

Minutes of Westlinton Parish Council Meeting held on 28<sup>th</sup> September 2021 at 7pm in Blackford Church.

Apologies: Helen Forester, Fiona Kay, John Wharton and Val Tarbitt.

Present; David Coulthard, Steven Nicholson, Alex Forbes, Ian Hewson and the clerk.

Declaration of Interests: None.

Minutes of last meeting: Approved.

Matters Arising: At the AGM it was agreed that the council needed to recruit new councillors. Since then Alex Forbes and Ian Hewson were approached and agreed to join. DC welcomed them both onto the council and the clerk issued them with declaration forms to fill in. DC said it was very sad that our previous chairman Robert Murray had died. He did a tremendous amount for the parish and will be greatly missed. He also will need to be replaced.

It was agreed at the last meeting that D. Addison could have a grant to put litter bins on the bus shelters but this has not been done yet.

David Shepherd was notified about the overgrown footpath along the A7 but nothing has been done yet.

After our last meeting, Rachel Plant from the Governance dept. got in touch with the clerk and asked questions about our code of conduct, how we looked at planning applications and asked for any minutes relevant to planning applications concerning Fir Bank and Justicetown farm. The clerk complied with all the requests and finally received a copy of the report that completely exonerates DC and the council from breaching our code of conduct.

Code of Conduct: A new version of this has been produced by the Governance Dept. for parish councils to look at and adopt. This was done and the council agreed to adopt the new version.

Accounts: PC usually gives £450 to the PCC towards the upkeep of the churchyard. It was suggested that as we had not used much of the grant money due to covid , we could give £150 more out of the grant money making it £600. At the moment we have £18,792.47p in the account but most of that is grant money.

Wind Farm Updates: There was a HallBurn grants meeting in September but the clerk had had no notification of this meeting or received any of the grant applications to be considered. It was only when the minutes of that meeting were received that she realised it had taken place. DC had been given those minutes and the council looked through the awarded grants. The clerk informed Grantscape that she had not received anything but Matt Young said he had sent them. Beck Burn meeting is due and the clerk has contacted the organizer of that but has not

heard back yet.

PCC have asked if they could have £250. Grant towards children's Christmas gifts. This was approved.

Several of the proposed grants have not been used yet because of lockdown restrictions. Ann Greig from Holly Cottage had asked the clerk if the PC could re-instate what was a duck pond opposite Newtown Farm. This piece of land is owned by the farm and the clerk had explained that even if the farm would allow it, it would be costly to make and maintain and could involve the council in serious liability issues if anyone accidentally fell in or was drowned.

Planning Issues: There have not been any planning applications for the council to look at. The only thing was a courtesy letter from the National Grid to inform the PC of their ongoing works at the Substation and to the pylons

Highways: Main complaint is the speed of the traffic on the A7 and the lack of policing of the speed limit. Mr Maxwell from Forde House has got up a petition to try and get the speed limit reduced from 50. The clerk will ask again about speed cameras and a police presence.

Complaints have been received about the overgrown pavements along the A7 and the clerk will contact the council again about this.

Also the very narrow footpath through parts of Newtown were commented on. John Collier from Blackdyke did go and cut the hedge back to make it wider.

Residents in Newtown have asked if there could be a mirror put at Holly Cottage to make the exit from Ross Castle road safer. Also the reflectors over the old railway bridge have been damaged beyond repair by hedge cutting and need to be replaced. The clerk will contact Val Tarbitt about these matters.

AOB: DC had received a letter from our MP explaining his concerns over the restructuring of Local Government and offering his support to the Parish Council.

Meeting closed at 7.50pm.

Next meeting will be in December.