

**Minutes of Westlinton Parish Council A.G.M. and Open Meeting held in Blackford School
on Tuesday 25th May at 7pm.**

Present: Stephen Nicholson, Helen Forrester, David Coulthard, Fiona Kay, Hudson Gray, John Wharton, the clerk and a member of the public.

1. Apologies: Robert Murray. Val Tarbitt
2. Election of Office bearers and council: RM would like to remain on the council but is receiving medical treatment at the moment. JW and FK proposed DC as the new chairman and JW as the vice-chair. They were unanimously elected and agreed to take office. HG said he would like to stand down from the council as he would be shortly moving out of the area. He was thanked by all for the effort he had put in over the years. Ann Hewson and Stuart Blane were suggested as possible new councillors and JW said he would approach them on this matter.
3. Declaration of Interests: DC declared an interest in planning applications 21/0120 and 21/0121.
4. Minutes of last meeting: Approved.
5. Matters Arising: Litter bins have been installed by Mr. Addison and he said the litter problem has been much less since their arrival. Since the councils views were published on a planning application there have been developments and these will be covered later under planning applications. The clerk had contacted Mr. Shepherd (city councillor) about the overgrown footpaths through Blackford. He said he would notify the relevant department but so far nothing has happened.
6. Accounts: These had been audited by John Collier and approved. All councillors had been given a copy of them and approved them. There were fewer grants given out last year due to Covid 19 restrictions but Beck Burn has said that the money can roll over as it was an unusual year. The AGAR was filled in for approval and the Certificate of Exemption signed. Standing Orders and Financial Regulations are still fit for purpose as is our Financial Risk Assessment Policy and were adopted. The Governance Dept is reviewing the standard Code of Conduct Policy as it was last reviewed in 2012. When this is published the Council can look at it with a view to adopting it. Cheques were asked to be authorized for CALC subs and Zurich insurance renewal and PAYE admin. This was done.
7. Wind Farm Grants: Mr Addison has asked if 2 wall mounted litter bins could be fitted to the bus shelters. He said he would fit them and empty them. This was approved. There was to be a First Aid Course last year but this could not run with Covid restrictions. Hopefully this can be re-organized for this year. A suggestion had been made for a Defibrillator at Westlinton. This will be looked into.

8. Planning Applications: 21/0484. North View. Erection of Single Story Office Building. This was discussed and the councillors had been able to look at the plans online. It will not be seen from the road and the council were happy with this but concerns were raised that if this was leading to an expansion in the business further congestion was likely on the road.

DC left the meeting at this point when the next applications were to be discussed and JW took over the meeting.

Applications 21/0120 and 21/0121. Amended details Fir Bank. Since the council views on these applications were put online the clerk received emails from Mr. Baugh of an aggressive nature demanding a list of councillors and a copy of our Code of Conduct. These came in late in the evening and the clerk suggested he look on the website. She did not open the 3rd one. When the amended applications came in the plans looked identical and the case officer confirmed the only additions were 2 documents one of which called into question the integrity of this parish council. JW had printed this document and the council reviewed it. The clerk had been in touch with Cumbria Association of Local Councils asking for advice on this matter. The officer she spoke to looked on our website and confirmed the relevant documents were in place and that declarations of interest had been made correctly. The advice was not to get involved in personal correspondence but to contact the case officer concerned.

The amended applications were discussed and as no change had been made to the actual plans the council still felt that the scale of the proposed development was not of a domestic nature. It was felt that the council were entitled to their views and that at the end of the day the Planning Dept. made their recommendations to the City Council who made the final decision. In the past parish council comments have been mainly ignored. The clerk was asked to make the comment to the case officer that the council's views remained unchanged.

DC rejoined the meeting. He said that he had sold his property next to Fir Bank but did not want to compromise the council by taking any part in the discussion.

9. Highway Issues: Speeding on A7 still an issue. Some cars are doing well in excess of 80mph through Blackford and it is not policed at all. Fly tipping remains a problem.
10. Meeting open for comments. The member of public said she had been interested to see what went on at a parish council meeting.

Brian Smith had contacted the clerk about the development at Green Meadows. He looks down on the site and said that it is really expanding. It was felt that the council should back him up and contact Mr. Shepherd again to see if he had made any progress.

Meeting closed at 8.20pm The chairman thanked everyone for coming.



28-9-21