

## STANHOPE PARISH COUNCIL

**At a meeting of the Council held in Eastgate Village Hall on 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2025**

### **PRESENT:**

Cllr L Blackett, Cllr Mrs D Sutcliff, Cllr M Brewin, Cllr R Lawrie, Cllr P Turton, Cllr Mrs S Thompson,

Cllr Mrs S Smart, Cllr E Buchanan

Cllr Mr D Craig – Chairman

Susan Anderson – Clerk

Also present: Cllr Mrs A Savory

### **11056**

#### **Apologies for Absence**

Cllr J Shuttleworth, Cllr Miss J Carrick, Cllr Mrs A Hawkes, Cllr Mrs C Burdis

### **11057**

#### **To Receive Any Declarations of Interest from Members**

Cllr Mrs Savory declared an interest on Planning Matters

Cllr Lawrie declared an interest in an item in correspondence

### **11058**

#### **Minutes of the meeting held on 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2025**

Minutes were moved as a true and correct record and were signed by the Chairman

### **11059**

#### **Matters Arising**

1. **Willard Grove Tenant** – A tenant who we wrote to regarding not renewing the tenancy would like to keep his plot. He has reduced his hours at work and will have more time to cultivate the plot. The councillors will give the tenant a three-month probationary period. If after an inspection the plot has not been cultivated then the tenancy will be terminated and forfeit the fees. **Resolved:** Clerk to write to the tenant.
2. **Church Hall, Stanhope** – A meeting took place in St Thomas Church on Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> March which was very well attended. The meeting was run by the Rev Alaistair Prince who is on the PCC, Paula McLeod is Treasurer and Sue Andrews the Secretary. The Church Hall is a Grade II listed building and following an Architectural Report the repairs will cost £110,000 so its future is being considered. There are three issues, the running costs of the hall, the repairs to the roof £25,000 and the rendering £45,000, the element of the number of people running it. Plans were handed around for alterations to the church which will cost £450,000 which is money from endowments. Questions were answered and it was felt that the decision to close the Church Hall had already been decided there are many questions that need answering. It was suggested that could a management group be formed to help the PCC so

to try and keep the Church Hall open as so many groups use it. It was mentioned about putting a path across consecrated ground in the church yard which should not be allowed to happen. A full report was sent to all of the councillors by Cllr Turton. The councillors would like a letter of support to go the PCC and that the grant money will continue along with the other Village Halls. **Resolved:** Clerk to write

3. **Lime Tree, Stanhope** – We asked for a new Lime Tree to be planted where the old one had to be felled. The reply that came back was that DCC were unable to replant due to the path.
4. **Ponders Lane, St Johns Chapel**- An inspection has taken place and the works will be programmed in due course to rectify the issues with the footbridge.
5. **Dentburn Bridge, St Johns Chapel** – This was also inspected and a refurbishment scheme for this structure had already been added to the 25/26 works programme. There is no information as to when the works will be undertaken as DCC are currently in the early stages of design. Since then the bridge has been hit and some stones have been knocked off.  
**Resolved:** Clerk to report to DCC
6. **Weardale Practice** – The current newsletter has been sent which has been sent to all councillors. The Practice Manager has invited a couple of councillors to attend a meeting to discuss the new process and any concerns that the Parish Council may still have. Cllr Mrs Thompson and Cllr Mrs Savory had been at a recent meeting and people can still ring for an appointment. The surgery does understand that elderly people cannot make online appointments. The phone system was explained that when priority calls come, they must be taken first for example calls from the Community Hospital, Care Home, paramedics. A discussion took place but it was felt that the Practice Manager from the surgery should attend a Parish Council meeting which has happened in the past. **Resolved:** Clerk to write to the Weardale Practice.
7. **Frosterley Car Park** – The Street Warden has been and put signage up but did find no dog foul. The area will be kept an eye on when the Street Warden is passing.
8. **Houses behind Front Street, Stanhope** – a councillor enquired if there was any update. Cllr Mrs Savory mentioned that some adapted plans had been received but there is no decision yet. The houses are still not in keeping with the area and there are the problems with the access onto Graham Street and the loss of the car park spaces.
9. **Westgate parked cars**- Cllr Craig mentioned there is no improvement with the cars parking opposite the opening by the Hare and Hounds. Cllr Mrs Savory had spoken to the Police regarding this problem.

