

**THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE WHEATLEY HILL PARISH COUNCIL
HELD ON MONDAY 9 DECEMBER 2019**

Present: Councillor J Miller (Chair)
Councillors M Goyns, B Miller,
L Stewart, C Stogdale and L White

Apologies: Councillors E Carr and E Goyns

1 The Minutes of the last meeting held on 11 November 2019 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

Members were advised that 103 incidents had been reported to the Police which included 7 reports of anti-social behaviour, 8 criminal damage and 5 thefts.

Members were advised that Lee Hobson was the new Sergeant for Wheatley Hill and Kate Shaw the new Beat Officer. G Cook had been transferred to Horden.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

4 COUNTY COUNCILLORS REPORT

There was no County Councillors present at the meeting.

5 CORRESPONDENCE

(1) Request for Financial Assistance

Wheatley Hill Community Nursery

The Clerk reported the receipt of a request for financial assistance from Wheatley Hill Community Nursery.

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

(2) Letters of Thanks

The Clerk reported the receipt of the following letters of thanks.

- Wheatley Hill Constitutional Club
- Wheatley Hill Banner Appeal - The Clerk reported that following the last meeting Mr Tempest advised that at this stage the Parish Council's commitment to financially assist the Banner Appeal was enough as no payments were due until June/July 2020. Therefore, no payment was made from the Parish Council.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

(3) Thomas Kenny Commemoration Stone

The Clerk reported the receipt of correspondence from Wheatley Hill Heritage Society in relation to the Thomas Kenny VC commemoration stone and the annual remembrance event held in the Ceremony.

Members were advised that the Heritage Society felt that at each remembrance since the stone was installed Thomas Kenny had been marginalised in that his name was not mentioned, no wreath was laid for him and people stood in front of his commemoration stone.

They had suggested re-locating the stone to the right of the war memorial, so it was unobscured or installing paving to the side and rear of the stone to encourage people not to stand in front of it. It was also suggested that the History Club and Heritage Society would order a wreath to be laid on the stone and G Tempest would speak to W Oswald about the possibility of T Kenny being mentioned at next years remembrance event.

Members discussed the suggestions put forward and agreed it was not necessary to re-locate the stone or provide additional paving. It was pointed out that the remembrance event was intended to remember all the people who had died in wars and that there were other war graves in the Cemetery that were not singled out on the day. There was no objection to a wreath being laid on the stone or to T Kenny being mentioned during the remembrance service.

RESOLVED that the Heritage Society be advised of the Parish Council's decision.

6 PLANNING

There were no planning matters.

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 7 and 14

The Clerk reported that following the last meeting plots 7 and 14 were offered to applicants 4/2019 and 5/2019 from the waiting list.

Members were advised that applicant 4/2019 had accepted plot 7 and applicant 5/2019 had accepted plot 14.

RESOLVED that that information given, be noted.

(2) Community Christmas Event - Greenhills Centre

The Clerk reported on the activities planned at the Greenhills Centre using the funding provided by the Parish Council and provided a financial breakdown of the spend to date.

An update on the community event held on 30 November 2019 was provided and Members were asked for feedback. Members discussed the event at length and agreed that it had been a huge success and enjoyed by everyone who attended.

Members agreed to pay additional costs of £516.48 incurred by the Greenhills Centre for Trimdon Brass Band - £150, Tree lights - £128.98 and selection boxes and sweets - £237.50.

The Chair advised that a bouquet of flowers, for H Jamieson was purchased at a cost of £20 and presented at the event. The Chair and Clerk would be meeting with H Jamieson to discuss the day and all feedback from Members would be fed into the meeting.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted and the additional expenditure be approved.

(3) Budget Setting 2020/2021

The Clerk provided details of the figures related to the Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme (LCTRS) grant and tax base for the forthcoming financial year 2020/2021.

Members were advised that the LCTRS grant for 2020/2021 was £14,766 which was a decrease of £4,919 from the previous year and the tax base had increased from 683.6 to 730.

The Clerk provided Members with various options and a range of figures for consideration. It was pointed out that if the Parish Council wished to continue financially supporting events at the Community Centre as well as the various groups in the village it would need to consider increasing its budget. The Parish Councils financial support to the Meals on Wheels service would also need to be looked at in greater detail.

It was pointed out that over the last few years the Parish Council had used reserves to keep the precept low. Members were advised that the Parish Council could increase its budget whilst retaining a standstill Band D charge to residents. By keeping a standstill Band D charge the Parish Councils precept would increase by 6.79%, this was due to the decrease in LCTSS grant and the increase in the Council Tax base.

It was suggested that a 6.79% increase be applied to the precept and the Clerk prepare a budget based on this for consideration at the next meeting.

RESOLVED that the Clerk prepare a budget based on a 6.79% increase to the precept.

(4) Community Defibrillator

The Clerk reported that the community defibrillators purchased by the Parish Council had been received.

An internal defibrillator was now located in the Community Centre and the Parish Council were asked to consider where they wished to locate the external unit in the Cemetery.

The Clerk advised that the defibrillators, once installed, would be registered with the NEAS to ensure that in the event of an emergency, callers would be notified that there was a defibrillator nearby and given the code to access the cabinet.

