

# THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE WHEATLEY HILL PARISH COUNCIL

HELD ON MONDAY 14 SEPTEMBER 2015

**Present:** Councillor M Nicholls (Chair)  
Councillors Mrs E Carr, B Maddison,  
Mrs L Stewart and Mrs C Stogdale

**Apologies:** Councillors E Goys, Mrs M Goyns, J Miller  
and Mrs M Nicholls

**1 THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING** held on 13 July 2015 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**

There was no Police present at the meeting.

## **4 STREET WARDENS**

There was no Street Wardens present at the meeting.

## **5 CORRESPONDENCE**

### **(1) Requests for Financial Assistance**

#### **(i) Wheatley Hill Children's Centre**

The Clerk reported the receipt of a request for financial assistance from Wheatley Hill Children's Centre to assist with the development of a community garden.

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

#### **(ii) Wheatley Hill History Club**

The Clerk reported the receipt of a request for financial assistance from Wheatley Hill History Club to assist with costs for a local history event.

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

#### **(iii) East Durham Community Transport Limited**

The Clerk reported the receipt of a request for financial assistance from East Durham Community Transport Limited.

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

- (iv) **Wheatley Hill Working Men’s Club Football Team**

The Clerk reported the receipt of a request for financial assistance from Wheatley Hill Working Men’s Club Football Team.

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

- (v) **Wheatley Hill Scouts**

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

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

- (vi) **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) **Letter of Thanks**

The Clerk reported the receipt of a letter of thanks from the Wheatley Hill Women’s Section of the Royal British Legion.

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

- (3) **Re-Purchase of Burial Plots**

- (i) **Plot Number F545**

The Clerk reported the receipt of a request from Hunt and Wrigley Solicitors, representing the late Mrs Current, for the Parish Council to re-purchase a burial plot that was no longer required.

**RESOLVED** that the Parish Council re-purchase burial plot F545 from the late Mrs Current and Solicitors representing the family be reimbursed the £60.00 purchase price.

- (ii) **Plot Number G691**

The Clerk reported the receipt of a request from Mr Carr for the Parish Council to re-purchase a burial plot that was no longer required.

**RESOLVED** that the Parish Council re-purchase burial plot G691 from Mr Carr at the original purchase price of £50.00.

**(4) Village Artwork – The Last Shift**

The Clerk reported that a meeting was held on 27 July 2015 to discuss proposals to mark the 50th anniversary of the closure of Wheatley Hill pit by commissioning a piece of public artwork for the village.

The Clerk took Members through the minutes of the meeting outlining the main issues which included an update on fund raising for the project.

Members were advised that the next meeting would be held on 28 September 2015 at 6pm in Wheatley House.

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

**(5) Request to Plant a Commemorative Tree**

The Clerk reported the receipt of correspondence from Mrs Hagan requesting approval to plant a commemorative tree in the Cemetery in memory of the Hagan family.

Members were advised that the Hagan family would be happy with any variety of tree and did not wish to erect a memorial plaque with the tree.

**RESOLVED** that approval be granted for the Hagan family to plant a commemorative tree in Wheatley Hill Cemetery.

**(6) Anonymous Letter – Wordsworth Avenue**

The Clerk reported the receipt of an anonymous letter from a resident living in Wordsworth Avenue, Wheatley Hill.

The letter made reference to various issues which included the number of caravans, horses and carts parked on the estate. The letter also made reference to horse muck and water containers left in the street, as well as problems related to drugs and dogs barking on the estate.

The Chair reported that a meeting had been held with residents and it was proposed to hold a further meeting which would involve the Police, Durham County Council, East Durham Homes and the Street Wardens.

**RESOLVED** that the letter be accepted.

**(7) Litter/Rubbish – Durham Road**

The Clerk reported the receipt of correspondence from Mrs Hedley which related to the amount of litter and rubbish on Durham Road, to the rear of the NISA garage, details of which were outlined to Members.

Residents were concerned at the problem of people dumping garden waste in the hedgerows and there had been an increase in the number of people throwing litter from cars when leaving the rear of the garage.

Residents were requesting that a portable CCTV camera be erected in the vicinity in order to identify those responsible.

**RESOLVED** that Durham County Council be requested to erect a mobile CCTV camera in the vicinity of Durham Road.

**(8) Residential Development on Land off Wingate Lane**

The Clerk reported the receipt of correspondence from Hedley Planning Services who were acting on behalf of Dere Street Homes Limited. The purpose of the letter was to advise of their intention to seek planning consent for 115 residential homes on land off Wingate Lane, Wheatley Hill.

