

# Whessoe Parish Council

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## MINUTES of the Meeting of Whessoe Parish Council held at Whessoe Parish Hall on Monday 25<sup>th</sup> March 2024, at 7.00 pm.

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

Borough Councillor R Lawley  
 Parish Clerk – B Goldfinch

MINUTE NO.	ITEM	ACTION
80.23	<p><b><u>Introduction</u></b>  <b><u>Apologies for Absence</u></b></p> <p>None received.</p>	
81.23	<p><b><u>Public Participation</u></b></p> <p>None.</p>	
82.23	<p><b><u>Declarations of Interest</u></b></p> <p>There were none.</p>	
83.23	<p><b><u>Minutes of the Meeting of Whessoe Parish Council – 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2024</u></b></p> <p>The Minutes of the Meeting of Whessoe Parish Council held on the 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2024 were presented.</p> <p>The Council <b>RESOLVED</b> that the Minutes of the Meeting of Whessoe Parish Council held on the 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2024 be approved.</p> <p><b><u>Action Points</u></b></p> <p>All actions are covered in the Agenda.</p>	
84.23	<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>	

Signed..... Date.....  
 Chair of the Parish Council

	<p><b>Planning Application 24/00177/FUL</b></p> <p>The Council considered this application for the enlargement of existing bungalow to create a two-storey dwelling including part demolition, erection of first floor habitable space, two storey extension to the north elevation, two storey extension with porch canopy to front elevation, single storey rear extension, alterations to windows/doors and associated works (Revised Scheme) at 60 Beaumont Hill and <b>RESOLVED</b> to raise no objections.</p> <p><b>Planning Application 24/00189/FUL</b></p> <p>The Council considered this application for the demolition of the existing garden room and erection of a single storey rear extension incorporating balcony area above with glazed balustrade, first floor rear bedroom extension and installation of render and cladding to elevations of dwelling. Erection of a detached double garage within front garden together with the provision of new hard standing at 24 Durham Road and <b>RESOLVED</b> to raise no objections.</p> <p>The Clerk will notify Darlington Borough Council's (DBC) planning department accordingly. POST MEETING NOTE: Done 26<sup>th</sup> March 2024.</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>	
85.23	<p><b><u>Parish Councillor Vacancy</u></b></p> <p>There are currently no vacancies.</p>	
86.23	<p><b><u>Clerk &amp; Responsible Finance Officer</u></b></p> <p><b>Staffing Committee Update</b></p> <p><b>Terms of Reference</b> – the draft had been reviewed and amended.</p> <p><b>Annual Appraisal Form</b> – the Clerk had completed the form and returned it to the Chair of the Staffing Committee. An appraisal is scheduled for 17<sup>th</sup> April.</p>	Clerk/SP
87.23	<p><b><u>Finance</u></b></p> <p><b>Bank Reconciliation January and February 2024</b></p> <p>Councillors Patterson and Minay reconciled the bank account against the cashbook on 5<sup>th</sup> February and 7<sup>th</sup> March 2024 respectively.</p> <p><b>Financial/Budget Statement to 20<sup>th</sup> March 2024</b></p> <p>The Clerk presented the Financial Statement for the period.</p>	

Signed..... Date.....  
Chair of the Parish Council

Receipts totalled **£16,430** of which £7,200 came from the precept. The Council spent **£18,184** to the end of the period.

The Council noted that the budget analysis is suggesting a shortfall of between £2k and £3k for the year. Any shortfall would be met from the Council's reserve.

**Payments more than £100 are as follow.**

<b>Date Paid</b>	<b>Transaction Detail</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Payee Name</b>
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
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
14/11/2023	Gas October	£ 103.14	EDF
16/11/2023	Replacement Distribution Board	£ 734.40	M H Gorman
29/11/2023	Christmas Party Entertainer	£ 175.00	Graeme Shaw
12/12/2023	Gas November	£ 208.75	EDF

