

Westlinton Parish Council AGM and Open Meeting held at 7pm 26th May 2026 in Blackford School.

1. Apologies; Helen Forester and Stephen Nicholson
2. Present: David Coulthard, John Wharton, Fiona Kay, Ian Hewson, the clerk and members of the parish.
3. Election of Office Bearers: DC was re-elected Chairman and JW was re-elected vice-chairman
4. Declaration of Interests: DC and IH declared an interest in planning item 26/0238. As members of the parish had come to petition the PC on this item it was decided to re-arrange the agenda and bring this forward. DC and IH left the room and JW took the chair of the meeting.
5. Planning applications: Ref 26/0238. JW welcomed those who had come to talk about this application and asked them to discuss this matter with the council. The owners of Firbank had sent a copy of the objections they had submitted to the case officer and the bullet points of these were read out and residents added their worries and concerns. When all those who wanted to speak had finished, JW thanked them for their input and said they would now discuss this and decide how the PC would respond to this application. When the parishioners left, this application was discussed and the council decided that they should support the objections raised by the local residents and the clerk would itemise the points of concern in the Parish Observations and ask that the application be turned down by the Planning Dept. As the closing date was 27th, the clerk would list the concerns raised and email them to the case officer the following morning. As this matter was now dealt with DC and IH were invited back to the meeting and were joined by Alan Hearty, who has been to the fore in the matter of the proposed Mega-substation, for an update.

He gave an update on what had been happening to try and stop this parish being chosen for the site of this huge 75 acre project. He had organized for a large Metal Detecting Group to have a weekend on the land proposed for the substation and this had proved spectacular. 3 pure gold 5000 year old torcs(jewellery) had been found plus numerous roman coins and artefacts. It had been so successful that the group will return in August and cover the fields that had crops in at the minute. AH has been in touch with various heritage groups and organisations in the hope that this site will be ruled out. PC will contact Cumberland Council about this.

DC gave an update on the matter of Hespian Wood landfill Site. This site has voluntarily shut itself down to avoid being shut down by the Environment agency. HF had been to the last meeting as DC had been away. Rockcliffe PC is fighting this as well.

DC also gave an update on the Incinerator appeal. This will take place next month and a

barrister will be employed to speak against this. Westlinton have said they will give monetary assistance for this.

6. Minutes of last meeting and matters arising: Minutes approved. Ongoing complaints have been received about the congestion at Tuer's Plant hire and Trailer Stockists. The clerk was asked to contact the Highways dept. to see if they could help.
7. Accounts: Copies of this were looked at. An internal audit was carried out by John Collier and everything was deemed correct and that part of the Agar Form had been filled in. The rest of the Agar forms were gone through and completed including the Certificate of Exemption one. There is £24,729-78p in the Cumberland. £10,495-17p of this is PC money and £14,234-61p is wind farm grant money. The Financial Risk Policy was deemed still fit for purpose and adopted. There has been a refund from the winding up of Eden and Lyne Buzz of £670 asking that the PC could use it for something environmental. Cheques were authorized for Zurich Insurance £196-00, Calc membership £195-56 and for the clerk for Employers NI contributions £27-45.
8. Parish Boundaries: Some residents in Todhills felt that they would be better off in Westlinton and wondered if the boundaries could be changed. Apparently this is a lengthy and costly process. As Rockcliffe and Westlinton PCs are working more closely together any problems could be sorted.
9. Wind Farm Grants: £14,234-61p left to spend. Will not receive any this year. W.I .has asked for £300 towards speakers. This was approved. BPTFA have asked for money towards the summer Fair. Approved but PC felt they need to advertise it better.
10. Highways: FK had reported poor state of the road just to the east of the A7 opposite the church. The clerk had also reported this. No result so far. Joan Forester had asked the clerk about a sign to warn motorists about the steep bend before their bungalow. Highways have looked into it and will do something when funds allow.

Meeting closed at 8.50pm