

THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE WHEATLEY HILL PARISH COUNCIL

HELD ON MONDAY 14 MARCH 2016

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

Apologies: Councillors E Goyns, Mrs M Goyns and J Miller

1 THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING held on 8 February 2016 a copy of which had been circulated to each Member, were approved and signed by the Chair.

2 PUBLIC QUESTIONS

There was no public present at the meeting.

3 POLICE/STREET WARDENS

There was no Police present at the meeting.

4 CORRESPONDENCE

(1) Requests for Financial Assistance

(i) The Children's Foundation

The Clerk reported that following the last meeting a letter was sent to the Children's Foundation requesting further information.

Members were advised that to date no further correspondence had been received.

RESOLVED that no donation be made.

(ii) Citizens Advice County Durham

The Clerk reported the receipt of a request for financial assistance from the Citizens Advice County Durham.

RESOLVED that consideration of this item be deferred.

(2) Durham Miners' Gala - 9 July 2016

The Clerk reported the receipt of correspondence from the Durham Miners' Association requesting the Parish Council to support the 132nd Durham Miners' Gala by placing an advert in the Gala Souvenir Brochure.

Members were advised that a message of support, up to a maximum of 25 words, cost £45.00.

RESOLVED that the Parish Council support the Durham Miners' Gala and place a message of support in the Souvenir Brochure at a cost of £45.00.

(3) Front Street Improvements

The Clerk reported the receipt of an update on the planned improvements to the Front Street from Durham County Council.

Members were advised that work had started on the paving and drains along the Front Street and the area to the front of the industrial estate had been cleared ready for planting. New planters, seating and litter bins would be installed by the end of March 2016.

The improvements included painting of the hooped railings along the border with Front Street and at the junction of Thornley Road, Woodlands Avenue and Front Street, all of which would be completed by the end of March 2016.

The Estate Management Brackenridge, Hansen and Tate and the owner of Unit 7, formerly the police station, had been advised of the works and any upheaval would be short lived. Overall the works would improve the appearance of the industrial estate and the Front Street in general.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

(4) Durham Constabulary

The Clerk reported the receipt of correspondence from the Chief Constable of Durham Constabulary advising that Durham Constabulary had been graded as the best police force in the country by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

(5) Village Artwork – The Last Shift

The Clerk reported that a meeting was held on 29 February 2016 to discuss proposals to mark the 50th anniversary of the closure of Wheatley Hill pit by commissioning a piece of public artwork for the village.

The Clerk advised that Mrs Hedley and Mrs Peacock would be attending the Parish Councils April meeting to discuss the project.

Members were advised that the next meeting would be held on 21 March 2016 at 2pm in Wheatley House.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

(6) East Durham Association of Parish & Town Councils

The Clerk reported that the next meeting of the East Durham Association of Parish & Town Councils would be held on 15 March 2016.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

(7) Heritage Centre – Key holders

The Clerk reported that following an incident at the Heritage Centre the contact details for all key holders had been reviewed.

Members were advised that the names currently held by CDS Security & Fire were J Thompson, J Davies, D Lamb, M Hedley and W Middleton.

The Clerk advised that Mrs Hedley was no longer a key holder and would be removed.

RESOLVED that CDS Security & Fire be advised that the nominated key holders for the Heritage Centre were J Thompson, J Davies, D Lamb and W Middleton.

(8) Queen's 90th Birthday - Commemorative Medal

The Clerk reported that on 21 April 2016 Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II would celebrate her 90th birthday. To commemorate this event the Tower Mint had produced a medal exclusively for schools and councils.

Members were advised that the medal cost £1.99 per unit excluding carriage and VAT. The minimum order value was 50 at a cost of £99.50.

RESOLVED that the Parish Council order 50 medals at a cost of £99.50 plus £7.50 carriage, total cost £128.40.

5 PLANNING

(i) Applications

DM/15/03930/FPA – Bungalow at land to the east of Weardale Park, Patton Walk, Wheatley Hill DH6 3QQ for Mr L Thompson

(ii) Approvals

DM/15/03859/FPA – Erection of dormer bungalow and conversion of former betting shop to garage at land adjacent Royal Villa, Quilstyle Road, Wheatley Hill for Mr S Townley

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

6 DELEGATES REPORTS

The Chair provided an update on the planning application for 115 residential properties at Wingate Lane which was recently considered by Durham County Council.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

7 HEAD GROUNDPERSONS REPORT

The Clerk reported 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 provided Members with details of the current waiting list for allotments and stable blocks.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

(ii) Stable Blocks 19 and 21

The Clerk reported that the tenant of stable block 19 had advised that he did not wish to retain the tenancy as the plot was being illegally occupied and he had been unable to gain full access. The Clerk had contacted the previous tenant of stable block 19 who had confirmed that the plot had been sub-let, which was a breach of the tenancy agreement.

On 2 March 2016 Mrs Kelsey, the tenant of stable block 21, advised that she wished to surrender the tenancy. Following discussion with the Chair it was agreed to offer stable block 21 to Mr Barnett, who accepted.

Following a lengthy discussion it was **RESOLVED** that;

- (i) the actions taken by the Chair and Clerk in allocating stable block 21 to Mr Barnett be endorsed,**
- (ii) stable block 19 be offered to Mr Tyers of 20 Burns Street, Wheatley Hill.**

(2) Website

The Clerk reported the receipt of correspondence from Durham County Council advising of changes to the Parish Councils website and the services provided by the County Council.

