

THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE WHEATLEY HILL PARISH COUNCIL

HELD ON MONDAY 12 SEPTEMBER 2016

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

Apologies: Councillors Mrs M Nicholls and Mrs C Stogdale

- 1 THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING** held on 11 July 2016 together with those of the Special Meeting held on 25 July 2016, copies 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/STREET WARDENS

The Chair welcomed PC D Edson to the meeting.

Members were advised that since 8 August 2016 140 incidents had been reported which included the following:-

Anti-social behaviour - 20

Theft of/from and criminal damage to vehicles - 6

Burglary - 10

Criminal damage - 10

The Chair referred to the on-going problems associated with youths congregating and causing a nuisance on the Front Street and around the Health Centre.

Councillor Stewart reported that an upstairs window was open at an empty property on Alexandra Terrace. The open window was located above a bay and there was concern the property could be accessed by climbing on the bay window.

The Chair reported that cars were continuing to park on the yellow lines at the entrance to Johnson Estate which restricted visibility for motorists leaving the estate.

The Officer advised that the new beat officer for Wheatley Hill was PC B Dawson.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

4 CORRESPONDENCE

(1) Request for Financial Assistance

(i) 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.

(ii) The Last Shift

The Clerk reported the receipt of a request for financial assistance from The Last Shift.

RESOLVED that consideration of this item be deferred.

(iii) Haswell and District Mencap Society

The Clerk reported the receipt of a request for financial assistance from Haswell and District Mencap Society.

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

(2) Letter of Thanks

The Clerk reported the receipt of a letter of thanks from the Learning Library.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

(3) Parish Council Meeting Venue

The Clerk reported that from September 2016 Wheatley House would be hosting Slimming World on a Monday night and would no longer be available for Parish Council meetings.

RESOLVED that future meetings of the Parish Council be held in the Heritage Centre.

(4) Mini Police Launch

The Clerk reported that the Mini Police would be launched in Wheatley Hill on 19 September 2016 at Wheatley Hill Primary School.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

(5) East Durham Association of Parish and Town Councils

The Clerk reported that the next meeting of the East Durham Association of Parish and Town Councils would be held on 13 September 2016.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

(6) Village Artwork – The Last shift

The Clerk reported that the fund raising group were at the planning stage and required confirmation from the Parish Council that they would take ownership of the statue once it was erected. This would entail the Parish Council entering into a lease agreement with Durham County Council and covering the statue on the Parish Councils insurance policy.

The Clerk reported that she had contacted the sculpture and for insurance purposes he had suggested the statue be covered for £35,000. He also confirmed the statue had minimal scrap value. The annual cost to insure the statue was approximately £235.00 per year.

Durham County Council proposed to charge a peppercorn rent of £1 per year for the length of the lease which was still to be determined.

Councillor Miller suggested that if the Parish Council were to agree to take on ownership of the statue then it would be better to locate it in the Cemetery. The Clerk advised that this option had previously been suggested to the group and discounted.

Members discussed the problems associated with the proposed location for the statue, in particular the potential for vandalism, and the benefits of locating it in the Cemetery. It was suggested that the Clerk contact the group and suggest they reconsider locating the statue in the Cemetery based on the following reasons;

- No lease agreement with Durham County Council would be required
- Proposed site was isolated and vandalism/theft of the statue was a possibility
- The Cemetery was a secure site
- Durham County Council had raised issue with the number of trees located at the proposed location
- Parking at the proposed location was a possible road safety hazard

RESOLVED that the Clerk contact the group and further developments be awaited.

(7) Variation to Premises Licence – Wheatley Hill Filling Station

The Clerk reported that following the last meeting representations were made to Durham County Council in relation to the application for a variation to the premises licence at Wheatley Hill Filling Station.

Members were advised that a Special Licensing Committee was scheduled to be held on 29 July 2016 to hear representations from the Parish Council.

Prior to the Special Meeting the Clerk was advised that residents from Durham Road had discussed the variation to the licence with the licensing section and were happy with the conditions being attached to the licence. The Parish Council therefore withdrew their representations and the hearing was cancelled.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

5 PLANNING

(i) APPLICATIONS

DM/16/0214/FPA – Erection of 5 no dwellings comprising 2 no apartments, 1 no detached dwelling and a semi-detached bungalow with associated access at land adjoining Stephen's Terrace and Moor View, Wheatley Hill, DH6 3NJ for Mr J Carr

DM/16/02542/FPA – Change of use to part of first and second floors from office/training/lounge and hair salon to residential care rooms at Abbots Court Nursing Home, Wingate Lane, Wheatley Hill, Durham DH6 3LP for Mr J Russi

(ii) APPROVALS

DM/16/01142/WAS – ELV operation for an existing garage at Unit 10, Wheatley Hill, Durham DH6 3QZ for Mr K Reay

DM/16/01507/LB – Internal alterations to form new openings, external alterations to windows and doors and removal of ramp to rear at 1 Thornley Hill Farmhouse, Wheatley Hill, Durham DH63LY for Mr and Mrs Taylor

DM/16/01820/FPA – First floor side and rear extensions at Rosscairn, Durham Road, Wheatley Hill, Durham DH6 3LJ for Mr J Carr

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

6 DELEGATES REPORTS

The Chair provided an update on various issues around the village which included the problems associated with youths congregating on the Front Street and at the new health centre.

Members were advised that the new village to village bus service would commence on 31 October 2016. Prior to the start of the new service leaflets would be prepared by Durham County Council.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

7 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.

