



Website: <http://whitwickpc.leicestershireparishcouncils.org>

FIRST ANNUAL REPORT 2011/12

Introduction

Whitwick Parish Council was established by the District of North West Leicestershire (Reorganisation of Community Governance) Order 2010. This specified that the number of councillors should be eleven and that they should be elected on the normal election day in 2011 and every four years thereafter.

Councillors

Nine candidates stood for election at the May 2011 elections and were returned unopposed. Two further councillors were subsequently co-opted to fill the remaining two vacancies. Please see page 4 for contact details.

Meetings

In the financial year 2011/12, the Parish Council held 8 ordinary meetings and one extraordinary (recruitment interview) meeting. All of the ordinary meetings were open to the press and public and all meetings now open with a public question and answer session. The Council currently meets at St John the Baptist C of E School, Parsonwood Hill, Whitwick.

Finance

NWLDC set the budget and precept for the first year of operation. The Council has subsequently decided to freeze the precept at the same level for 2012/13. The Council has opened accounts with HSBC Bank. A Balance Sheet as at 31 March 2012 is shown on page 5.

Community Grants

NWLDC continued to administer the 'Community Chest' grants scheme in 2011/12. With effect from 1 April 2012, the Parish Council has taken over this function and has set aside the sum of £1500 for the purpose. Our Small Grants Policy and application form are available on the website.

Policies and Procedures

In its first year, the Council has adopted:

- A Code of Conduct for Members
- Standing Orders
- Financial Regulations
- Risk Assessment
- Asset Register
- Freedom of Information Publication Scheme
- Media Policy
- Disability Discrimination Policy
- Complaints Procedure
- Community Grants Policy
- Staff Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures

Memberships

The Council is a member of the National and Leicestershire and Rutland Associations of Local Councils and the Rural Community Council (Leicestershire & Rutland).

Community Policing

Our local beat policeman and PCSO are invited to attend each meeting to have a dialogue with the Parish Council on community policing issues.

Planning

The Council considers all planning applications submitted in the parish as a consultee though the final decisions are taken by NWLDC.

The Parish is facing major challenges due to planning proposals for significant new housing development, particularly 'Stephenson Green' on the existing Green Wedge between Whitwick and Coalville which would more than double the population of the Parish. The Council strongly opposed this application which was heard at a Public Inquiry which opened on 7 February 2012. This – and other potential applications – would, if successful, drastically affect the character of the area by increased urbanisation, increased numbers of residents, increased pressures on existing infrastructure and additional facilities to be provided by developers which the Council may be expected to take on. We would like to thank Whitwick Action Group and all local residents for ensuring that the Inspector was left in no doubt as to the scale of local opposition to this proposal. A decision is expected not later than 20 August 2012.

Website

The Parish Council has set up its own website which is regularly updated including news, agenda and minutes and future meetings. There is also an email link to the Clerk.

Logo

The Council wishes to record its thanks to local firm Quiet Storm who kindly designed a logo for the Parish Council at no cost to council tax payers.

Staff

The Council engaged the services of Phil and Lorraine Ellis on an interim basis to get the essentials in place. Both had excellent qualifications, extensive public sector experience and had each previously clerked parish councils. Following open advertisement and competitive interviews, they have been retained on two year fixed term contracts until 31 March 2014. Lorraine is hoping to be awarded the Certificate in Local Council Administration (CiLCA) very shortly.

Audit

The Council has appointed Richard Willcocks of Redwood Pryor Ltd as its Internal Auditor. Clement Keys have been designated as the Council's external auditors. The Council's accounts are made available for public inspection as part of the audit process.

Future Work

The Council has an aspiration to qualify for 'Quality Parish Council' status before the 2015 elections.

We in negotiation with NWLDC to secure the transfer of all parks, recreation grounds and open spaces into parish council ownership. When completed, this will mean that maintenance costs will be met by the Parish Council from its precept rather than by NWLDC as a special expense. The Council has decided not to seek the transfer of Whitwick cemetery at the present time. This will therefore continue to be charged by NWLDC as a special expense on the council tax bills.

If other parts of the Coalville area are parished in the near future, the Council would like to consider joining up with these and existing urban area parishes to form a joint board for grounds maintenance and burials.

There is an intention to facilitate a community consultation/community plan process but not until after the outcome of the Stephenson Green planning inquiry is known given the significant impact this could have on the future of the parish.

The Council is also investigating options for establishing its own office and wishes to provide a dedicated notice board at a strategic location to publicise parish council related matters.

Ray Woodward

Chairman of the Parish Council

Councillors and Staff

Councillor Anthony Barker, 33 Crusader Close, Whitwick, Leics LE67 5BX

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Councillor Sue Colledge, 60 Leicester Road, Whitwick, Leics LE67 5GH

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Councillor Elaine J Easom, 14 Coverdale, Whitwick, Leicestershire, LE67 5BP

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Councillor Dave Everitt, 72 Glebe Road, Thringstone, Coalville, Leicestershire, LE67 8NW

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Councillor Tony Gillard, 128 St Bernards Road, Whitwick, Leicestershire, LE67 5GW

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Councillor Derek Howe (Vice Chairman), 73 Silver Street, Whitwick, Coalville, Leics, LE67 5EX

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Councillor Nita Pearson

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Councillor Jo Straw

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Councillor Lindsay Weaver

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Councillor Ray Woodward (Chairman), 30 Mossdale, Whitwick, Coalville, Leics, LE67 5BL

Tel: 01530 831542 E.mail: ray.woodward@nwleicestershire.gov.uk

Staff

Parish Clerk: Phil Ellis Assistant Clerk: Mrs Lorraine Ellis

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Tel: 01530 458565 E.mail@ clerk@whitwickpc.org.uk

WHITWICK PARISH COUNCIL		
RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 2012		
Budgetted	Actual Payments	Actual Receipts
Opening Balance	0.00	
INCOME		
Precept	31000.00	30998.00
Interest	4.83	
VAT	108.91	
Other Income	350.00	
EXPENDITURE		
Salaries	15000.00	13410.39
Election Costs	6500.00	43.26
Office Accom	2000.00	482.10
Equipment	1000.00	350.80
Admin & Subs	1500.00	1496.79
Contingency	5000.00	300.00
VAT		108.91
Other Expenditure		125.72
Total	£16,317.97	£31,461.74
Balance to c/fwd	£15,143.77	