

# WINDLESTONE PARISH COUNCIL

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## Minutes of Ordinary Meeting held 5<sup>th</sup> March 2024 at Hutton House, Chilton

<b>Present:</b>	Councillor Dave Willshaw (DW) (Chair) Councillor Phil Woods (PAW) Councillor Allison Morris (AM) Karen Youngusband, Clerk & Responsible Finance Officer (KY) County Councillor Julie Cairns (JC)  9 Members of the Public were also in attendance.	<b>ACTION</b>
<b>45/23-24</b>	<b>Apologies</b>  Councillor Derek Cattell (DC)	
<b>46/23-24</b>	<b>Declarations of Interest</b>  No Declarations of Interest were received.	
<b>47/23-24</b>	<b>Minutes</b>  Members agreed to approve the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Windlestone Parish Council held 16 <sup>th</sup> January 2024.	
<b>48/23-24</b>	<b>Matters Arising from the Minutes</b>  Following several letters being received from local residents, KY reported that she had again contacted the Local Authority to request that a Grit Bin be installed on land owned by DCC near to the lane leading to Windlestone Park. Unfortunately, the request had once again been denied on the grounds that the bin would be for the purpose of servicing a private road. KY agreed to send a map showing the location proposed for the installation of a Grit Bin to Councillor Cairns, to see if Julie might have better luck in pursuing the matter.  If DCC still refused the request KY reported that for the Parish Council to cover the cost of providing a Grit Bin it would be around £250 - £300 for a 400 litre bin.	<b>JC</b>
<b>49/23-24</b>	<b>Public Participation</b>  Nine Members of the public were present at the meeting. It was agreed to bring members of the public into discussions under the relevant Agenda Items.	
<b>50/23-24</b>	<b>Finance</b>  Expenditure was approved and cheques signed for the Clerk's Emolument and Room Hire Costs.	
<b>51/23-24</b>	<b>Planning</b>  There were no planning matters to report.	

<b>52/23-24</b>	<b>Correspondence</b>	<b>KY</b>
<p>DW reported that one item had been received. The path leading from the noticeboard at Windlestone Park to the Postbox at the gates to Windlestone Hall was completely covered in mud. KY confirmed that she had reported the matter to the Local Authority and would continue to chase it up.</p> <p>A member of the public reported the erosion of the footpath leading from the Middridge road to Aycliffe. This had also been reported to the Local Authority, who had replied stating that it was cut back annually.</p>		
<b>53/23-24</b>	<b>Parish Council Website</b>	<b>KY</b>
<p>KY reported that County Councillor Cairns had kindly offered to contribute £1,500 to cover the development costs of a new website for the Parish Council. Members thanked Julie for her generosity. KY confirmed that the application for the funding would be submitted by the end of the week and that it usually took around 8 weeks for payment to be received. The costs to the Parish Council would be £210 per annum for hosting and maintaining the site. This was actually less than what the Parish Council were currently paying.</p>		
<b>54/23-24</b>	<b>Damaged Bollards at the end of Eden Gardens</b>	<b>KY</b>
<p>KY reported that she had first reported the damaged and missing bollards at the end of Eden Gardens in July 2023. DCC had attended promptly to reinstate the bollards that had been knocked over, but unfortunately, more bollards were now damaged and there were still gaps where bollards had been removed. KY had reported the matter again in January 2024 to the Local Authority suggesting that it might be better to install a steel barrier instead of reinstating bollards, as this would be more effective in preventing cars and bikes from driving through the gaps and onto the road.</p> <p>Residents from Eden Gardens present at the meeting agreed that a steel barrier would be more effective. KY would continue to chase the matter up with the Local Authority.</p>		
<b>55/23-24</b>	<b>Update on The Eden Arms</b>	
<p>KY reported that the Police and Fire Brigade had carried out an inspection of the Eden Arms and found it to be in an acceptable condition. There was no evidence of illegal activity at the property and the workers present at the time of the inspection had clearly been busy painting the rooms and fitting carpets. Because of ventilation issues the workers were advised not to continue residing at the property and to find alternative accommodation. Despite the language barrier the workers had indicated that the intended use of the property going forward, was to provide a place to stay for homeless people. The Police advised that this would not be permitted without Change of Use Planning Permission. The Local Authority confirmed that they had not received a planning application and Mears also confirmed that as the</p>		

