

THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE

WHEATLEY HILL PARISH COUNCIL

HELD ON MONDAY 11 JUNE 2012

Present: Councillor M Nicholls (Chair)
Councillors Mrs E Carr, Mrs M Goyns,
J R Lamb, B Maddison, Mrs M Nicholls

Apologies: Councillors E Goyns, Mrs L Stewart and
Mrs C Stogdale

1 THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING held on 14 May 2012, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member, were approved and signed by the Chair.

2 COMMUNITY POLICING

The Chair welcomed PCSO S Bowman to the meeting.

The Officer advised that since 1 May 2012 there had been 107 incidences reported, which included 20 anti-social behaviour, 2 criminal damage and 2 highways related incidences.

PCSO Bowman referred to the 20 reported incidences of anti-social behaviour and explained that 4 of these were genuine anti-social behaviour reports and incidences such as nuisance phone calls and neighbour disputes were now categorised as anti-social behaviour incidences.

Members were advised that Durham County Council had undertaken a survey of traffic speeds on Woodlands Avenue and Jack Lawson Terrace and would soon be in a position to report the results. The boxes used to monitor the traffic and collect the data had been stolen and there were no plans to replace them.

The Chair thanked PCSO Bowman for the work she had undertaken in Wheatley Hill.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

3 STREET WARDENS

There were no Street Wardens present at the meeting.

4 CORRESPONDENCE

(1) Request for Financial Assistance

Wheatley Hill Constitutional Club

The Clerk reported the receipt of a request for financial assistance from Wheatley Hill Constitutional Club towards their honorary member's day out.

RESOLVED that a donation of £150 be made from the Section 137 Budget.

(2) Letters of Thanks

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

Hartlepool and District Hospice

Haswell and District Mencap Society

Girlguiding – 1st Wheatley Hill Brownies

2nd Wheatley Hill Scout Group

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

(3) East Durham Association of Town and Parish Councils

The Clerk reported that the next meeting of the East Durham Association of Town and Parish Councils would be held on 12 June 2012.

RESOLVED that apologies for absence be submitted on behalf of Councillors Mr and Mrs Goyns who were unable to attend the meeting.

(4) British Gas Insulation Scheme

The Clerk reported details of a Durham County Council mail shot to all private properties within the County Council's housing regeneration areas, which included Wheatley Hill.

The mail shot provided details of a British Gas insulation scheme which offered free loft or cavity wall insulation to all homeowners or those who privately rented.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

5 PLANNING MATTERS

(i) Applications

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

Erection of two storey side extension and single storey rear extension at 23 Johnson Estate, Wheatley Hill for Mr D Hedley.

Single storey front and rear extensions at 18 South View, Wheatley Hill for Mr K Monaghan.

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

(ii) Refusal

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

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

6 DELEGATES REPORTS

Councillor Mrs Goyns reported that the Localism Act 2011 removed the obligation to have a Standards Committee and she had recently attended the last meeting of Durham County Council's Standards Committee. The County Council were in the process of clearing all outstanding cases which had to be dealt with by 1 July 2012.

Members were advised that Durham County Council proposed to establish a new Standards Committee which would comprise of 11 Elected Members of the County Council. Parish Councils would also be invited to nominate up to 2 Parish Councillors to be co-opted as non-voting members of the Committee. The new committee would come into force from 1 July 2012.

Existing members of the Standards Board would not be eligible to hold office on the new committee and there was concern that the wealth of training and experience gained by those Members who currently sat on the Standards Committee would be lost.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

7 HEAD GROUNDSPERSONS REPORT

General

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 reported that since the last meeting, Mrs Dinsdale had confirmed her interest in an allotment and was happy with the suggestion to half stable block number 23.

The Clerk suggested that a site meeting be held with both Mrs Dinsdale and Mr Barnett to discuss the division of the stable block in further detail.

With regard to the division of the stable block, it was suggested that the Parish Council cover the cost to erect a dividing fence to create 2 allotments.

RESOLVED that:-

- (i) the Clerk contact Mrs Dinsdale and Mr Barnett to arrange a site meeting to discuss the division of stable block 23,
- (ii) the Parish Council cover the cost to erect a dividing fence to create 2 allotments.

