2024 – 7.00 pm</p> <p><b>Annual Parish Meeting:</b></p> <p>Annual Parish Meeting – Monday, 13<sup>th</sup> May 2024 – 6.30 pm to 7.00 pm</p> <p>The Council <b>RESOLVED</b> that the Parish Council will meet on the above dates during 2023-24.</p>													

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