

THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE WHEATLEY HILL PARISH COUNCIL

HELD ON MONDAY 7 DECEMBER 2015

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

Apologies: Councillor Mrs M Nicholls

1 THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING held on 9 November 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

The Clerk reported that following the last meeting the Police were contacted regarding their lack of attendance at Parish Council meetings.

Members were advised that the Police had not attended a meeting since June 2015.

PC S Rowe had advised that the Police would attend Parish Council meetings whenever possible. Unfortunately, the meetings were held on a Monday evening when the Police had fewer staff on duty due to shift patterns. In future the Police would provide relevant information for Members information.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

4 STREET WARDENS

The Clerk reported that following the last meeting the Street Wardens were contacted regarding their lack of attendance at Parish Council meetings.

Members were advised that the Wardens had not attended a meeting since September 2013.

The Wardens had advised that due to a change in their working hours they now finished at 8pm during the week. This meant they rarely had the opportunity to attend meetings held after 5pm.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

5 CORRESPONDENCE

(1) Requests for Financial Assistance

(i) Wheatley House - Thomas Kenny VC

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 all agreed that the day itself was a huge success and the Kenny family had expressed their appreciation to everyone involved.

The Clerk advised that Wheatley House had received a small payment for room hire from the East Durham AAP. As a token of appreciation for all the hard work that went into making the reception such a success it was suggested that a donation be made from the Parish Council from the Section 137 Budget.

RESOLVED that a donation of £200 be made from the Section 137 Budget.

(ii) Great North Air Ambulance

The Clerk reported the receipt of a request for financial assistance from the Great North Air Ambulance.

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

(iii) Durham Cathedral

The Clerk reported the receipt of a request for financial assistance towards the welfare and upkeep of Durham Cathedral.

RESOLVED that a donation of £50 be made from the Section 137 Budget.

(iv) Wheatley Hill Workmen's Social Club and Institute

The Clerk reported the receipt of a request for financial assistance from Wheatley Hill Workmen's Social Club and Institute.

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

(2) Letters of Thanks/Cards

The Clerk reported the receipt of the following letters of thanks and Christmas cards.

Wheatley Hill Community Nursery
Wheatley Hill Constitutional Club
Wheatley Hill Mothers Club
Wheatley Hill History Club

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

(3) Village Artwork – The Last Shift

The Clerk reported that a meeting was held on 30 November 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 possible locations for the artwork.

Members were advised that the next meeting would be held on 25 January 2016 at 6pm in Wheatley House.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

(4) Wheatley Hill Post Office

The Clerk reported the receipt of correspondence from the Post Office confirming that Wheatley Hill Post Office would move from its current location on Granville Terrace to Stephen's Off Licence at 26 Alexandra Terrace, Wheatley Hill.

Members were advised that during the consultation period the Post Office received a small number of comments from residents. The main concerns related to parking at the new location, the availability of space inside the store and privacy and security.

The Post Office had considered the feedback received and the impact on residents. They had also reviewed pedestrian and vehicular access to the premises and were confident that the new branch was suitably located and would continue to meet customer needs

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

(5) All Saints Church - Community Carol Service

The Clerk reported the receipt of an invitation to attend All Saints Church Community Carol Service on 20 December 2015 at 4pm.

On Christmas Eve a crib service for families and children would be held at 3pm and a Christmas communion at 7pm.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

6 PLANNING

There were no planning matters.

7 DELEGATES REPORTS

The Chair provided an update on the following:-

- Front Street – Improvements on and around the entrance to the industrial estate including tree and shrub pruning, new grit bins, signage and seating
- Front Street Shops - 2 shops had been fitted with new fronts
- New Health Clinic – works to car park were on-going

- Durham County Council – Savings of £153M had been made since 2011 and further savings of £120M were required before 2020
- Devolution – Proposals for devolution which would generate additional money for services

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 stable block 19 had been allocated to Mr L Barnett of 16 Jack Lawson Terrace, Wheatley Hill, DH6 3RT.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

(iii) Annual Rents

The Clerk reported that all rents had been paid.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

(2) Thomas Kenny - Victoria Cross Memorial Stone

Following the last meeting the Chair and Clerk met with Durham County Council to discuss the outstanding works needed to bring the Thomas Kenny VC Memorial stone up to an acceptable standard.

The Clerk outlined the Parish Councils position, particularly the fact that the stone was commissioned and paid for by the East Durham AAP.

Members were advised that the County Council had agreed to undertake the outstanding work free of charge. The works included relaying the right hand side coping stone, replacing the mortar where the edging met the footpath and removing the protruding foundation on the front right hand side.

The County Council were asked to provide a quotation to remove the 2 flower beds to the side of the stone and replace them with yorkstone setts to match the area to the front of the stone.

