

**THE MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE  
WHEATLEY HILL PARISH COUNCIL  
HELD ON MONDAY 16 MAY 2011**

**Present:** Councillors Mrs E Carr, Mrs M Goyns,  
E Goyns, J R Lamb, B Maddison,  
Mrs M Nicholls, M Nicholls, Mrs L Stewart  
and Mrs C Stogdale

**1 ELECTION OF CHAIR**

**RESOLVED** that Councillor M Nicholls be elected Chair of Wheatley Hill Parish Council for the ensuing year.

Councillor M Nicholls accepted the office of Chair of Wheatley Hill Parish Council and thanked the Members for their confidence in him and stated that he would act in the best interests of the village and community over the forthcoming year.

The Chair proceeded to give a brief overview of the work undertaken by the Parish Council during the previous year as well as some of its aims and objectives for the forthcoming year.

**2 APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIR**

**RESOLVED** that Councillor Mrs E Carr be appointed Vice-Chair of Wheatley Hill Parish Council for the ensuing year.

**3 APPOINTMENT OF INTERNAL AUDITOR**

**RESOLVED** that Mr G Fletcher be appointed Internal Auditor to Wheatley Hill Parish Council for the ensuing year.

**4 APPOINTMENT OF SCHOOL GOVERNORS**

**RESOLVED** that Councillor Mrs C Stogdale be appointed to serve as School Governor to Wheatley Hill Primary School.

**5 APPOINTMENT TO SUB-COMMITTEES**

**RESOLVED** that the following appointments be made:-

Cemetery Sub-Committee  
Councillors Mrs M Goyns, B Maddison and Mrs E Carr

Allotment Sub-Committee  
Councillors B Maddison, M Nicholls and J R Lamb

6 **REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES**

**RESOLVED** that the following Members be appointed to serve as representatives of the Parish Council on the following external bodies for the forthcoming year:-

**Easington Area Association of Parish and Town Councils**  
Councillors Mrs M Goyns and E Goyns

**Durham County Association of Local Councils**  
Councillors Mrs M Goyns and E Goyns

**Durham County Police Consultative Committee**  
Members were advised that this Committee had been dissolved.

**Citizens Advice Bureau**  
Councillor J R Lamb

**Durham Rural Community Council**  
Councillor J R Lamb

7 **DATE AND TIME OF ORDINARY MEETINGS OF WHEATLEY HILL PARISH COUNCIL**

**RESOLVED** that Meetings of Wheatley Hill Parish Council be held on the second Monday of each month commencing at 6.00pm, with the exception of August where no Council Meeting would be held due to recess. Meeting dates were subject to change with the consent of the Chair of the Parish Council.

8 **THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING** held on 18 April 2011, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member, were approved and signed by the Chair.

9 **COMMUNITY POLICING**

The Chair welcomed PC Melenthin to the meeting.

The Officer advised that since the last meeting there had been 14 incidences reported, which was 7% down on the same period in 2010.

The Officer advised that for the second month running crime had reduced and the number of incidences reported had reduced by 5%.

Councillor Mrs E Carr made reference to an incident in Wheatley Hill which related to cold callers selling fish to elderly residents. Councillor Carr reported that one particular elderly resident had purchased a large amount of fish and had no recollection of the event or what he had paid for it. His family were understandably concerned at the situation. The Officer advised that he would record the incident and investigate the matter further.

**RESOLVED** that the information given, be noted.

10 **STREET WARDENS**

The Chair welcomed Mr P Rice and Mr N Morton, Street Wardens representing Durham County Council.

Members were advised that during April there had been 2 reported incidences of anti-social behaviour, 1 related to alcohol and 1 rowdy nuisance. In addition there had been 1 fly-tipping and 1 dog related incident. No fixed penalty notices had been issued with regard to either littering or dog fouling.

The Chair advised that there had been a number of incidences throughout the village related to the theft of railings, however concern was expressed that residents were not reporting incidences. The Street Wardens stressed the importance of residents reporting all incidences in order for them to be recorded.

The Chair advised that an area of land to the rear of Greenhills Terrace was being used to keep a horse. The land was in private ownership and was currently a mess and bad odours had also been reported.

Councillor Mrs C Stogdale advised that an area of land next to the Co-op on Quilstyle Road was being used to dump rubbish and a horse was also being kept there. The Street Wardens agreed to investigate.

The Chair thanked both the Street Wardens and the Police for the work they had undertaken at the allotments.

**RESOLVED** that the information given, be noted.

11 **CORRESPONDENCE**

(1) **Request for Financial Assistance**

**Residents - Abbots Court Nursing Home**

The Clerk reported the receipt of a request for financial assistance from the elderly residents of Abbots Court Nursing Home who had recently suffered a theft of garden furniture.

**RESOLVED** that a donation of £500 be made from the Section 137 Budget.

(2) **Letters of Thanks**

The Clerk reported the receipt of the following letters of thanks: -

**Wheatley Hill Banner Appeal  
Victim Support  
Wheatley Hill Constitutional Club**

**RESOLVED** that the information given, be noted.

(3) **Wheatley Hill Heritage Society - Annual Report**

The Clerk reported the receipt of the Annual Report from Wheatley Hill Heritage Society which provided details of the work undertaken by the Society during 2010/2011, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member.