Signed..... Date.....  
**Chair of the Parish Council**

	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>27/12/2023</td> <td>Annual Grounds Maintenance</td> <td>£1,368.00</td> <td>S E Landscaping</td> </tr> <tr> <td>29/12/2023</td> <td>PAYE 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter</td> <td>£ 445.80</td> <td>HMRC</td> </tr> <tr> <td>29/12/2023</td> <td>Clerk's Salary 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter</td> <td>£1,783.70</td> <td>Bill Goldfinch</td> </tr> <tr> <td>16/01/2024</td> <td>Gas December</td> <td>£ 235.22</td> <td>EDF</td> </tr> <tr> <td>26/01/2024</td> <td>Website upgrade</td> <td>£ 108.00</td> <td>White Digital</td> </tr> <tr> <td>28/02/2024</td> <td>Gas January</td> <td>£ 193.07</td> <td>EDF</td> </tr> </table> <p>The Parish Council <b>RESOLVED</b> to note the financial/budget report to 20<sup>th</sup> March 2024.</p> <p><b>Appointment of an Internal Auditor</b></p> <p>The Council <b>RESOLVED</b> to appoint Kevin Pearce as the internal auditor (proposed by the Clerk and seconded by Councillor Goldfinch – appointed unanimously).</p> <p><b>Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR)</b></p> <p>There has been no communication from Mazars, our external auditor, at the time of this meeting. An online briefing has been scheduled for the 22<sup>nd</sup> April. POST MEETING NOTE: Received 28<sup>th</sup> March.</p>	27/12/2023	Annual Grounds Maintenance	£1,368.00	S E Landscaping	29/12/2023	PAYE 3 <sup>rd</sup> Quarter	£ 445.80	HMRC	29/12/2023	Clerk's Salary 3 <sup>rd</sup> Quarter	£1,783.70	Bill Goldfinch	16/01/2024	Gas December	£ 235.22	EDF	26/01/2024	Website upgrade	£ 108.00	White Digital	28/02/2024	Gas January	£ 193.07	EDF	
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88.23	<p><b><u>Policies</u></b></p> <p><b>Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and Code of Conduct</b></p> <p>The Council noted that the Standing Orders had been updated to the latest model document and that only minor changes had been made to the other two policies and <b>RESOLVED</b> to approve the changes to all three policies. The Clerk will version control them and put them on the website.</p> <p><b>Risk Management Policy and Plan</b></p> <p>The Council agreed to raise the risk on no.3 (There is a risk that all rental income was lost as a result of a national crisis) to 2 plus 3 = 6 and to decrease no.17 (There is a risk of infection to hall users through transmissible diseases) to 2 plus 2 = 4.</p> <p>In addition, the Council agreed to include a section on “residual risks” showing how the mitigations were impacting the risk score and to add a risk around continuity in the event of losing the clerk. Councillor Goldfinch would make the necessary changes. POST MEETING NOTE: Completed and circulated 27<sup>th</sup> March.</p>	Clerk																								
89.23	<p><b><u>Correspondence</u></b></p> <p><b>Clerks and Councils Direct</b> was passed to Councillor Woodley. A copy of the latest <b>Tees Valley Village Hall Network newsletter</b> was circulated to Councillors.</p>																									

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	<p><b>Switching to a gov.uk domain name</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Clerk gave a short verbal presentation on the initiative to encourage parish councils to switch to a gov.uk domain name.</li> <li>• After discussion the Council <b>RESOLVED</b> not to switch to a gov.uk domain name at this time. In their view there was no clear benefit to a change.</li> </ul>	
90.23	<p><b><u>Events and Training</u></b></p> <p>The training and events log had not been circulated prior to the meeting. The Clerk apologised and circulated the latest log on 27<sup>th</sup> March.</p> <p><b>Events</b> Councillor Musson attended the TVVHN event at Eggescliffe on 28<sup>th</sup> February. He was impressed by the presentation from P C Hampson about identity theft, phishing and the like. The Council <b>RESOLVED</b> to book a community event on this topic and asked the Social Committee to organise.</p> <p><b>Training</b> The Clerk would be attending an online briefing on the AGAR by Mazars on 18<sup>th</sup> April.</p>	Social Comtee
91.23	<p><b><u>Marketing and social media</u></b></p> <p>The Council agreed to produce an A5 double-sided flyer to promote use of the hall, the summer event on the Green and quiz nights which would be circulated to everyone on the Harrowgate Farm estate, the new estates at Berrymead Farm and other local residents.</p> <p>Councillor Goldfinch would make sure Councillor Blanchard was given administrator rights on the Council's Facebook page.</p>	SG  SG
92.23	<p><b><u>Whessoe Parish Hall Committee</u></b></p> <p>The Hall Committee met on 26<sup>th</sup> February 2024.</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>• The Clerk will approach the developers of Berrymead Farm to see if we can put a notice board at an appropriate location on the site.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Contracts</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Gas</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ At their meeting on 25<sup>th</sup> July the full Council approved a new one-year fixed price contract with EDF. The contract is for 12 months, starting from 19<sup>th</sup> December 2022. The unit price will be 20.5p and</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Clerk/SG  Clerk

Signed..... Date.....  
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the daily standing charge 25p. Based on current usage the cost to the Council in a full year would be £1,621.