Once the defibrillators were registered free awareness training would be provided by the Community First Responder team, possibly at the Community Centre and the more people involved in the session, the better.

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

(5) Parking – Wheatley Hill Primary School

The Clerk reported that following the last meeting a meeting was held with Mr Scarr, Head Teacher at Wheatley Hill Primary School to discuss proposals to extend the school car park to provide additional car parking spaces and move the schools play provision to the rear of the school. Mr Scarr had requested a financial contribution from the Parish Council to assist with the proposed works.

County Councillor L Hovvels, had pledged £5,000 to help create a community sensory garden area and Mr Scarr would look to match fund any monies provided by Councillor Hovvels and the Parish Council.

Mr Scarr had been asked to provide written information in relation to the proposed works which included detailed drawings, contractor information, costs, timescales etc. However, as insufficient information had been received Members were unable to consider a financial contribution.

RESOLVED that Mr Scarr be advised that the Parish Council required detailed written information of the proposals to allow a decision to be made regarding funding.

(6) Staffing Sub Committee

The Chair suggested that a Staffing Sub Committee be established comprising of Councillors E Carr, M Goyns, J Miller and L Stewart.

RESOLVED that the Staffing Sub Committee be established.

(7) Ex-Gratia Christmas Payments

The Chair suggested that an ex-gratia Christmas payment of £300 be made to J Davies and J Thompson and an ex-gratis payment of £200 be made to K Walton.

RESOLVED that approval be granted for an ex-gratia payment of £300.00 to J Davies and J Thompson and £200 to K Walton from the Chair's Account.

9 PAYMENTS

The following schedule of payments was circulated together with figures of all income and expenditure as at 30 November 2019

| CHQ NO | PAYMENT TO | DETAIL | COST | VAT | TOTAL |
|--------|-------------------------------------|--|----------|--------|----------|
| 105649 | Fitzpatrick Woolmer | Information Lectern | 796.50 | 159.30 | 955.80 |
| 105650 | Horns Garden Centre | Village Christmas Trees | 299.99 | 60.00 | 359.99 |
| 105651 | Cheque Destroyed | | | | |
| 105652 | G Wilson - Peterlee Gas | Boiler Repair - Heritage Centre | 90.00 | | 90.00 |
| 105653 | J Thompson | Telephone Allowance | 25.00 | | 25.00 |
| 105654 | MKM | Fencing - Allotments | 1,994.25 | 398.85 | 2,393.10 |
| 105655 | J Thompson | Reimbursements | 62.87 | 1.25 | 64.12 |
| 105656 | Wheatley Hill Community Nursery | Section 137 Donation | 300.00 | | 300.00 |
| 105657 | Wheatley Hill Community Association | Additional Expense for Community Event | 516.48 | | 516.48 |
| 105658 | J Thompson | Ex-gratia Christmas Payment | 300.00 | | 300.00 |
| 105659 | J Davies | Ex-gratia Christmas Payment | 300.00 | | 300.00 |
| 105660 | K Walton | Ex-gratia Christmas Payment | 200.00 | | 200.00 |

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|------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------------|--|--------------|------------------|------------------|
| 105661 | Durham County Council | Machine Repairs | | 364.86 | 72.97 | 437.83 |
| 105662 | JAC's Accountancy Limited | Payroll Services - December 2019 | | 15.40 | 3.08 | 18.48 |
| Internet Banking | Payroll | Wages - December 2019 | | 4,453.54 | | 4,453.54 |
| Internet Banking | HMRC/DCC | PAYE/Pension - December 2019 | | 2,795.31 | | 2,795.31 |
| Direct Debit | British Telecom | Telephone/Internet | | 45.83 | 9.16 | 54.99 |
| Direct Debit | O2 | Chairs Mobile Telephone | | 25.62 | 5.12 | 30.74 |
| Invoice 31 | Co-Op Bank | Service and Commission Charges | | 11.65 | | 11.65 |
| | | | | TOTAL | 12,597.30 | 709.73 |
| | | | | | | 13,307.03 |

RESOLVED that the information given be received and the payments be approved.

10 RISK MANAGEMENT

There was nothing to report.

11 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

(1) The Avenue

Members reported a property at The Avenue which had previously been reported but still had a lot of rubbish in the yard and was attracting rats.

RESOLVED that the matter be reported to Durham County Council.

(2) Street Light

Members reported that a street light, attached to the side of a residential property, at Woodlands Avenue was out. The light had been reported but it was possible the County Council were confusing the light with street light number 48 which was located on the main road.

RESOLVED that the matter be reported to Durham County Council.

(3) Potholes

Members reported the poor condition of the paths to the front of East View, from number 1 to 37 and both sides of Cemetery Road.

RESOLVED that the potholes be reported to Durham County Council.

(4) Doctors Surgery - Car Park

Members reported that parking at the Doctors surgery was becoming increasingly difficult and patients attending the surgery were often unable to get parked when visiting the surgery. It was reported that a "Doctors Only" sign had been erected at the car park.

RESOLVED that the matter be reported to Councillor J Grant.

..... Signed

..... Dated