



**MINUTES of the MEETING OF WHITWICK PARISH COUNCIL held on THURSDAY 4 AUGUST 2022 AT 7.04 pm at Park Hall, Whitwick Park, North Street, Whitwick**

Present: Councillor S Colledge (Chairman)  
Cllrs A Barker, P Moulton, R Woodward, M Wyatt

In attendance:  
Mrs C Tibbles PSLCC, Parish Manager/Responsible Finance Officer

5 members of the public

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and apologised for the short delay in starting.

**2918. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Cllrs L Gillard, T Gillard, L Spence and J Straw. Cllr S Gillard was absent.

**2919. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Cllr Barker declared a disclosable non-pecuniary interest as a Director of Holly Hayes Woods, a member of Whitwick Historical Group and a non-pecuniary interest as a signatory at Walkers Flats Allotment Group.

Cllr Colledge declared a non-pecuniary interest in matters connected to Whitwick Historical Group as a member, to Whitwick Action Group as a member and Woodstock in Whitwick as a member; as a supporter of Coalville CAN; there were no planning issues so no other interests declared regarding the Green Wedge; potential pecuniary interest as a neighbour of the old Hermitage Leisure Centre site.

Cllr Moulton declared a disclosable non-pecuniary interest as a member of Belton and Whitwick Royal British Legion, as a Link Councillor and member of Whitwick Historical Group, as a member of Whitwick Bowls Club, Link Councillor for Thornborough Road Allotment Society; a Link Councillor for Meadow Barn View

Cllr Woodward declared a disclosable non-pecuniary interest as a Director of Holly Hayes Woods and as a member of Whitwick Historical Group.

Cllr Wyatt declared a disclosable non-pecuniary interest in all matters relating to North West Leicestershire District Council as a member.

**2920. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN**

**Resolved: That Cllr P Moulton be elected as Vice-Chairman of the Council for the remainder of the 2022/2023 Civic Year.**

## 2921. VACANCY FOR A PARISH COUNCILLOR

Members noted that an election had not been called for by residents of the parish and that the casual vacancy for a parish councillor for the Holly Hayes Ward could now be filled by co-option, with details being published soon and a closing date set so that an appointment could be made at the council meeting on 15 September. The appointment would last until the elections in May 2023.

**2922. PUBLIC QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION** - by agreement adjourned until after the next item had been discussed.

## 2923. THE FUTURE OF HERMITAGE LEISURE CENTRE

Members had received information at the last council meeting and considered carefully what it felt was best for the community of Whitwick. Members fully endorsed that community ownership of the building should be seriously considered by NWLDC as some officers appeared to support this for further exploration, questioning the view that the building was not beyond adaption for partial use. If this Community Asset building/site was operated and funded by the community for a period of two years (or more) the District Council would not suffer any detriment. **Resolved that the discussion of the draft statement be finalised by the Parish Manager, in consultation with the Chairman, and submitted to the Scrutiny Committee, with a request that a parish councillor would attend and hopefully speak on this matter. Further resolved unanimously that if the Hermitage Leisure Centre building was to be disposed of by the District Council then the Parish Council would trigger the Asset of Community Value process and express an interest in its future.** [Parish Manager's note: The wording of the final submission is shown below.]

*"Whitwick Parish Council Option for the future of Hermitage Leisure Centre  
Thanks are given to Mr Sanders and the team for finally attending our Parish Council meeting on 21 July with an update about the future of the Hermitage Leisure Centre (HLC). Whitwick Parish Council (WPC) are, however, disappointed that, despite us having a standard agenda item every month to allow for updates, these were not forthcoming. The parish council was left as an afterthought in the consultation process. We are also disappointed to learn that tenders have already been invited for the demolition of the HLC, this also seems rather presumptive, unless we are actually not being given any consideration in this process.*

*WPC are a significant stakeholder in this and made the HLC an Asset of Community Value This was listed on NWLDC website 14/11/2016. This was taken back for full council to consider before it expired and it was renewed in 2021, yet we are now presented with the options already decided upon. **We would like to propose another option - that of Community Ownership.** NWLDC have commissioned a whole raft of consultation and advice and through that have produced their 'vision'. The only reason for not going with this aspirational option is financial. We believe that through community ownership the 'vision' can be delivered.*

*The structural report by CBRE, commissioned by NWLDC, states that poolside and the plant are in no fit state to repair but that phase of the building could*

*be demolished, leaving the gym, sports hall, cafeteria areas. This same report indicates that with minimal roof repairs this remaining structure has approximately 10 years of life, with more substantial roof repairs, another 25 years of life.*

*This is a substantial structure of great community value that could be salvaged and repurposed, saving much environmental damage. The only truly GREEN building is one that is already built. Destroying a reusable building would be tantamount to environmental vandalism. If a community group had ownership of the building for two years, this would help NWLDC to deliver their aspirational vision. If it fails, they've lost nothing because the plans can be reviewed. At the meeting of Whitwick Parish Council on 4 August 2022, members voted to trigger the Asset of Community Value and WPC intends to express an interest in it.*

*There are many ways forward including, but not limited to: The Community Ownership Fund, which works alongside existing Community Asset Transfer frameworks to support these transfers and fund renovation and refurbishment; Lottery Funding; a Community Share issue; Community Co-operatives, youth funding and Shared operating options.*

***We urge the Scrutiny Committee to allow our option to be presented to cabinet and to seriously consider this option as the way forward with the Hermitage Leisure Centre.***