(ii) Request for an Allotment

The Clerk reported that a request for an allotment had been received from Mr D Leigh, who gave his address as 48 Luke Terrace, Wheatley Hill.

Members were advised that upon checking the Register of Electors, Mr Leigh was not registered at this address and was therefore not eligible for an allotment in Wheatley Hill.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

(2) Heritage Centre – Roof Repairs

The Clerk advised that at the last meeting Members approved repairs to the Heritage Centre roof in the sum of £295. Upon commencement of the work it was discovered that additional repairs were required, which had not been identified during the initial inspection. The cost of the additional works amounted to £85.

As RnB Roofing was already on site, the additional work required was authorised by the Clerk in liaison with the Chair of the Parish Council.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted and the additional £85 expenditure be approved.

(3) Purchase of Equipment – Long Reach Hedge Trimmer

The Clerk advised that at the last meeting Members approved the purchase of a long reach hedge trimmer at a cost of £495 plus VAT. Following the meeting, the Clerk was advised that the model quoted for was not compatible with equipment already in use by the Parish Council. An alternative model, with additional functions, was available at an extra cost of £50.

RESOLVED that approval be granted to purchase the upgraded model at an additional cost of £50.

(4) Internal Audit for the Year Ended 31 March 2012

The Clerk reported the receipt of the Internal Report for 2011/2012, 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, although it was noted that internal controls for the payroll system could be improved.

The Report therefore concluded that there were no recommendations concerning the Audit.

RESOLVED that the Internal Audit Report 2011/2012 be accepted.

(5) Cemetery Wall

The Clerk reported that at the last meeting it was agreed that the Clerk, together with Councillors Mrs Goyns and Mrs Carr, would undertake an inspection of the Cemetery Wall.

Since that meeting, Mr P Burr, Direct Services, Durham County Council, had advised that he would provide the Parish Council with a programme of works that were still outstanding.

To date, this schedule of works had not been received.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

(6) Mosaic – Heritage Centre

The Clerk reported that at the last meeting of the Parish Council Mrs Richardson and Mrs Tomlinson from St Godric's RC Primary School had attended to discuss with Members a project to celebrate the Queens Diamond Jubilee and the Olympics 2012.

At that meeting Members were advised that St Godric's School proposed to create a mosaic to be located in the Heritage Centre, Wheatley Hill.

Following Members granting approval for the mosaic to be located in the Heritage Centre it came to light that there was a memorial plaque, donated by

Wheatley Hill Mothers Club, already located in the foyer of the Heritage Centre where it was proposed to display the mosaic.

Since the last meeting the Mothers Club had confirmed that they were happy with the proposal to relocate the plaque to a new location within the Heritage Centre.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

(7) Grass cutting – Children’s Play Area, Greenhill’s Centre

The Clerk reported that the Parish Council had been approached by the Greenhill’s Centre to assist with grass cutting at the children’s play area.

It was suggested that if the Parish Council were to assist with grass cutting at the play area it would be better if this was done on a regular scheduled basis.

Following discussion, it was suggested that the Parish Council undertake grass cutting at the children’s play area on a regular basis during the summer months.

RESOLVED that the Greenhill’s Centre be advised that the Parish Council would undertake grass cutting services at the children’s play area on a regular basis during the summer.

(8) Skate Park

The Clerk advised that a meeting had recently been held with Hilary Jamieson from the Greenhill’s Centre, S Bowman, PCSO and the Chair of the Parish Council to discuss the possibility of a skate park in Wheatley Hill.

H Jamieson had identified an area of land that could be used at the Greenhill’s Centre and felt that the possibility of providing a skate park could be explored further. It was acknowledged that due to the current financial climate funding would be an issue but it was something that all parties would like to pursue.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

(9) Pit Pony and Tub

The Clerk advised that the new pit pony and tub was installed on the roundabout on 29 May 2012.

The Parish Council’s Insurers, Zurich, were advised of the addition to the Policy and there was no increase to the premium.

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 there was nothing to report.

11 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Pothole

Councillor Mrs M Goyns reported a pot hole to the rear of 18 South View, Wheatley Hill.

RESOLVED that the issue be reported to Durham County Council.

..... Signed

..... Dated