Members were advised that the development would incorporate 10% affordable homes and the properties would be a mix of 2, 3 and 4 bedroom semi and detached properties.

Comments were invited at this pre planning stage and Members pointed out they would consider the application when it was formally submitted to Durham County Council.

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

**6 PLANNING**

**APPROVALS**

**DM/15/01694/FPA** – Construction of detached garage in separate garden area to rear of dwelling (retrospective application) at 25 East View, Wheatley Hill, DH6 3LF for Mr and Mrs S Hill

**DM/15/02213/FPA** – Installation of shop front with roller shutters at 27 Alexandra Terrace, Wheatley Hill, DH6 3JW for Johnny Ridley Bookmaker

**DM/15/02235/FPA** – Alterations to shop fronts including installation of roller shutters and rendering to front and side at Wheatley Hill Pet and Corn Stores, 7–9 Front Street, Wheatley Hill, DH6 3NJ for Wheatley Hill Pet and Corn Stores

**DM/15/02221/AD** – Display of two externally illuminated fascia signs to front of property at 27 Alexandra Terrace, Wheatley Hill, DH6 3JW for Johnny Ridley Bookmaker

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

**7 DELEGATES REPORTS**

The Chair provided an update on the following:-

- New Health Clinic
- Wordsworth Avenue – Issues related to caravans, horses and carts parked on the estate, horse muck and water containers in the street, barking dogs and drugs. A meeting was held with residents and it was proposed that a further meeting, involving the Police, Durham County Council, East Durham Homes and the Street Wardens would be held.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

## 8 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.

## 9 CLERK'S REPORT

### (1) Allotments/Stable Blocks

#### (i) Allotment Sub Committee

The Clerk reported that an Allotment Sub Committee was held on 17 July 2015.

Members were advised that many of the plots were overgrown, not used and generally in a poor state. Following the site visit letters were issued advising tenants that plots must be kept in a good condition or further action would be taken to evict.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

#### (ii) Request for Allotment/Stable Block

The Clerk reported the receipt of the following applications for an allotment/stable block.

Mr P Chapman, 27 Handel Terrace, Wheatley Hill, DH6 3RS  
Miss L Griffen, 71a Wordsworth Avenue, Wheatley Hill, DH6 3RD  
Mr T W Carney, 48 Peter Lee Cottages, Wheatley Hill, DH6 3RH

RESOLVED that the applications be accepted onto the waiting list.

#### (iii) Annual Rents

The Clerk reported that the annual rent letters would be issued at the end of September.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

### (2) Thomas Kenny - Victoria Cross Memorial Stone

The Clerk reported that the last meeting of the Thomas Kenny Group was held on 3 September 2015.

Members were provided with an update and advised that the AAP had been successful in securing funding from the Heritage Lottery to cover the costs for the event.

The next meeting was scheduled to be held at 2pm on 8 October 2015 at Wheatley House.

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

**(3) Annual Audit 2015**

The Clerk reported that BDO LLP had completed the Annual Audit for the year ended 31 March 2015 and there were no separate issues that required attention.

In accordance with the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2011, the Notice of Conclusion of Audit would be displayed for a minimum of 14 days.

The cost of the Annual Audit was £480.00

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

**(4) Budget Setting 2016/2017**

The Clerk reported the receipt of correspondence from Durham County Council advising of the indicative forecast of reductions in Local Council Tax Support Scheme Grant for the period 2015/16 to 2017/18.

The forecasts provided could be used for budget planning purposes but the current position was not final, as this would be based on the Tax Base forecasts undertaken in October 2015.

Using the updated Tax Base and the forecast grant reductions the Parish Council would see an increase in its Tax Base of 22.3 and a reduction in grant of £931.00.

There was also the possibility of the Government extending the Council Tax capping controls in 2016/17. This could affect councils with a Band D Council Tax in excess of £140.00 and if implemented would place restrictions on the ability of councils to increase their Council Tax by more than 1% to 2% without approval through a local referendum.

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

**(5) Wheatley Hill Banner – Insurance**

The Clerk reported that the Wheatley Hill Banner was to be rehoused at Wheatley Hill Working Men's Club. The Clerk advised that Zurich Municipal

had confirmed that the banner was covered under the Parish Councils insurance at this location.

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 there was nothing to report.

..... Signed

..... Dated