

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

**HELD ON MONDAY 9 NOVEMBER 2015**

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

**Apologies:** Councillors E Goyns and Mrs M Goyns

**1 THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING** held on 12 October 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) Mrs L Paterson**

The Clerk reported that at the last meeting Members deferred consideration of a request for financial assistance from Mrs Paterson.

Members were advised that the Clerk had contacted Mrs Paterson to discuss her proposal and obtain further information. To date no further information had been received from Mrs Paterson.

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

**(ii) Wheatley Hill Constitutional Club**

The Clerk reported the receipt of a request for financial assistance from Wheatley Hill Constitutional Club towards their annual Honorary Members Christmas Party.

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

**(2) Letters of Thanks**

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

Wheatley Hill Heritage Centre  
All Saints Church – “Over 20’s Club”

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

(3) Village Artwork – The Last Shift

The Clerk reported that a meeting was held on 26 October 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, including recent posts to social media on the proposals.

Members were advised that the next meeting would be held on 30 November 2015 at 6pm in Wheatley House.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

(4) Front Street Improvements

The Clerk reported the receipt of correspondence from Durham County Council in relation to improvements on and around the Front Street.

Members were advised that the County Council were working with the owners of the industrial estate on the Front Street to undertake improvements which included tree and shrub pruning, 2 new grit bins, new speed restriction signs and vehicle reversing signs.

This work formed part of a programme of improvements on the Front Street and discussions were also taking place with the Clean and Green team to replace seating and install new planters and litter bins.

It was proposed to install two new tubs planted with low maintenance shrubs. The Parish Council had been asked to take on the future maintenance of the tubs and with the use of low maintenance planting time and costs would be kept to a minimum.

Signage to the Community Centre would be renewed and the footpath from the main road to the Community Centre would be improved. Improvements at the junction with Woodlands Avenue included the painting of railings and repairs to the paving in specified areas.

Following discussion it was RESOLVED that Durham County Council be advised that the Parish Council would take on the future maintenance of the two tubs to be sited on the Front Street.

(5) Wheatley Hill Mothers Club - Christmas Concert

The Clerk reported the receipt of an invitation for Members to attend the annual Christmas Concert on 2 December 2015.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

**6 PLANNING**

**(i) Applications**

**DM/15/02970/FPA – Vehicular access at Thorne Villa, Woodlands Avenue, Wheatley Hill, Durham DH6 3JY for Mr A Kirby**

**(ii) Approvals**

**DM/15/02837/AD – Display of non-illuminated fascia sign and relocation of existing projecting sign to front elevation at Wheatley Hill Pet and Corn Stores, 7–9 Front Street, Wheatley Hill, Durham DH6 3NJ for Wheatley Hill Pet and Corn Stores**

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

**7 DELEGATES REPORTS**

The Chair provided an update on the following:-

- **Front Street – Further walkabouts were planned as well as improvements on and around the entrance to the industrial estate on the Front Street.**
- **New Health Clinic – Old surgery would be demolished in December 2015.**
- **Wordsworth Avenue**

**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) Waiting List**

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

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

**(ii) Stable Block 19**

The Clerk reported that at the last meeting stable block 19 was allocated to Mrs L Bradwell of 9 Gable Terrace, Wheatley Hill. The Clerk advised that Mrs Bradwell had not confirmed her acceptance or paid the rent and it was suggested that the plot be re-allocated.

**RESOLVED** that stable block 19 be offered to Mr L Barnett of 16 Jack Lawson Terrace, Wheatley Hill, DH6 3RT.

(iii) Mr Frost – Allotment 5

The Clerk reported the receipt of a request from Mr Frost for a key to the main gates at the football field.

Members expressed concern about allowing access to the field and felt that it was not appropriate to allow keys to be distributed to tenants.

**RESOLVED** that the request be declined.

(iv) Annual Rents

The Clerk reported that to date four rents were outstanding. The Clerk advised that a reminder would be sent to those tenants who had not paid advising that failure to pay would result in termination of the tenancy.

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

(v) Overgrown Hedge

The Clerk reported that arrangements had been made for Durham County Council to cut back the hedge on the track leading to the allotments.

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

(2) Thomas Kenny - Victoria Cross Memorial Stone

The Clerk reported that the unveiling of the Thomas Kenny VC Memorial stone took place on 4 November 2015 at the Cemetery followed by a reception at Wheatley House.