The quotation was £614.21 plus VAT. If Members wished to proceed with the works they would be undertaken in the spring.

Following discussion Members agreed to wait until the remedial works were complete before making any decision on the flower beds.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

(3) Estimates of Expenditure 2016/2017

The Clerk provided details of the draft expenditure required by the Parish Council for the forthcoming financial year 2016/2017, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member.

The draft expenditure was based on a standstill overall budget of £127,317.00. This was made up of a Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme Grant of £28,390.00 and an additional £98,927.00 precept.

The Clerk took Members through the detailed budget and following discussion it was RESOLVED that Durham County Council be advised that the Parish Councils precept request for 2016/2017 was £127,317.00.

(4) Wheatley Hill Community Association – Meals On Wheels

Consideration was given to the report of the Clerk which requested Members to consider providing financial support towards the Meals on Wheels service provided by Wheatley Hill Community Association, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member.

The Clerk reported that over the last three financial years the Parish Council had provided financial support towards the Meals on Wheels service provided by the Association.

Members were advised that over the last two years the East Durham AAP had provided funding for the Association to lease a van to support the service. The funding provided by the AAP would end soon and the leased van, used by the Association, would be returned leaving the Association without transport for the service.

The Centre incurred the following annual costs related to the provision of the Meals on Wheels service.

- Transport - £4,418
- Paid Staff – Meals on Wheels delivery - £2,808. This was based on the actual cost for 1 delivery person - £7.20 per hour (from April 2016) x 1.5 hours x 5 days x 52 weeks = £2,808

Wheatley Hill Parish Council – 7 December 2015

Additional costs previously funded by the Parish Council included Trade Refuse Collection and lift maintenance -

The centre currently provides 25 meals in Wheatley Hill, 3 in Thornley, 4 in Wingate, 3 in Peterlee and 1 in Shotton.

The Clerk took Members through the report and following discussion it was RESOLVED that: -

- (i) approval be granted for a financial donation, from the Section 137 Budget, of £7,500.00 to Wheatley Hill Community Association to assist with the costs related to the provision of the Meals on Wheels service which included transport and paid staff.
- (ii) the Parish Council continue with grass cutting at the children's play area during the summer months.

10 PAYMENTS

RESOLVED that the payments listed be endorsed.

	PAYMENT TO	DETAIL	COST	VAT	TOTAL	
105105	Horns	Christmas Tree and Supplies	125.83	25.17	151.00	
105106	J Thompson	Telephone Allowance	25.00		25.00	
105107	J Thompson	Reimbursements	38.95		38.95	
105108	J Davies	Ex Gratia Christmas Payment	200.00		200.00	
105109	D Lamb	Ex Gratia Christmas Payment	200.00		200.00	
105110	J Thompson	Ex Gratia Christmas Payment	200.00		200.00	
105111	Wheatley House	Section 137 Donation	200.00		200.00	
105112	Great North Air Ambulance	Section 137 Donation	100.00		100.00	
105113	Durham Cathedral	Section 137 Donation	50.00		50.00	
105114	Wheatley Hill Workmen's Social Club & Institute	Section 137 Donation	300.00		300.00	
105115	Mrs D Coils	Re-Purchase of Burial Plot G887	100.00		100.00	
105116	Todds Highway Maintenance Ltd	Road Planings	200.00	40.00	240.00	
105117	JAC's Accountancy Ltd	Payroll Services - December 2015	13.25	2.65	15.90	
Internet Banking	Payroll	Wages - December 2015	3932.44		3932.44	
Internet Banking	HMRC/DCC	PAYE/Pension - December 2015	2283.47		2283.47	
Direct Debit	British Telecom	Telephone/Internet	34.36	6.87	41.23	
			TOTAL	8003.30	74.69	8077.99

11 RISK MANAGEMENT

The Clerk advised there was nothing to report.

12 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

(i) Bevan Crescent/Harper Crescent

Councillor Maddison reported that Durham County Council was investigating the tree roots coming through the pavements at Bevan Crescent and Harper Bungalows.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

(ii) Hanging Baskets

Councillor Stewart reported that summer hanging baskets were still up at the Aged Miners bungalows and the Front Street.

RESOLVED that the matter be reported to Durham County Council

(iii) Trees – New Clinic

Councillor Stogdale reported that residents had expressed concern in relation to overgrown trees at the new clinic, on the corner with First Street. Residents had requested that the trees be removed or at the very least pruned back.

RESOLVED that the matter be reported to Durham County Council.

(iv) Street Lighting

Councillor Goyns reported that the street lighting to the rear of 22 East View along to 1 South View was out.

There was also a street light out at 14/15 Woodlands Avenue.

RESOLVED that the matter be reported to Durham County Council.

The Chair thanked everyone for their support over the last year and wished everyone a Merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

..... Signed

..... Dated