	<p>sole authority in allocating homes for asylum seekers that the Eden Arms was not registered to be used for this purpose.</p> <p>Residents expressed their ongoing concerns and were advised to remain vigilant and continue reporting any concerns or issues. The Police would continue to keep an eye on the property.</p> <p>No response had been received from Environmental Health and attempts to meet with the owner of the property had all failed. Efforts would continue to try and set up a meeting with the owner asap.</p>	
<p><b>56/23-24</b></p>	<p><b>Update on Windlestone Hall</b></p> <p>KY reported that as it had only been six weeks since the last meeting Mr Robertson had confirmed that there was not really anything further to report. Improvement work was continuing at the Hall, as were negotiations with the Local Authority over various issues. As soon as a date had been set for the commencement of the enabling development, the Parish Council would be informed. Photos on the Hall's website demonstrated that the improvements that had been carried out to date had been done to a high standard and were very impressive.</p>	
<p><b>57/23-24</b></p>	<p><b>Proposed Changes to Rushyford Roundabout</b></p> <p>KY circulated plans for the proposed changes to Rushyford Roundabout, which had been provided by DCC Highways Department. The plans showed proposals to widen the approaches to the roundabout with the inclusion of splitter islands to help residents cross the road.</p> <p>Residents and Members expressed concerns that introducing splitter islands did not go far enough, and that no consultation had ever taken place with residents most affected by the plans. It was agreed that a joined-up approach with Chilton Town Council would be beneficial in raising awareness of residents' concerns with the Local Authority.</p> <p>KY would contact the Clerk at Chilton Town Council to request that the matter be placed on the Agenda for the next meeting of Chilton Town Council. The idea was that representatives from Chilton Town Council be selected to meet with Windlestone Parish Council in the first instance, to draw up a list of concerns regarding the plans for the roundabout. A letter would then be sent documenting residents' concerns to the Highways Department at DCC. Residents were invited to either send their individual concerns via email to the Parish Clerk (KY) or submit them via Parish Councillors. It was then proposed that representatives from the Highways Department be invited to a Meeting, so that they could address the concerns raised. KY/JC would continue to liaise to ensure a joint up approach was facilitated.</p>	<p><b>JC/KY</b></p>
<p><b>58/23-24</b></p>	<p><b>Community Bulb Planting</b></p> <p>KY reported that a specification was required to enable competitive quotations to be sought for bulb planting in the Parish. To give an idea on cost; it would be around £120 for 1000 daffodil bulbs. Obviously, a lot more than this would be required for such a widespread parish. Members and residents agreed that a plan needed to be drawn up</p>	<p><b>ALL</b></p>

	<p>identifying locations for planting to take place, together with a list of different types of flowers to be planted, such as crocuses, daffodils and snowdrops. It was agreed that everyone consider appropriate areas for planting ready for discussion at a future meeting.</p>	
<b>59/23-24</b>	<p><b>Public Footpaths/Definitive Map for Windlestone</b></p> <p>Members agreed to defer this item to a future meeting, which would give Members time to review the footpaths in the Parish, comparing the existing footpaths to the original Definitive Map for the Parish.</p>	<b>PAW/DC</b>
<b>60/23-24</b>	<p><b>Update from the Clerk</b></p> <p><u>Missing Public Seat at Mill Cottages</u> KY confirmed that she had reported the seat at Mill Cottages, which had been hit by a vehicle to the Local Authority, and had requested a replacement seat be installed. KY would continue to chase this up.</p> <p><u>Casual Vacancy for a Parish Councillor</u> KY reminded everyone present at the meeting that there remained a vacancy for a Councillor on the Parish Council. If anybody knew of anyone interested in taking up this position, they were asked to contact KY as the Parish Clerk. DW/AM stressed the importance of maintaining a full compliment of Councillors on the Parish Council.</p> <p><u>Street Lighting Repairs</u> KY reported that she had been assured that the street lighting repairs/replacement would be carried out within the next two weeks.</p> <p><u>Windlestone Parish Council Noticeboard</u> KY reported that ground staff at Ferryhill Town Council had offered to refurbish the noticeboard at Windlestone Park, which was now in a dreadful condition. The Parish Council would be invoiced for materials accordingly. Members conveyed thanks to the staff involved.</p> <p><u>Request for a Litter Bin</u> Residents asked if it would be possible to have a litter bin installed at the end of the lane leading from School Cottages/Rookery Garden as rubbish was constantly being dumped in this area. KY agreed to submit a request to DCC for a bin to be installed asap.</p>	<p><b>KY</b></p> <p><b>ALL</b></p> <p><b>KY</b></p>
<b>61/23-24</b>	<p><b>Date and Time of Next Meeting</b></p> <p>KY agreed to book Hutton House (Chilton Town Hall) for the next meeting of the Parish Council, which would be a Special Meeting to discuss the concerns regarding Rushyford Roundabout as follows:</p> <p><b>Special Parish Council Meeting – 6.00pm Tuesday, 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2024</b></p>	<b>KY</b>

With no further business to discuss the Chair declared the meeting officially closed at 7.50pm.

**SIGNED:** ..... (Chair)

**DATE:** .....