

**THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE  
WHEATLEY HILL PARISH COUNCIL  
HELD ON MONDAY 10 FEBRUARY 2014**

**Present:** Councillor M Nicholls (Chair)  
Councillors E Goyns, Mrs M Goyns, B Maddison,  
J Miller and Mrs C Stogdale

**Apologies:** Councillors Mrs E Carr, Mrs M Nicholls and Mrs L Stewart

**1 THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING** held on 13 January 2014 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 COMMUNITY POLICING**

The Chair welcomed PCSO A Gilhooley to the meeting.

Members were advised that since the last meeting there had been 64 incidents reported which included 4 anti-social behaviour, 6 burglaries, 1 theft, 1 criminal damage and 2 thefts from a motor vehicle.

With regard to Burns Street 1 incident had been reported.

In relation to crime overall, incidents were up 4% year on year and anti-social behaviour was down 38%.

The Chair reported that cars were still parking at the entrance of Johnson Estate. The Officer advised that 2 warning notices had been issued and if the problem persisted the next step would be to issue Fixed Penalty Notices.

Councillor Mrs Goyns reported several incidents of nails and screws being thrown onto the road at the rear of East View. Residents had swept up the nails and screws but were very concerned. The Officer advised that he would contact the resident who had swept up the nails and screws and investigate.

Councillor Mrs Goyns reported that vans parked on the corner of Cypress View were obstructing visibility from the junction and creating a possible road safety hazard. The Officer agreed to investigate.

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

**4 STREET WARDENS**

There was no Street Wardens present at the meeting.

**5 CORRESPONDENCE**

(1) Request for Financial Assistance

Toma Fund

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The Clerk reported the receipt of a request for financial assistance from the Toma Fund.

RESOLVED that no donation be made.

### (2) Royal Garden Party 2014

The Clerk reported that the County Durham Association of Local Councils had advised that Belmont and West Auckland Parish Councils had been allocated places to attend the Royal Garden Party on 3 June 2014.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

### (3) Durham Miners' 130th Gala – 12 July 2014

The Clerk reported the receipt of correspondence from the Durham Miners' Association requesting the Parish Council to support the 130th Durham Miners' Gala by placing an advert in the Souvenir Brochure.

Members were advised that a message of support, up to a maximum of 25 words, cost £45.

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 from the Section 137 Budget.

### (4) All Saints Church - Flower Festival in Commemoration of World War 1

The Clerk reported the receipt of correspondence from All Saints Church advising that as part of the village's contribution to the 100 year commemoration of World War 1, they were holding a flower festival from 1 – 3 August 2014.

To ensure the festival appealed to the whole community organisations were being invited to make a donation for a flower display in the Church. Displays would be subsidised by the church that were raising money to host the event. Each organisation would be given the opportunity of placing a piece of memorabilia with their display. This could be a photograph, a poem or an artefact that represented the organisation.

A booklet describing the sponsor of every flower display would be produced as a keepsake.

The Church also planned to have a Memories Tree over the weekend of the flower festival, where families could remember their loved ones, not necessarily involved in World War 1, at this time of commemoration. For a donation of £5 names would be hung on the tree, inside the Church, and the names of contributors would be included in the commemorative booklet.

Members suggested that a donation of £100 be made for a floral display and a poem related to World War 1 be displayed with the flowers.

RESOLVED that a donation of £100 be made from the Section 137 Budget.

### (5) Haswell and District Mencap Society – Victory Ball

The Clerk reported the receipt of an invitation from Haswell and District Mencap

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Society to attend a Victory Ball on 22 March 2014.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

### (6) Wheatley Hill Heritage Society – Work Experience Placement

The Clerk previously reported that Wheatley Hill Heritage Society had been approached by Northumbria University to provide a work placement for an undergraduate studying history.

Mr Gilson, a volunteer with the Society, had been planning work to the Societies graves register database and felt the undergraduate could assist with this work.

The Heritage Society would be solely responsible for the work placement, supervise all work and undertake all administrative tasks related to the placement.

The Parish Council had no objection to the placement and had approved the work in the Cemetery. The Clerk had however raised concern in relation to insurance and stressed that the work placement was not covered by the Parish Councils insurance. The Society would need to demonstrate they had appropriate insurance cover in place prior to the start of the placement.

RESOLVED that the Clerk contact the Heritage Society to ensure they had appropriate insurance cover in place.

### (7) Wheatley Hill Mothers Club

The Clerk reported the receipt of an invitation from Wheatley Hill Mother's Club to attend their meeting on 5 March 2014 when the Hartlepool Male Voice Choir would be singing.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

## 6 PLANNING

### Applications

CE/13/01221/FPA – Erection of canopy, store extension and widening of rear access at Wheatley Service Station, Durham Road, Wheatley Hill Durham DH6 3LJ for Wheatley Service Station.

