

**THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
WHEATLEY HILL PARISH COUNCIL
HELD ON MONDAY 7 APRIL 2014**

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

Apologies: Councillor Mrs L Stewart

- 1 THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING** held on 10 March 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's C Naisby and A Gilhooley to the meeting.

Members were advised that since the last meeting there had been 91 incidents reported which included 10 anti-social behaviour and 10 burglaries. In relation to anti-social behaviour incidents were down 39% on the previous year.

With regard to Burns Street 1 incident had been reported.

Councillor Mrs Goyns reported seeing a horse being ridden on the pavement along the Front Street, the horse had also left a large amount of horse muck on the pavement. Councillor Goyns had also seen horses been rode along the footpath at East View.

The Chair reported that cars were still parking at the entrance of Johnson Estate. Councillor Mrs Goyns reported that cars were parking in the vicinity of 19, 20 and 21 East View and restricting the visibility of cars leaving Johnson Estate.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

4 STREET WARDENS

There was no Street Wardens present at the meeting.

5 CORRESPONDENCE

(1) Requests for Financial Assistance

(i) Peterlee Town Twinning

The Clerk reported the receipt of a request for financial assistance from Peterlee Town Twinning.

RESOLVED that a donation of £25 be made from the Chair's Account.

(ii) **Wheatley Hill Heritage Society**

The Clerk reported the receipt of a request for financial assistance from Wheatley Hill Heritage Society. The Society was hosting a number of events in 2014 to commemorate the beginning of World War 1, details of which were outlined to Members.

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

(iii) **Wheatley Hill Community Association**

The Clerk reported that at the last meeting Members agreed to a donation to support the Meals on Wheels service provided by Wheatley Hill Community Association.

RESOLVED that approval be granted to pay Wheatley Hill Community Association £4,805 from the Section 137 Budget to assist with the following costs related to the provision of the Meals on Wheels service: -

- Paid staff - Meals on Wheels delivery - £2,484
- Trade refuse collection – Meals on Wheels, Luncheon Club and general running - £1,226
- Lift maintenance – essential for all users with limited mobility - £1,095

(2) **Letters of Thanks**

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

Wheatley House Moving Forward
Wheatley Hill Mothers Club

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

(3) **Infinis – Wingate Grange Public Exhibitions**

The Clerk reported that a public exhibition for the Wingate Grange Employability Fund was held on 4 April 2014 at the Greenhills Centre.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

(4) **Proposed Construction of Road Humps – Cemetery Road**

The Clerk reported the receipt of correspondence from Durham County Council advising of a consultation in relation to the proposed construction of a road hump, in the form of a speed cushion, on the C65 Cemetery Road, Wheatley Hill.

The consultation would run from 31 March to 21 April 2014.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

(5) Precept 2014/2015

The Clerk reported the receipt of a complaint regarding the level of precept set by the Parish Council for 2014/2015.

Members were advised that Mr D Henderson of 11 Greenwood Close, Wheatley Hill had contacted the Clerk to express his concern and displeasure at the increase in the level of precept for 2014/2015.

The Clerk had contacted Mr Henderson and extended an invitation to discuss the matter over the telephone or at a time and place to suit Mr Henderson if he wished to discuss the matter face to face. The Clerk also invited Mr Henderson to attend a meeting of the Parish Council.

Mr Henderson had contacted the Clerk by telephone and discussed his concerns in relation to the precept. He wished it brought to the attention of Members that he was not happy with the level of precept and felt this was a charge he had no control over.

The Clerk outlined, in detail, the Parish Council's precept and the actual annual, monthly and weekly cost to residents living in a band A, B, C and D property. Members also discussed the level of precept set by neighboring councils.

Following a lengthy discussion on the complaint received it was **RESOLVED** that the concerns expressed by Mr Henderson, be noted.

(6) Dog Fouling

The Clerk reported the receipt of a letter of complaint from Mrs L Stokoe of 15 Gable Terrace, Wheatley Hill.

Mrs Stokoe was concerned at the level of dog fouling in Wheatley Hill and felt that not enough was being done by the County Council to prevent it.

RESOLVED that the concerns of Mrs Stokoe be passed to the Street Wardens for investigation.

6 PLANNING

(i) Applications

DM/14/00347/FPA – Erection of 2 number dwellings at land at Moor View, Wheatley Hill, Durham for Mr T Cunningham

DM/14/00359/FPA – New detached single storey garage to replace existing at 4 Dalton Terrace, Wheatley Hill, Durham DH6 3RJ for Mr D Metcalf

DM/14/00609/FPA – Erection of 65 number dwellings with associated works at land at Cain Terrace and Henderson Avenue, Wheatley Hill, Durham for Gleeson Developments Ltd

(ii) Approvals

DM/14/00038/FPA – Erection of 5 number dwellings (resubmission) at former West House, 1 Gable Terrace, Wheatley Hill, Durham DH6 3JT for J Kemp Ltd

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

7 DELEGATES REPORTS

- (i) New Clinic – The Chair reported that work on the new clinic had been delayed and it was unclear when work would start on the new build.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

8 HEAD GROUNDS PERSONS 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.

(ii) Request for an Allotment

The Clerk reported the receipt of a request for an allotment from Mrs Michelle McMahon of 92 Johnson Estate, Wheatley Hill, Durham DH6 3LH.

