

THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE

WHEATLEY HILL PARISH COUNCIL

HELD ON MONDAY 16 APRIL 2012

Present: Councillor M Nicholls (Chair)
Councillors Mrs M Goyns, E Goyns,
B Maddison, Mrs M Nicholls,
Mrs L Stewart and Mrs C Stogdale

Apologies: Councillors Mrs E Carr and J R Lamb

1 THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING held on 12 March 2012, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member, were approved and signed by the Chair.

2 COMMUNITY POLICING

There were no Police present at the meeting.

3 STREET WARDENS

There were no Street Wardens present at the meeting.

4 CORRESPONDENCE

(1) Requests for Financial Assistance

(i) Previously Agreed Donations

The Clerk advised that the Parish Council had previously agreed, in principle, to three requests for financial assistance from the 2012/2013 Section 137 Budget.

Members were asked to confirm a donation of £300 to the following organisations:-

Learning Library
Wheatley Hill History Club
Wheatley Hill Mother's Club

RESOLVED that a donation of £300 be paid to the Learning Library, Wheatley Hill History Club and Wheatley Hill Mother's Club from the Section 137 Budget.

(ii) Greenhills Centre

The Clerk reported the receipt of a request for financial assistance from the Greenhills Centre to help with operating costs, Meals on Wheels and the Luncheon Club.

RESOLVED that a donation of £300 be made from the Section 137 Budget.

(iii) **St Godric's RC Primary School**

The Clerk reported the receipt of a request for financial assistance from St Godric's RC Primary School.

RESOLVED that a donation of £300 be made from the Section 137 Budget.

(2) **East Durham Citizens Advice Bureau**

The Clerk advised that following the last meeting held on 12 March 2012, the East Durham Citizens Advice Bureau were requested to provide additional information and statistics in relation to the outreach services provided in Wheatley Hill as well as other areas within the former Easington District area.

Members were advised that to date no response had been received from the East Durham Citizens Advice Bureau.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

5 PLANNING MATTERS

Consideration was given to the following application received from Durham County Council: -

Two storey rear extension at 6 Meadow View, Wheatley Hill for Principle Properties ILM Limited.

RESOLVED that no objection or comment be made to Durham County Council.

6 DELEGATES REPORTS

(i) **East Durham Association of Parish and Town Councils - Annual General Meeting**

Councillor Mrs Goyns reported that she attended the Annual General Meeting of the East Durham Association of Parish and Town Councils on 13 March 2012.

Members were advised that the Secretary and Treasurer, Councillors A Liversidge and Mrs D Liversidge, had resigned. Councillor Mrs J Clark was elected as the new Secretary and Councillors Mrs G Crute and B Hall were elected joint Treasurers.

Councillor Goyns provided details of the short presentations given by Mr I Moran, who was working with the Heritage Society in Wheatley Hill and Mrs S Pearce, the AAP Co-ordinator, Durham County Council.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

(ii) New Health Centre

The Chair provided an update on the new Health Centre and advised that residents had attended a consultation event on 22 March 2012. The event provided residents the opportunity to air their views on the new centre.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

(iii) Horses

The Chair reported that Mr S Jobling, Enforcement Officer, Durham County Council, had been asked to investigate horses that were being kept on land at the rear of Front Street/Greenhills Terrace and West House.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

(iv) Speedometer – Woodlands Avenue

The Chair reported that the Residents Association had requested a speedometer to be installed at Woodlands Avenue. It was explained that in order for a speedometer to be erected, the Police would need to undertake a survey to ascertain the levels of speeding traffic.

Members were advised that the cost of a speedometer was approximately £2,000 which the Chair could possibly fund from his Durham County Council Budget. The Parish Council would probably be requested to insure the speedometer.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

7 HEAD GROUNDSPERSONS REPORT

The Clerk advised that routine work had been undertaken in the Cemetery and around the village since the last meeting, details of which were outlined to Members.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

8 CLERK'S REPORT

(1) Allotments/Stable Blocks

(i) Waiting List

The Clerk advised that an Allotment Sub-Committee was held on 15 March 2012. At the meeting Members discussed stable block number 23 which was vacant. As this was a large plot it was suggested that it could be halved to form either 2 allotments or 2 stable blocks.

Members were advised that there were 5 applicants on the waiting list. It was pointed out that as one of the applicants Mr D Leigh of 48 Luke Terrace did not live at this address he would need to be removed from the waiting list.

Following discussion it was suggested that the Clerk contact 2 of the applicants, Mrs J Dinsdale of 6 Wheatley Terrace and Mr D Barnett of 9 Shinwell Terrace to ascertain if they were still interested in an allotment or stable block.

RESOLVED that Mr D Leigh of 48 Luke Terrace, Wheatley Hill be removed from the waiting list and the Clerk contact Mrs J Dinsdale of 6 Wheatley Terrace and Mr D Barnett of 9 Shinwell Terrace to ascertain if they still wished to be considered for an allotment/stable block

(ii) Application for an Allotment

The Clerk advised that a request for an allotment had been received from Mr D Hogg of 9 Bevan Crescent, Wheatley Hill, DH6 3LS.