Members were advised that from January 2016 changes would be made to the way the County Council supported the Parish Councils website. There would no longer be one point of contact and problems would be logged via the ICT portal. The website would be moved from SharePoint to WordPress, the primary reason for this being security and to ensure it complied with new guidance. This would be completed by April 2016 and would include the transfer of pages, content, minutes and agendas.

The new site would retain the original website colours, and parish badge. It would include a front page image, but not a banner image. Training would be provided in the use of WordPress.

From April 2016 the County Council would introduce an annual charge and the Parish Council would have the option to purchase a Service Level Agreement (SLA) from Durham County Council. This would cost

approximately £575 per year and would include hosting the website and full support for the year of the SLA and a banner image for the website.

The Parish Council did not have to purchase the SLA and the County Council would continue to host the website until 31 March 2017, at which point it would be taken down.

The Clerk advised that investigations were being made into alternative arrangements.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted and further developments be awaited.

(3) Summer/Winter Bedding Contract 2016/17

The Clerk reported that Durham County Council had provided the following quotation for the 2016/17 summer/winter bedding.

- Provision, installation, watering and removal of 18 hanging baskets - £1,925.95
- Supply and maintenance of 2780 summer bedding plants - £2,969.90
- Supply and maintenance of 1190 winter bedding plants - £1,271.28
- Supply only of summer bedding plants for the Cemetery - £294.00

All prices quoted were exclusive of VAT.

RESOLVED that the quotation from Durham County Council be accepted.

(4) Trade Waste Contract 2016/17

The Clerk reported that Durham County Council had provided a quotation of £594 for the annual trade waste contract for the Cemetery. The contract price was based on 3 bins on alternative weekly collections.

RESOLVED that the quotation from Durham County Council in the amount of £594 be accepted.

(5) New Audit Arrangements

The Clerk reported that revised audit arrangements were being introduced from 1 April 2017. The Councils current contract with BDO would expire following the 2016/17 audit and from the 2017/18 financial year the Parish Council would have an auditor appointed to them by a new 'sector-led body' or they could procure their own.

Members were advised that the new sector led body called the Smaller Authorities' Audit Appointments Ltd (SAAAL) had been established to act as the procurement body to appoint auditors and manage audit contracts. The SAAAL would appoint auditors for all authorities "opted in" to the new arrangements.

The Council would automatically be opted in to the SAAAL arrangements

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for five years but if they wished to opt out then NALC must be notified by 31 March 2016.

RESOLVED that the Parish Council continue with the SAAAL arrangements.

9 PAYMENTS

RESOLVED that the payments listed be endorsed.

| | PAYMENT TO | DETAIL | COST | VAT | TOTAL | |
|------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------|-----------------|----------------|-----------------|
| 105133 | J Davies | Reimbursement - Mileage | 21.00 | | 21.00 | |
| 105134 | D Lamb | Reimbursement - Mileage | 11.00 | | 11.00 | |
| 105135 | Whites | Cemetery Forms | 35.00 | 7.00 | 42.00 | |
| 105136 | Durham County Council | Fuel | 115.69 | 23.13 | 138.82 | |
| 105137 | J Thompson | Telephone Allowance | 25.00 | | 25.00 | |
| 105138 | M Nicholls | Telephone Allowance | 25.00 | | 25.00 | |
| 105139 | North East Granite Co Limited | Cemetery Supplies | 96.00 | 19.20 | 115.20 | |
| 105140 | J Dent | Skip Hire | 175.00 | 35.00 | 210.00 | |
| 105141 | Horns | Cemetery Supplies | 22.08 | 4.42 | 26.50 | |
| 105142 | Durham County Council | Summer/Winter Bedding 2015/16 | 6461.13 | 1292.23 | 7753.36 | |
| 105143 | J Thompson | Reimbursements | 27.97 | | 27.97 | |
| 105144 | Durham Miners Gala Brochure | Message of Support | 45.00 | | 45.00 | |
| 105145 | Northumbrian Water | Allotments | 104.22 | | 104.22 | |
| 105146 | JAC's Accountancy Ltd | Payroll Services - March 2016 | 14.00 | 2.80 | 16.80 | |
| 105147 | Northumbrian Water | Water Rates - Cemetery and Bungalow | 861.76 | | 861.76 | |
| Internet Banking | Payroll | Wages - March 2016 | 3932.64 | | 3932.64 | |
| Internet Banking | HMRC/DCC | PAYE/Pension - March 2016 | 2283.27 | | 2283.27 | |
| Direct Debit | British Telecom | Telephone/Internet | 31.98 | 6.40 | 38.38 | |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | TOTAL | 14287.74 | 1390.18 | 15677.92 |

10 RISK MANAGEMENT

The Clerk advised there was nothing to report.

11 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

(i) Potholes

Councillor Maddison reported a pothole opposite 2 Bevan Crescent.

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Councillor Mrs Carr reported a number of small potholes to the rear of Gable Terrace as well as a large pothole near 6 and 8 Gable Terrace.

(ii) Street Lights

Members reported 2 street lights to the rear of Gable Terrace were out.

(iii) Next Meeting of the Parish Council

The Chair suggested that the next meeting of the Parish Council be held at Wheatley House.

RESOLVED that the next meeting of the Parish Council to be held on 11 April 2016 be held at Wheatley House at 6pm.

..... **Signed**

..... **Dated**