**11060**

#### **Correspondence Received**

1. The Chair of a group who are trying to develop a pilgrimage route to run from Killhope to Bishop Auckland, The Way of Hope, with the aim of promoting visitors to the Dale. The route broadly follows the existing Weardale Way, with diversions to sites of interest including Churches, Chapels, and museums. The North Pennines National Landscape are keen to provide grant aid to the group for the repair and reinstatement of the historic Scarsyke guide post ( currently broken and languishing in Westgate Chapel). The group is informal without a written constitution or bank account. They have run under the umbrella of the Weardale Churches Joint Parochial Church Council. Who are unwilling to receive and administer the grant money as they are concerned that it will give rise to continuing liability for maintenance and insurance of the stone. The group would like the Parish Council to agree to receive the grant on the groups behalf for the short period between receipt from National Landscapes and payment of the contractor. Our auditor has been contacted and we can receive the grant money but we cannot claim the vat back. Cllr Craig and Cllr Blackett mentioned that there is another stone somewhere between Park View and Rainey Close

Westgate. **Resolved:** All the councillors were in agreement to accept the grant money but will accept no liability for the stone.

2. Cllr Turton mentioned that a dog bin is needed in the gravelled area up from the cattle grid, Stanhope. Some residents reported to him that a bin is needed there.
3. One of the bus drivers that drives the 101 bus service is making the Parish Council aware of the problems that he faces in trying to get to the bus stop on the Market Place, Stanhope. It is all the parked cars that park outside of the cobbled bays that is the problem they just don't leave enough room for the bus to get to the bus stop. Any help would be appreciated.  
**Resolved:** This is a Police and Highways matter, Cllr Mrs Savory will flag it
4. DCC has received an application from Weardale Together Community Interest Company to have St Thomas Church Hall listed as an Asset of Community Value under the Community Right to Bid legislation brought in under the Localism Act 2011 and the Assets of Community Value (England) Regulations 2012. The Council has eight weeks to decide whether the nominated assets are of community value being taken by the Head of Corporate Property and Land. If the assets are considered to be of community value they will be added to the Councils List of Assets of Community Value for five years. The owner of the property can object to their property being placed on the List and they have a right to an internal review by the Council of the decision to list. **Resolved:** A letter of support to be sent.
5. CDALC sent an email regarding the benefits of CDALC/NALC Membership.

#### 11061

##### Planning Matters

DM/25/00237/FPA

Subdivision and change of use of former bank into two units, a restaurant unit (Class E) to the ground floor and offices (Class E) to the first and second floor.

Barclays Bank

Front Street

Stanhope

### PLANNING APPLICATION APPROVALS

DM/24/01838/LB

Retrospective Listed Building consent for the demolition of one partly collapsed stone wall and one boundary stone wall to ground level, to gain access to adjoining land to allow repair of the adjoined former Coach House. Boundary stone wall to be rebuilt upon completion of repairs. (amended heritage statement and plans received on 12<sup>th</sup> & 14<sup>th</sup> Nov 2024).

Bonny Moor Hen

Stanhope

DM/24/02772/LB & DM/24/03366/FPA

Internal reconfiguration, replacement windows including replacing window to rear with patio doors, installation of air bricks, roof vents and alterations to boundary treatments.

Chapel House

Wearhead

DM/24/03270/FPA

Removal of existing access ramp to main dwelling, walls and planting area within the existing garden area. Installation of new door and external staircase to rear of building and new steps to existing entrance door. Installation of UPVC doors to annex building. Hard landscaping works (amended 11.2.2025)

1A Bridge End  
Frosterley

## 11062

### Finance

1. When the invoice was paid for the hire of the Church Hall the details on the invoice were for the St Thomas Church account. We need to find out if the Church Hall account is still open for when the Village Hall Grant money is paid in May.
2. A tenant from Westgate sent too much rent money so a refund of £5.00 was sent back to them. The chairman authorised this from the bank account
3. The Bank Reconciliation Figures for 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025 have been sent to all of the councillors. The Receipts and Payments for the Year End along with the AGAR figures have also been sent. The accounts will be taken to Allen Sykes Accountants for auditing. We have received the AGAR forms from Mazars which have to be sent by 30<sup>th</sup> June 2025. **Resolved:** Figures were agreed
4. Oliver's Tree Services are due to inspect in the trees in the Old Cemetery, Stanhope, and the allotments. This is done bi-annually and it was 2023 the last inspection was done. **Resolved:** Agreed
5. Cllr Mrs Smart would like a new Notice Board next to the bus stop so that people can see the notices. **Resolved:** Clerk to get a quote
6. Cllr Miss Carrick has had a report that the stone seat by Centenary Close needs a repair. The wooden seat is rotten. **Resolved:** Clerk to check that the seat is the responsibility of the Parish Council

## 11063

### CDALC

Nothing to report

## 11064

### AAP Report

The last meeting has taken place of the AAP's which is now known as Local Networks. The meetings should commence in September and Cllr Mrs Savory is hoping that the new Local Networks carry on a sterling job.