Members were advised that the day itself was a success and members of the Kenny family were happy with the event. The Clerk advised that a letter of thanks, to everyone involved, had been received from Mrs T Shaw, Thomas Kenny's granddaughter.

The Clerk gave details of the ongoing problems associated with the memorial stone and explained that the stone currently in place was the second attempt by Durham County Council.

Members were advised that prior to the event numerous meetings were held with county staff and Members expressed concern about taking on the future maintenance of a memorial with so many faults.

The Clerk explained the Parish Councils position, particularly the fact the stone was commissioned and paid for by the Area Action Partnership.

The Clerk agreed to contact the County Council to ascertain the present position with the stone.

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

be awaited.

**(3) Estimates of Expenditure 2016/2017**

The Clerk provided options with regard to the spending requirements of the Parish Council for 2016/17, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member.

The Clerk outlined the various options and provided a range of figures for Members consideration.

Members discussed the options and suggested that a standstill budget of £127,317.00 be set for 2016/17. This was made up of a Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme Grant of £28,368.00 and an additional £98,949.00 precept.

The Clerk suggested that a draft budget based on these figures be prepared for Members consideration. The Clerk pointed out that the tax base and grant was subject to change but it was not expected to be significant.

Following a lengthy discussion it was **RESOLVED** that the Clerk prepare a budget for 2106/17 based on a standstill budget of £127,317.00.

**(4) Ex-Gratia Christmas Payments**

The Chair suggested that an ex-gratia Christmas payment of £200.00 be made to J Davies, D Lamb and J Thompson.

**RESOLVED** that approval be granted for an ex-gratia payment of £200.00 to J Davies, D Lamb and J Thompson from the Chair's Account.

**10 PAYMENTS AND ORDERS**

**RESOLVED** that the payments listed be endorsed.

CHQ NO	PAYMENT TO	DETAIL	COST	VAT	TOTAL
105093	Durham County Council	Machine Repair	172.66	34.53	207.19
105094	M Nicholls	Telephone Allowance	25.00		25.00
105095	J Thompson	Telephone Allowance	25.00		25.00
105096	Horns	Flowers/Slate	91.67	18.33	110.00
105097	Horns	Flowers/Chippings	91.25	18.24	109.49
105098	J Thompson	Reimbursements	48.31	3.80	52.11
105099	Wheatley Hill Constitutional Club	Section 137 Donation	300.00		300.00
105100	J Davies	Reimbursements	35.45	7.09	42.54
105101	Go2 Electrical Services Ltd	Light Repair - Heritage Centre	40.00		40.00
105102	J Dent	Skip Hire	175.00	35.00	210.00
105103	The Co-Operative Funeralcare	Gravedigging Fes	80.00		80.00

**Wheatley Hill Parish Council – 9 November 2015**

105104	JAC's Accountancy Ltd	Payroll Services - November 2015	18.75	3.75	22.50
Internet Banking	Payroll	Wages - November 2015	3945.24		3945.24
Internet Banking	HMRC/DCC	PAYE/Pension - November 2015	2318.87		2318.87
Internet Banking	Councillors Mrs M Goyns and Mrs L Stewart	Attendance Allowance	434.56		434.56
Direct Debit	British Telecom	Telephone/Internet	32.54	6.51	39.05
			<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>7834.30</b>	<b>127.25</b>
					<b>7961.55</b>

**11 RISK MANAGEMENT**

The Clerk advised there was nothing to report.

**12 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

**(i) Bevan Crescent/Harper Crescent**

Councillor Maddison reported tree roots were coming through the pavement at Bevan Crescent and Harper Bungalows. Residents were concerned about damage to property and would like the trees felled.

**RESOLVED** that the matter be reported to Durham County Council.

**(ii) Police/Street Wardens Attendance at Meetings**

Councillor Miller made reference to the poor attendance of Police and Street Wardens at meetings of the Parish Council.

**RESOLVED** that the Police and Street Wardens be contacted regarding their lack of attendance at Parish Council meetings.

**(iii) Fly Tipped Rubbish – Alexandra Terrace**

Councillor Stogdale reported fly tipped rubbish to the rear of Alexandra Terrace, behind the health centre.

**RESOLVED** that the matter be reported to Durham County Council.

**(iv) Pot Hole – Greenhills Terrace**

Councillor Carr reported a pot hole on the road at 7 Greenhills Terrace.

**RESOLVED** that the matter be reported to Durham County Council.

..... Signed

..... Dated