- As agreed at the last Hall committee meeting and confirmed at the full Council meeting on 27<sup>th</sup> March, we have a new fixed price contract from EDF, arranged through Bionic (one of our brokers). The unit price, from December 2023 will be 11.1p and the standing charge remains at 25p per day. The contract runs until December 2025.

- **Electric**

- At their meeting on 25<sup>th</sup> July 2022 the full Council approved a new two-year deal with Octopus Energy starting in August 2022. The unit cost is 47.37p and the standing charge is 43.36p per day. Based on current usage the cost to the Council in a full year would be £1,126.
- Bionic, on behalf of Money Supermarket.com, has quoted for a replacement contract using EDF, which they say is the cheapest they can find. Octopus, our current supplier, has offered three options. All figures exclude VAT and CCL.

Supplier	Period (months)	Standing Charge (p per day)	Unit cost (p)	Annual current
EDF	24	60	25.4	£650 m
Octopus	12	117.54	19.5	£740
Octopus	24	97.82	20.58	£690
Octopus	12	0.00	26.71	£420

- The Clerk is due to talk to bionic again on Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> March. There are problems accepting the cheapest Octopus offer but the Clerk is in contact with them.

- **Water**

- We are with Wave which is Anglian Water Business National. Costs are currently under budget.

- **Grounds Maintenance**

- S E Landscaping provided a quote which was signed off by the full Council on 27<sup>th</sup> March 2023. The basic price is £1,250 plus VAT. They also quoted for removing the fence, but we have asked them to hold off doing this until we see what Taylor Wimpey is proposing to do. The Committee agreed to seek to renew the contract with S E Landscaping. S E Landscaping are no longer going to provide us with a maintenance service. The Clerk will seek alternatives.

- **Cleaning**

- Jean Bowyer from 4<sup>th</sup> September is cleaning once a week on a Monday.

Clerk

Clerk

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Broadband</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ BT has installed a full fibre broadband connection at a price of £32.95 plus VAT. The contract period is for 24 months starting in May 2023. This is within the budget we set for the year.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Insurance</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ We have taken insurance with Zurich on the basis on a three-year fixed term deal. This will end on 31 May 2025.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Statutory Testing</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Fire extinguisher testing was carried out in September 2023.</li> <li>○ The Gas inspection and certification was carried out on 16<sup>th</sup> January 2024.</li> <li>○ We were advised that a CO alarm and smoke detectors are required by law. The Clerk discussed the requirement with M H Gorman and arranged a quote for the purchase and installation of smoke/fire alarms. The Council <b>RESOLVED</b> to accept their quote of £195 plus VAT to supply and fit wireless connected battery alarms.</li> <li>○ A CO alarm has been purchased from Amazon and is located adjacent to the boiler in the kitchen.</li> <li>○ PAT took place on 14<sup>th</sup> February 2024.</li> <li>○ The 5-year fixed electrical test was carried out on 4<sup>th</sup> July. A number of essential remedial works were identified, and M H Gorman carried out the work on 10<sup>th</sup> October. The full Council ratified the decision.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>Hall bookings</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A local resident, who needed a large open space, has booked the hall on Monday morning for one hour to undertake physio on a child with cerebral palsy. The Council is providing this at no charge.</li> </ul>	Clerk
93.23	<p><b><u>Whessoe Parish Social Committee</u></b></p> <p>The Social Committee met on 6<sup>th</sup> March 2024. Councillor Minay provided an update.</p> <p><b>Quiz Nights</b></p> <p>Dates for Quiz nights have been scheduled and volunteers to host each one have been identified except for 30<sup>th</sup> August and 4<sup>th</sup> October 2024.</p> <p><b>Summer Event</b></p> <p>This will take place on Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> July on the Green. Councillor Patterson had identified entertainers, and the Clerk would be booking them.</p>	Clerk

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	<p><b>Christmas Party</b></p> <p>The party will take place at the hall on Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> December 2024. The Committee is seeking a different entertainer to previous years.</p> <p><b>Village Halls Week</b></p> <p>The committee decided there was not enough time to arrange anything for this year. The Clerk will add discussion around the topic as an agenda item for the Annual Parish Meeting.</p>	Clerk
94.23	<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>Annual Meeting – Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2024 – 7.00 pm</p> <p><b>Annual Parish Meeting:</b></p> <p>Annual Parish Meeting – Wednesday 22<sup>nd</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>	

Signed..... Date.....  
Chair of the Parish Council