Members once again raised concern in relation to the widening of the rear access from the garage onto Durham Road. Large vehicles were still using the rear access as an alternative to leaving the garage at the front and turning left onto the busy A181. This was causing increased traffic and disturbance to residents living on Durham Road.

Upon leaving Durham Road large vehicles were then continuing through Wheatley Hill to the bottom roundabout for easier access onto the A181. The purpose of the bypass was to take traffic away from the centre of the village.

RESOLVED that the concerns of the Parish Council be conveyed to Durham County Council.

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### 7 DELEGATES REPORTS

#### (1) East Durham Association of Parish and Town Councils

Councillor Mrs Goyns attended a meeting of the East Durham Association of Parish and Town Councils on 14 January 2014.

Councillor Mrs Goyns had previously expressed concern at the timing of the meetings and felt that 4pm was not a convenient time. This was a view held by others when discussed at the meeting.

Updates in relation to traveller encampments and Welfare Reform were provided at the meeting. Members were also advised that Councillor W Jeffries had been nominated to sit on the National Association.

The Annual General Meeting was scheduled to be held on 11 March 2014.

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

#### (2) Chairs Update

- Welfare Reform – 3 bed properties were lying empty as families were forced to move out to avoid paying the “bedroom Tax” for rooms they did not use
- Front Street - Selective Licensing had been successful in other parts of the County and would be rolled out into other areas. It was hoped this would improve the situation with rental properties on the Front Street, absentee landlords and anti-social behaviour
- Arriva Bus Services – Discussions were due to be held to discuss bus routes
- Cain Terrace/Henderson Avenue – Discussions were ongoing in relation to the provision of new housing
- Aged Miners Bungalows – Provision of 2 bed bungalows
- Entrance to Community Centre – there had been a marked improvement to the entrance to the Community Centre
- Developments at Bevan Crescent and West House
- New Clinic – it was anticipated that building work would commence shortly. Councillor Mrs Goyns suggested that once the clinic was built it would be appropriate to locate a bus stop close to the clinic
- Weardale Park – land to the rear of the estate
- Stray Horses

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

### 8 HEAD GROUNDSPERSONS 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.

9 CLERKS REPORT

(1) Allotments/Stable Blocks

(i) Waiting List

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

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

(2) Estimates of Expenditure 2014/2015

The Clerk reported that at a special meeting of the Parish Council held on 9 December 2013 Members resolved that the net spending requirement of the Parish Council for 2014/15 be set at £127,743.00. This was made up of a Local Council Tax Support Grant of £32,579.00 and an additional £95,164.00 precept.

Members were advised that the Parish Council had deferred submitting its precept request to Durham County Council until it knew the outcome of the Government's intention in relation to the extension of the capping limits to town and parish councils for 2014/15.

The Clerk explained that if capping limits were extended to town and parish councils the Parish Council would not wish to hold a referendum over the setting of its council tax and would need to set a precept within the limit imposed by the Government. If no capping restrictions were imposed the Clerk was instructed to submit the agreed precept to Durham County Council.

The Clerk explained that it was probable the Government would extend the capping provisions from 2015/16. It was expected that councils setting a council tax band D charge above a Government determined de-minimus range, possibly a council tax band D charge of over £160/£170, may be capped for 2015/2016.

RESOLVED that if no capping restrictions were imposed the Clerk be authorised to formally submit the precept request agreed on 9 December 2013.

(3) Summer/Winter Bedding

The Clerk reported that Durham County Council had been requested to supply information in relation to the current contracts for flower beds and hanging baskets.

To date limited information had been provided and the Clerk was trying to establish a comprehensive schedule of flower beds and hanging baskets the Parish Council was responsible for.

The Clerk explained that savings needed to be made in this area. This could be achieved by reducing the number of flower beds and hanging baskets or looking at alternative suppliers.

It was suggested that in order to establish a baseline for what the Parish Council was responsible for a meeting be sought with Durham County Council.

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**RESOLVED** that the Clerk contact Durham County Council and request a meeting to discuss this matter further.

**(4) Parish Council Website**

The Clerk reported the since the launch of the Parish Councils website in September 2011 the number of people visiting the site had increased significantly, details of which were outlined to Members.

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

**(5) Additional Office Accommodation**

The Clerk reported that since the last meeting two quotations had been received for the erection of a temporary office accommodation to the rear of the Heritage Centre.

The Clerk was assessing the quotations and would provide further details at the next meeting.

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

**10 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.

**11 RISK MANAGEMENT**

The Clerk advised that there was nothing to report.

..... Signed

.....Dated