

Minutes of Newton le Willows Parish Council Meetings **held on 20th July 2020**

These meetings were held in the Village Hall after a risk assessment had been carried out and all appropriate Covid-19 guidelines had been followed to ensure safety of all attendees. All documents had been circulated to councillors ahead of the meetings to ensure all time constraints were met. Financial documents will be available to view by all on the Parish Council website shortly.

Minutes - Annual Parish meeting

1. The **minutes of the meeting** held on the 7th May 2019 were **approved and signed**.
2. **Chairman's report:**

'It seems like a long year since I took on chairing this Parish Council. Well with Covid-19 it has been an extended year, during which we have come up to full strength with Ted Clarkson and Chris Audritt joining the Council.

Firstly, I would like to thank our clerk for preparing our agendas with the Parish Plan in mind and for dealing with a variety of correspondence, the accounts and several planning applications. The latter usually requiring comments at short notice between our meetings. There have been nine of these including an extra one shared with Patrick Brompton at their request and one to consider the Village Hall extension planning application.

Restoring and improving the Playground has been an ongoing concern. I am pleased to say that repainting has improved the appearance but a decision is needed on renewing or replacing the rubberised asphalt. We are grateful to Ted Clarkson for the simple but effective initiative of fixing cable ties above the swings to deter pigeons.

There has also been the renewal of street lighting by NYCC with LED upgrades, yet to be completed.

The defibrillator has been restored with a new battery and we are very grateful for training given by Hannah Phillips. Routine checks are made by the Parish Clerk.

We continue to have unresolved issues in relation to The Wheatsheaf site and fly tipping in Sinks Lane. The former issue was given new life by correspondence between John Bell and our MP Rishi Sunak which led to a site meeting with staff from RDC. However subsequent correspondence has not led to any progress. The latter is in the hands of the Environment Agency who have linked our case with four others for potential prosecution, but there is no time table relating to this and it is part of an escalating national problem. At this point I would like to thank our team of volunteers who regularly venture forth with bin bags to collect sundry discarded items from the roadsides, with those tackling the verges outside the core village dealing with considerable quantities.

Our business continues to be concerned with highways and related issues. Victoria Wilthew has been persistent with this and a major achievement has been the extension of speed limits along Sinks Lane and beyond Aysgarth School. We are pursuing funding support for additional signage in the roads. Site meetings with NYCC Highways have also given consideration to traffic calming measures. These have potentially included a roundabout at the crossroads by The Wheatsheaf, Vehicle Activated Signs (shared with Crakehall) and chicanes. All of these would depend on funding applications. The possibility of a traffic priority scheme under the railway bridge is to be considered as a road safety measure in the coming agenda.

The pavement all along Station Road has been marked for resurfacing. The need was emphasised by Johnnie Johnson before he died in January and to whom it would be a fitting memory. We note his extensive contributions to the village through this Parish Council over many years.

A major drainage issue has been taken up in conjunction with Aysgarth School. This concerns inadequate and damaged pipework that leads to the discharge of rainwater down Station

Road. This scours out the road edges and deposits considerable debris outside the terraced houses at the bottom of the hill. It also causes an icing hazard for vehicles particularly on the slopes. NYCC have acknowledged the need for remedial work and we need to keep them up to getting this done.

We have noted the Environment and Climate Emergency motion passed by RDC with Councillor Kevin Foster in attendance, and look forward to cooperating with their Climate Emergency Officer when in post.

With the arrival of the Covid-19 emergency I took the initiative of linking our Resilience Team to the NYCC Local Resilience Forum and they put the Leyburn hub in touch with us. Four of us set up a Newton-le-Willows Covid Mutual Aid Group registered with the national scheme. An associated WhatsApp group and Facebook page were established. In this connection I am grateful to Bob Sampson, Phil Nunn and Jane Hodges for guidance and to some 38 other volunteers for support. This has involved collecting prescriptions and shopping, especially for shielded and vulnerable residents. We have also been able to share information on local initiatives by local suppliers and services to help us through the crisis, also cautions about scams, potential abuse and mis-information. We have been most grateful to Aysgarth School for the offer of free lunches to a number of vulnerable households and individuals and we thank the volunteers who collected and distributed these.

A final thank you to our Clerk Teresa for the extra work involved in preparing for this meeting.

3. Contributions and questions from the electorate:

- **H Hepworth – planning concern.** Could the council positively support an outline planning application? This will be discussed at the ordinary meeting under planning.
- **B Sampson – environmental issues.** Would the Council be involved in the Climate Emergency motion and how does the Parish Council intend to follow a more environmental approach moving forward? At the moment, the council are still awaiting an appointed officer for RDC and L Ryder has been liaising with Councillor Foster. In terms of what the council can do, it can look at planning applications with an environmental approach in mind, it has considered ancient trees within our community (aimed at protecting them) and will consider making a statement at a future date. It agreed that this matter should be reviewed at future meetings.

Minutes – Annual meeting of the council

1. L Ryder was elected as **Chairman** of the council
2. The **declaration of acceptance** of office was signed by L Ryder
3. There were **apologies for** absence from J Bell and Councillor R Ormston
4. **Election of Vice Chairman** – V Wilthew was elected
5. **Nomination of councillors onto other working groups and organisations:**
 - Atkinson Clarke Educational Trust** - V Wilthew
 - Newton le Willows and Patrick Brompton Village Hall** – C Audritt
 - Community Resilience** – L Ryder
 - Welcome packs** – V Wilthew
 - Waste & recycling** – L Ryder
6. The Annual Meeting of the council was declared closed at 6.45pm