## 11065

### Accounts for Payment

N&C SCOTT ALLOTMENT OVER PAYMENT	PAID	£5.00
JRB ENTERPRISE LTD		£540.00
SMITH OF DERBY FROSTERLEY VILLAGE HALL		£328.80
SMITH OF DERBY WEARHEAD VILLAGE HALL		£328.80
SMITH OF DERBY WESTGATE VILLAGE HALL		£328.80
GFW IRESHOPEBURN ALLOTMENTS		£20.00
DCC CEMETERY		£199.60

S ANDERSON SALARY	£903.28
HM REV	£20.96
S ANDERSON HOME AS OFFICE	£35.00
S ANDERSON EXPENSES INCLUDES SLCC MEMBERSHIP	£275.85
CDALC SUBSCRIPTION CHARGE 2025/26	£848.18
SCOTTISH WIDOWS (PRECEPT TRANSFER )	£45,000.00
TOTAL	£4092.17

#### ACCOUNTS FOR RECEIPTS

ALLOTMENT RENT	£1251.00
BANK FEES REFUND	£1.20

#### DIRECT DEBITS

BANK CHARGES	£9.70
EON ASHCROFT	£23.79
VODAFONE	£44.50

#### 11066

##### New Matters for Discussion

1. Cllr Mrs Thompson mentioned the congestion through Westgate with the traffic lights but the parking of two or three mini buses is not helping the problem. The builders work could take up to eighteen weeks. **Resolved:** Clerk to report to the Police
2. There are some broken kerbs on Front Street, Ireshopeburn below number 31. **Resolved:** Clerk to report to DCC
3. Cllr Buchanan mentioned that is it true that Stanhope Silver Band will not be playing at the Weardale Show (St Johns Chapel Show) this year. Cllr Mrs Sutcliffe declared an interest. It is true but no discussion took place on this as it is not a Parish Council matter it is the Show Committee.
4. Cllr Mrs Sutcliffe mentioned that the grass verges up Sidehead are no better after reporting them. **Resolved:** Clerk to report again to DCC
5. Cllr Mrs Savory mentioned that a dog was off the lead in the cemetery in Stanhope and the owner did not pick up after the dog. A lady confronted the person and asked were they not going to pick the dog muck up but just got a not very nice reply. The dog is a type of boxer dog.
6. The work on Wears Bridge at Wolsingham will commence on 8<sup>th</sup> May with pedestrian access allowed. The bridge will be closed three times to vehicles. The work should be completed by Show Weekend but it is either have the work done or the bridge would be closed. It was

mentioned was there any progress on the road closed by Witton-le Wear to Hamsterley but there is no progress.

7. Cllr Brewin would like to report that the drains are blocked from Mill Lane to the Village Green. **Resolved:** Clerk to report to DCC
8. Cllr Craig would like to know when will the repairs to the Stone Bridge be done. **Resolved:** Clerk to write and Cllr Mrs Savory will also enquire.
9. There is a tree on Softley Bank that look rotten and needs attending too. **Resolved:** Cllr Mrs Savory will report this
10. Cllr Craig also mentioned that some stumps have been cut off and thrown in his field but this has not been done by DCC.
11. Cllr Miss Carrick would like to report that the sewage works sign is leaning and needs straightening. **Resolved:** Clerk to report

**11067**

**Clerks Business**

Nothing to report

**MEETING CLOSED AT 8PM**

**DATE OF NEXT MEETING WEDNESDAY 7<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2025 AT EASTGATE VILLAGE HALL**

**ANNUAL PARISH ASSEMBLY COMMENCING AT 6.30PM**

**ANNUAL MEETING COMMENCING AT 6.45PM**

**PARISH COUNCIL MEETING COMMENCING AT 7PM**

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