RESOLVED that Mrs M McMahan of 92 Johnson Estate, Wheatley Hill, Durham DH6 3LH be accepted onto the waiting list for an allotment.

(2) Annual Audit for the Year Ending 31 March 2014

The Clerk reported that the Annual Audit date had been set for 30 June 2014.

The Clerk proceeded to take Members through Section 1, Statement of Accounts and Section 2, Annual Governance Statement.

Following discussion it was RESOLVED that Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Return for the year ended 31 March 2014, be approved and signed by the Chair.

(3) Dog Bags

The Clerk reported that the County Durham Association of Local Councils was undertaking a bulk purchase of poop scoop bags. Members were advised that in May 2013, the Parish Council purchased 20,000 poop scoop bags at a cost of £170.40. To date 8,000 bags had been used.

It was proposed that the Parish Council purchase a further 10,000 bags. The exact cost of the bags was unknown and would be dependent on the total number of bags purchased, however, it was expected to be a similar cost to last year.

RESOLVED that approval be granted to purchase 10,000 poop scoop bags.

(4) Trade Waste Contract 2014/15

The Clerk reported that Durham County Council had provided a quotation of £555 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 £555 be accepted.

(5) Summer/Winter Bedding

The Clerk reported that Durham County Council had provided a quotation of £18,878.07, including VAT, for the 2014/2015 summer/winter bedding contract based on the current number of flower beds and baskets. Members had previously discussed the need to make savings and it was agreed that this could be achieved by reducing the number of flower beds and hanging baskets or looking at alternative suppliers.

The Clerk had advised the County Council that the Parish Council would not be renewing the contract based on the current level of service and had requested a meeting to discuss future requirements.

The Clerk reported that a meeting was held with J Talbot, Durham County Council on 3 April 2014 to discuss the contract and the need to make savings. The Clerk outlined the Parish Councils intention to reduce the number of flower beds and baskets. A schedule of the Parish Councils future requirements was given to the County Council with a request for a revised quotation based on the information supplied.

RESOLVED that a revised quotation from Durham County Council be awaited.

- (6) Legislative Reform Order – Cheques – Repeal of Section 150 (5) of the Local Government Act 1972

The Clerk reported that from 13 March 2014 Councils were allowed to make electronic payments. Councils were no longer obliged to have every cheque signed by two Councillors although Councils who wished to continue with this method of payment were entitled to do so to demonstrate “robust and effective controls over expenditure and payment systems”.

Councils who wished to take advantage of this must formally put in place effective systems and arrangements compliant with the proper practices before it sought to abandon the two signature rule. This effectively meant adopting new Financial Regulations and internal procedures compliant with the guidance. Councils could not abandon the two signature rule until safe and effective arrangements were in place.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

- (7) Financial Regulations

The Clerk reported that new Model Financial Regulations have been drafted.

RESOLVED that the new Financial Regulations be adopted.

- (8) Additional Office Accommodation

The Clerk reported that no progress had been made.

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.

12 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- (i) Cemetery – Boundary Wall

Councillor B Maddison reported that Mr Rose, whose property shared a

boundary with the Cemetery, had recently erected a new brick wall.

The Clerk reported that it was believed that when the Parish Council originally erected the steel boundary fence around the Cemetery Mr Rose had asked the Council not to erect it to the side of his property and had sought permission to erect a wooden fence in place of the steel fencing.

The cost of the boundary wall was discussed and it was suggested that the Parish Council could make a small financial contribution towards the cost of the wall, as a gesture of goodwill and appreciation. It was pointed out that Mr Rose had at no time requested any financial assistance with the cost of the wall.

Following a lengthy discussion it was suggested that a small contribution of £50 be offered to Mr Rose as a gesture of goodwill and appreciation.

RESOLVED that the Clerk contact Mr Rose to discuss the matter and further developments be awaited.

(ii) **Pot Holes – South View**

Councillor Mrs Goyns reported several deep potholes running from 1 to 19 South View. The holes were filling up with water and were in need of repair.

RESOLVED that the issue be reported to Durham County Council.

(iii) **Shrub Garden – Peterlee Cottages**

It was reported that there was an accumulation of rubbish and litter caught up in a shrub garden in the vicinity of Peterlee Cottages.

RESOLVED that the issue be reported to Durham County Council.

..... Signed

.....Dated