8 CLERK'S REPORT

(1) Allotments/Stable Blocks

(i) Waiting List

The Clerk provided Members with details of the current waiting list for allotments and stable blocks.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

(ii) Allotment Number 6

The Clerk reported that the tenant of allotment 6 had handed the garden back on 27 July 2016. The tenant claimed to have been warned not to leave anything on the plot as it would be stolen and he was also advised the plot belonged to somebody else.

RESOLVED that allotment 6 be offered to Mr G Coatsworth, 7 Handel Terrace, Wheatley Hill.

(iii) Application for Stable Block

The Clerk reported the receipt of a request for a stable block from Mrs Taylor, 13 Gable Terrace, Wheatley Hill.

RESOLVED that Mrs Taylor be accepted onto the waiting list for a stable block.

(iv) Application for an Allotment

The Clerk reported the receipt of a request for an allotment from Mr Griffiths, 10 Patton Walk, Wheatley Hill.

RESOLVED that Mr Griffiths be accepted onto the waiting list for an allotment.

(v) Annual Rents

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The Clerk reported that the annual rent letters would be issued at the end of September 2016.

Members discussed the fees for allotments and stable blocks and suggested they remain at their current level.

RESOLVED that the annual fee for allotments and stable blocks remain at their current level.

(vi) General

Members discussed the on-going problems associated with the allotment site and queried if it was possible for the Parish Council to dispose of the site.

The Clerk advised that it was unlikely Durham County Council would be willing to take the site back as they were disposing of sites where possible.

RESOLVED that options for the disposal of the site be investigated.

(2) School Governor – St Godric's RC School

The Clerk reported that following a request for the Parish Council to appoint a representative to serve as a school governor at St Godric's RC School Councillor Miller had been appointed.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

(3) Staffing Issues

The Clerk reported that following the special meeting of the Parish Council held on 25 July 2016 Mr B Higgins was appointed, on a casual basis, to the vacant position of Groundsperson and commenced his employment on 26 July 2016.

The casual appointment was an interim measure and Members would assess the position in relation to the vacant post at a later date. The appointment was initially for a period of 2 months and it was suggested that it continue until the next meeting when Members would review the situation.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted and the position be reviewed at the next meeting.

(4) Budget Setting 2017/2018

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 2017/2018 to 2019/2020.

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 2016.

Using the updated Tax Base and the forecast grant reductions the Parish Council would see an increase in its Tax Base of 14.9 and a reduction in grant of £4,914.00.

There was also the continued possibility of the Government extending the Council Tax capping controls in 2017/18.

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RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

(5) Flower Beds – Pit Wheel

The Clerk reported that many of the summer flowers in the beds at the Pit Wheel had been eaten by rabbits. Durham County Council had suggested that the formal beds be removed and replaced with wild flowers

RESOLVED that Durham County Council be advised to remove the formal flower beds and replace with wild flowers.

(6) Police

Members discussed the on-going problems associated with youths congregating and causing a nuisance throughout the village. It was pointed out that the lack of a permanent beat officer in the village was an issue and resulted in no continuity.

It was hoped that the recent appointment of a new beat officer would improve the situation.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

(7) Cemetery Fees

Members discussed Cemetery fees and suggested they remain at their current level for 2017/2018.

RESOLVED that Cemetery fees remain at their current level for 2017/2018.

9 PAYMENTS

RESOLVED that the payments listed be endorsed.

CHQ NO	PAYMENT TO	DETAIL	COST	VAT	TOTAL
105201	Durham County Council	Fuel	56.84	11.37	68.21
105202	J Dent	Skip Hire	200.00	40.00	240.00
105203	J Davies	Reimbursements	418.59	53.29	471.88
105204	JAC's Accountancy Limited	Payroll Services - August 2016	19.00	3.80	22.80
105205	Wilf Husband	Topsoil	192.00	38.40	230.40
105206	J Thompson	Telephone Allowance	25.00		25.00
Internet Banking	Payroll	Wages - August 2016	3936.38		3936.38
Internet Banking	HMRC/DCC	PAYE/Pension - August 2016	2062.56		2062.56
Direct Debit	British Telecom	Telephone/Internet	34.21	6.84	41.05
105207	Carrs Billington	Machine Repairs	120.51	22.73	136.42
105208	CDS Security & Fire	Annual Service Charge	487.00	97.40	584.40
105209	M Nicholls	Telephone Allowance	25.00		25.00

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105210	J Thompson	Telephone Allowance	25.00		25.00
105211	J Thompson	Reimbursements	85.08	7.35	92.43
105212	Wheatley Hill Working Men's Club Football Team	Section 137 Donation	300.00		300.00
105213	Haswell & District Mencap Societ	Section 137 Donation	100.00		100.00
105214	J Davies	Reimbursements	188.96	27.50	216.46
105215	JAC's Accountancy Limited	Payroll Services - September 2016	14.00	2.80	16.80
105216	Northumbrian Water	Water- Allotments	68.95		68.95
105217	Emblematic Limited	Section 137 Donation - Mini Police Uniforms	814.00		814.00
105218	BDO LLP	Annual Audit	400.00	80.00	480.00
Internet Banking	Payroll	Wages - September 2016	3798.79		3798.79
Internet Banking	HMRC/DCC	PAYE/Pension - September 2016	2043.80		2043.80
Direct Debit	British Telecom	Telephone/Internet	36.14	7.23	43.37
			TOTAL	14844.30	278.58
					15122.88

10 RISK MANAGEMENT

The Clerk advised that there was nothing to report.

11 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

(i) Scrap Van

Members reported a scrap van that had been seen parking, on several occasions, in the bus bay on the Front Street. The vehicle was also being used to deliver flowers and was often seen parked on the Front Street.

RESOLVED that the matter be reported to Durham County Council.

..... Signed

..... Dated