RESOLVED that Mr Hogg be accepted onto the waiting list for an allotment/stable block.

(2) Cemetery Wall

The Clerk reported that a meeting was held with Mr P Burr of Direct Services, Durham County Council on 4 April 2012. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the new boundary wall at Wheatley Hill Cemetery and the final invoice.

Members were advised that the agreed price for the work was £77,894.19, which was made up of the following: -

Phase 1 £26,973.07 – left hand side of the wall to the main entrance – 60 linear metres

Phase 2 £50,921.12 – right hand side of the wall to the main entrance – 108 linear metres

The Clerk took Members through a report which detailed the Parish Councils concerns and included issues such as the demonstration wall, the site foreman, bricks, lack of communication and planning permission, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member.

Members also highlighted a number of minor issues in relation to the wall that were still to be attended to, details of which were also outlined within the report.

Following a lengthy discussion with Mr Burr regarding the new wall the Parish Council offered to pay £70,000 for the work undertaken by Direct Services. The Parish Council felt this amount reflected the disruption, amount of time and areas of concern that Members had in relation to the work.

The Clerk advised that since that meeting a further invoice had been received from Durham County Council in the amount of £84,000 including £14,000 VAT.

It was suggested that Direct Services be given until the next meeting of the Parish Council, 14 May, 2012 to attend to the outstanding issues, whereupon the invoice would be paid.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

(3) Trade Waste Contract

The Clerk reported that Durham County Council had provided a quotation of £510 for the annual trade waste contract.

RESOLVED that the quotation from Durham County Council in the amount of £510 be accepted.

(4) Annual Audit for the Year Ending 31 March 2012

The Clerk reported that the Annual Audit date had been set for 11 June 2012.

The Clerk proceeded to take Members through Section 1, Statement of Accounts, and Section 2, Annual Governance Statement.

Following discussion it was RESOLVED that Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Return for the year ended 31 March 2012, be approved and signed by the Chair.

(5) Precept 2012/2013

The Clerk reported that 2 complaints had been received regarding the level of precept set by the Parish Council for Wheatley Hill for 2012/2013.

Members were advised that Mr D Henderson and Ms J Lowther, had e-mailed the Clerk to express concern regarding the increase in the level of precept. Mr Henderson had supplied an address but no telephone number and Ms Lowther had provided neither a telephone number nor an address.

The Clerk responded to both complaints, via e-mail, and asked Mr Henderson and Ms Lowther to either supply a telephone number on which they could be contacted or telephone the Clerk to discuss their concerns. The Clerk also offered to meet Mr Henderson and Ms Lowther at a time and place to suit them if they wished to discuss the matter face to face.

To date, neither had replied to the Clerk.

The Clerk outlined, in detail, the Parish Council's precept and the actual annual, monthly and weekly cost to residents living in band A, B, C and D properties. The Clerk also outlined the precept levels of neighboring authorities, including Wingate, Thornley and Trimdon. In addition, the Clerk took Members through the level of precept that would have been levied had the Parish Council imposed a 3%, 2% and 1% increase on the precept from 2003/2004 when it had been set at £109,000.

Following a lengthy discussion on the precept and the complaints received, it was **RESOLVED** that the information given, be noted.

9 PAYMENTS AND ORDERS

The Clerk presented Members with a written report of all payments and receipts made since the last meeting.

Members were also provided with details of the financial position of the Parish Council in comparison with the Annual Budget.

RESOLVED that the report be received and the payments itemised be approved.

10 RISK ASSESSMENT

The Clerk advised that there was nothing to report.

11 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

(i) Horses – Front Street

Councillor Mrs Stewart reported that there had been a number of incidences recently involving horses and carts riding up and down the Front Street, particularly in the middle of the road.

On one occasion, a horse was left in the middle of the road whilst the owner went into a shop. There was a build-up of traffic, due to the horse in the middle of the road, and the horse subsequently became spooked and took off, which could have resulted in the horse hurting itself or an accident involving either a pedestrian or a motorist.

Horses had been seen riding up and down the Front Street with no saddle or helmet and it was only a matter of time before there was an accident.

RESOLVED that the Clerk report the matter to the Police and Street Wardens.

(ii) Dog Bin – Quetlaw Road

Councillor Mrs Stogdale advised that the dog bin at Quetlaw Road was missing. It had previously been attached to a lamppost and was removed when a new lamppost was installed.

RESOLVED that this matter be reported to Durham County Council.

(iii) **Note of Appreciation**

Councillor Mrs Goyns wished it recording that whilst the new recycling bins were being delivered, the Supervisor co-ordinating deliveries had been very helpful and had sorted Councillor Goyns' recycled rubbish and removed it.

RESOLVED that the Clerk pass on the thanks from Councillor Mrs Goyns to Durham County Council.

(iv) **Thornley Waste Disposal Site**

The Chair advised that there was a possibility that Thornley Waste Disposal Site would remain open at weekends and Bank Holidays.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

..... Signed

..... Dated