*This option will provide an amazing community asset with safe affordable spaces for disaffected young people within our community to feel welcomed in. Youth workers could be on site who can identify any potential exploitation issues before they get out of hand. This would be useful to counter antisocial behaviour. When young people have nothing to do except congregate in large groups, ASB often develops within that environment. None of the proposals conflict with the new Whitwick and Coalville Leisure Centre. The two could operate in a complimentary fashion to enhance our leisure infrastructure.*

***NWLDC has stated that it can demolish this building without it affecting the registration status of being an Asset of Community Value. The parish council would challenge that view and would take our own legal advice."***

## **2922. PUBLIC QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION**

Questions were raised on the land not being fit for building domestic properties (due to previous use); covenants that restricted the land to be only used for specific purposes; confirmation that Everyone Active did not see community ownership at Hermitage as being in conflict with their leisure business function; lack of affordable provision for some youths so a community led enterprise would help address that serious omission with safe activities and protect the community by reducing ASB; saddened that the current operations were not more inclusive; concern that positions were being used to unfairly influence the outcome.

## **2924. SECURITY IN WHITWICK PARK**

**Resolved that the suggestion of the police to upgrade to a live feed CCTV system be approved in principle, with investigation by the PMGP Committee to get full costings of everything required.** The Parish

Manager said that an allocation from general reserves was likely to be required.

### **2925. VACANCIES ON COMMITTEES/WORKING PARTIES/LINK COUNCILLORS**

**Resolved that:**

- a) **following advertisement and expression of interest by one person, Mrs T Barker be appointed as a non-councillor to Property Management and General Purposes Committee;**
- b) **to correct the reference of four members to 'five' members and Cllr P Moulton was appointed as the fifth councillor to serve on the Property Management and General Purposes Committee.**

### **2926. CIVILITY AND RESPECT – FUTURE CONDUCT AND COMMUNICATIONS**

Members concurred the current issues were impacting on members, staff and parishioners. The Parish Manager and the Chairman urged that a way forward was needed to establish better co-operative working and support to staffing. The LRALC presentation in May had been very interesting and well delivered and the members who attended had found it very valuable. Whilst disappointing that there hadn't been full attendance, member concluded that part 2 should be arranged. **Resolved to invite Jake Atkinson from LRALC to return to Whitwick, preferable on a Thursday evening in October.** [Parish Manager's Note: an invitation has been extended for 13 or 27 October. Please keep these dates free until confirmation is agreed.]

### **2927. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT – EXTRA OFFICE OPENING**

Volunteers invited for opening the Community Office on 15 October, 19 November and 17 December (Saturdays 10 am – 1 pm). Cllr Woodward offered to be reserve if no-one came forward.

### **2928. PLANNING AND LICENSING MATTERS**

a) The Council had been consulted by NWLDC on the following applications:

**REF: 22/01054/FUL – Land to south of Loughborough Road -** Erection of one self-build dwelling – resubmission 21/00989/FUL – **to recommend that it should be refused based on the following objections being raised:**

**The proposed site was outside the scope for development and falls within the National Forest;**

**The land was agricultural use and local knowledge confirmed that drainage was a longstanding problem; applications had previously been refused at this location and appeals were upheld – there was no material change to the validity of the decisions made at that time. It was further resolved that all views of the parish council would in future ask the following two questions: However, if approval was given the parish council wished to ask what environmental mitigation measures would be taken by the applicant to help improve or offset their environmental impact within Whitwick? The parish council would also wish to ask for a**

**donation to help improve or increase our current tree stock which will help to reduce the current carbon dioxide concerns within the parished area.**

**REF: 22/01199/FUL – 58 Parsonwood Hill** – Erection of single-storey front and rear extensions – amended 21/00021/FUL – **no objection raised**

**REF: 22/02109/PNH – 27 Grove Road** - Erection of a single storey extension - – **no objection raised**

- b) Decisions by NWLDC who have now **approved** the following applications:  
REF 22/00905/FUL – 5 Torrington Ave – Erection of single storey front and rear extensions  
REF 22/00930/ADC – KFC Restaurant, Thornborough Rd – Display of 3 illuminated lightbox fascias  
REF: 22/00451/FUL – 67 Church Lane – Erection of one no. two storey dwelling

### **2929. PARISH MANAGER’S REPORT AND MATTERS PENDING**

Members noted the report. In response to questions, the Parish Manager confirmed that 7 councillors had replied to her email giving the costings (up to £2200 for the professional view being sought on the potential future use of the Hermitage Leisure Centre building. Members confirmed that they would like to see a demonstration of the air quality bollard system that Cllr Wyatt had found and this would be arranged by the Parish Manager for the September meeting, with consideration to be given at the October meeting. A question was asked about draw down of water from the Black Brook by Severn Trent, which was outside the parish boundary but affecting the parish and causing concern to the local Angling club. Cllr Woodward urged that a letter should be sent to Severn Trent but the Parish Manager required more information before being able to fulfil this.

### **2930. ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT**

Following consideration, members:

- a) noted that the list of scheduled Direct Debits for 22/23 and 2 members signed a new DD form that was needed after an existing supplier had changed their name;  
**b) resolved that members should proceed with on-line electronic banking;** the Parish Manager would pursue the addition of outstanding approved signatories, members could then set a deadline and an informal training session scheduled.

Full signature of Chairman: ..... Date: .....

Meeting closed at 8.25 pm

*Date of **PUBLIC** meeting regarding Grace Dieu Brook:*

*Date to be announced*

*Date of next council meeting:*

*Thursday 15 September 2022*