**RESOLVED** that the information given, be noted.

(4) **Infinis - Wind Farm, Wingate Grange Farm**

The Clerk reported the receipt of correspondence from Infinis advising that Infinis Wind Holdings Limited had submitted a planning application to Durham County Council for an anemometer mast to be erected south of the A181 on land at Wingate Grange Farm to the north of Deaf Hill and west of Wingate.

Members were advised that this was the preliminary step in the development process to determine whether the land at Wingate Grange Farm was an appropriate site for a small wind farm. Infinis would also be carrying out a number of other surveys and assessments over the coming months to evaluate the sites suitability before considering whether to submit a planning application.

Infinis had advised that local residents and community organisations would have ample opportunity to comment on the wider wind farm proposal and eventual planning application throughout the development and planning process and were fully committed to keeping all local stake holders informed. Infinis had also offered to attend a meeting of the Parish Council to discuss the proposals.

**RESOLVED** that the information given, be noted.

12 **PLANNING MATTERS**

There was nothing to report.

13 **DELEGATES REPORTS**

There was nothing to report.

14 **HEAD GROUNDSPERSON REPORT**

(i) **General**

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

**RESOLVED** that the information given, be noted.

(ii) **Purchase of New Grasscutter**

The Clerk advised that a request had been received from the Head Groundsperson to purchase a new grasscutter at a cost of £329.99 including VAT. Members were advised that the current grasscutter was 9 years old and was in need of replacement.

**RESOLVED** that authority be granted to purchase a new grasscutter at a cost of £329.99 including VAT.

(iii) **Safety Clothing**

The Clerk advised that a request had been received from the Head Groundsperson to purchase new safety clothing for himself and Mr D Lamb, details of which were outlined to Members

**RESOLVED** that authority be granted for the purchase of new safety clothing.

15 **CLERK'S REPORT**

(1) **Allotments**

Members were provided with details of waiting lists for allotments and stable blocks.

The Chair advised that a meeting of the Allotment Sub-Committee was held on Thursday 5 May 2011.

The Chair made reference to stable block no. 23 which was occupied by Mr P Anderson of Black Lane Bungalow, Black Lane, Wheatley Hill. Members were advised that it appeared that the stable block was not being used and was in a state of disrepair. The stable block was not secure and could be accessed by anyone. There also appeared to be a lot of rubble dumped in the stable block. Following discussion it was agreed that the Clerk contact Mr Anderson and advise that he had 30 days to get the stable block into order, following which the Parish Council would re-inspect and if there had been no improvement further action would be taken to evict Mr Anderson.

The Chair advised that a complaint had been made by a tenant regarding rats at the allotments. The Clerk advised that Durham County Council had been contacted regarding the situation and explained what the process was for the area to be treated.

The Chair also advised that during the site visit it was noted that stable block no. 22, occupied by Mr W Thompson and Mr Newton, appeared to have a water leak on the stable block.

The Clerk agreed to investigate.

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

(2) **Internal Audit for the Year Ended 31 March 2011**

The Clerk reported the receipt of the Internal Audit report for 2010/2011 undertaken by Mr G Fletcher.

Members were advised that all local Councils in England were expected to complete an Annual Return which summarised their annual activities at the completion of each financial year.

It was Members responsibility to ensure that financial management was adequate and effective and the Council had a sound system of internal controls.

A section within the Annual Return was to be completed by the Parish Council's Independent Internal Auditor who gave an opinion of the Parish Council's internal controls, details of which were outlined to Members.

All of the key controls contained within the Annual Return were examined and found to be working satisfactory.

The report had therefore concluded that there were no recommendations concerning the Audit. However, as quotes for contract renewals were not challenged by Members the Internal Auditor had suggested that it may be prudent next year to ensure that the Council was obtaining value for money by asking for further quotes.

**RESOLVED** that the Internal Audit report be accepted.

(3) **Review of Standing Orders**

The Clerk advised that a review had been undertaken of the Parish Council's Standing Orders, details of which were outlined to Members.

**RESOLVED** that the information given, be noted.

(4) **Review of Risk Management**

The Clerk advised that a review had been undertaken of the Council's Risk Management Policy and Risk Assessment, details of which were outlined to Members.

**RESOLVED** that the information given, be noted.

(5) **Cemetery Wall**

The Clerk advised that Mr P Burr, Direct Services, had advised that he would erect a 1 metre square demonstration wall to allow Members the opportunity to view what the finished Cemetery wall would look like.

Members were advised that Mr Burr would be contacting the Parish Council to determine a suitable location for the erection of the demonstration wall.

**RESOLVED** that the information given, be noted.

(6) **Website**

The Clerk advised that work was underway to provide the Parish Council with a website and Members would be kept advised of progress.

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

16 **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.

17 **RISK MANAGEMENT**

The Clerk advised that there was nothing to report.

18 **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

**Community Centre Play Area**

Members were advised that a number of complaints had been received regarding the play area at the Community Centre. Residents had advised that the area was unusable due to the length of the grass which was apparently not being cut on a regular basis. It was suggested that the Clerk contact the Community Centre and advise of the complaints received and suggest that the Parish Council cut the grass as a one-off.

**RESOLVED** that the Clerk contact Wheatley Hill Community Centre and advise that the Parish Council would cut the grass in the play area.

..... **Signed**

..... **Dated**