

THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE WHEATLEY HILL PARISH COUNCIL

HELD ON MONDAY 10 OCTOBER 2016

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: Councillors Mrs M Nicholls

1 THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING held on 12 September 2016 a copy of which had been circulated to each Member, were approved and signed by the Chair.

2 PUBLIC QUESTIONS

The Chair welcomed Mrs M Hedley and Mrs D Peacock to the meeting.

Mrs Hedley advised that the purpose of attending the meeting was to discuss the location of the memorial statue which was being designed and erected to mark the 50th anniversary of the closure of the local colliery.

It was initially proposed to locate the statue near the Pit Wheel, opposite the former colliery site, on Durham County Council land. However, at the last meeting of the Parish Council Members expressed concern regarding the site, in particular the potential for vandalism to the statue. Members also discussed the benefits of locating the statue in the Cemetery. It was pointed out that if it was located in the Cemetery there would be no need for a lease agreement with Durham County Council. It was therefore suggested to The Last Shift that they reconsider locating the statue in the Cemetery based on the following;

- No lease agreement with Durham County Council would be required
- No peppercorn rent would be paid to Durham County Council
- Pit Wheel site was isolated and vandalism/theft of the statue was a concern
- Cemetery was a secure site – Head Groundsperson lived on site
- Durham County Council had raised issue in relation to the number of trees at the Pit Wheel site
- Parking at the Pit Wheel site was a concern and possible road safety hazard

Following the request from the Parish Council The Last Shift held an Extraordinary Meeting and agreed to locate the statue in the Cemetery. The Parish Council were therefore asked to consider the following;

- Permission to locate the statue in the Cemetery. If approved The Last Shift would like to mutually agree the precise location of the statue.
- Adopting the project as a Parish Council memorial and community asset. This would require the Parish Council to place the order for the statue, pay for it and reclaim the VAT.
- When erected the statue would become the responsibility of the Parish Council and be covered on the Parish Councils insurance policy.

The Last Shift had been advised by Durham County Council that the Parish Council could use designated planning powers to grant itself "Planning Approval". The Last Shift would produce all necessary plans for submission to the Parish Council and liaise with the County Council's Structural Engineer and the sculptor with regard to the specification for the foundation and anchoring of the statue.

The Last Shift would fund all costs up to and including erection of the statue following which the Parish Council would take on ownership and all future upkeep and maintenance.

RESOLVED that approval be granted for;

- (i) the statue to be located in the Cemetery, the precise location of the statue to be mutually agreed with The Last Shift,
- (ii) the Parish Council to adopt the project, place the order for the statue, pay for it and reclaim the VAT.
- (iii) the Parish Council to take on responsibility for the statue once erected and cover it on the Parish Councils insurance policy.

3 COMMUNITY POLICING/STREET WARDENS

The Chair welcomed PCSO Goodwin to the meeting.

Members were advised that since the last meeting 132 incidents had been reported which included the following:-

Anti-social behaviour - 18
Burglary - 3
Theft - 9
Vehicle crime - 4

The Officer advised that during the last month Farmwatch and Checkpoint patrols had been undertaken. Both these initiatives targeted rural areas, farms and major roadways for travelling criminals.

The Chair referred to on-going problems in the village and the lack of a permanent beat officer. At the last meeting Members were advised that an officer had been assigned to Wheatley Hill and 2 days later the Clerk was advised the officer had been transferred. Members pointed out the problems associated with the lack of a permanent beat officer in the village particularly those related to the lack of continuity.

Councillor Stewart reported youths racing each other in cars throughout the village. The Officer advised that speed signs were being looked into and asked for details of the cars involved.

The Officer advised that all the issues raised would be passed to K Hyde the PCSO for Wheatley Hill.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

4 CORRESPONDENCE

(1) Request for Financial Assistance

(i) The Last Shift

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

RESOLVED that no donation be made.

(2) County Durham Association of Local Councils - Annual General Meeting

The Clerk reported that the County Durham Association of Local Councils Annual General Meeting would be held on 22 October 2016 at County Hall, Durham.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

(3) Meeting with MP's and Parliamentary Outreach Workshop

The Clerk reported the receipt of an invitation from the County Durham Association of Local Councils to attend an event with local MP's and the Parliamentary Outreach Team on 14 October 2016 at the Glebe Centre, Murton.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

(4) Greenhills Centre Luncheon Club - Christmas Meal

The Clerk reported the receipt of an invitation from the Greenhills Centre to attend the Luncheon Club Christmas meal on 20 December 2016.

RSOLVED that the information given, be noted.

(5) Creative Youth Opportunities – Open Day

The Clerk reported the receipt of an invitation from Creative Youth Opportunities to attend an Open Day on 22 October 2016 at the Greenhills Centre.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

(6) Wheatley Hill Mothers Club and Banner Appeal

The Clerk reported the receipt of an invitation to attend a GT Brass Band Concert on 9 November 2016.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

5 PLANNING

(1) Applications

DM/16/02996/FPA – Shop front with dropped kerb and external plant at The Cooperative Food, Quilstyle Road, Wheatley Hill, Durham DH6 3RF for W D Harley

DM/16/03064/FPA – Erection of 4 residential dwellings at 3-6 Front Street, Wheatley Hill, Durham DH6 3NJ for Mr W Adams

(2) Approvals

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

(3) Refusals

DM/16/02114/FPA – Erection of 5 No dwellings comprising 2 No apartments, 1 No detached dwelling and a pair of semi-detached bungalows with associated access at land adjoining Stephens Terrace and Moor View, Wheatley Hill DH6 3NJ for Mr J Carr

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

6 DELEGATES REPORTS

The Chair provided Members with an update on various issues around the village which included; youths congregating on the Front Street, the new health centre, speeding traffic and general problems on the Front Street.

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 following the last meeting allotment 6 was offered to Mr G Coatsworth of 7 Handel Terrace, Wheatley Hill. To date Mr Coatsworth had not confirmed his acceptance of the tenancy.

RESOLVED that a decision from Mr Coatsworth be awaited.

(iii) Annual Rents

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

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

(2) Annual Audit 2016

The Clerk reported that BDO LLP had completed the Annual Audit for the year ended 31 March 2016 and there were no 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.

(3) Cemetery Bungalow – New Door

The Clerk reported that the Cemetery Bungalow door was broken and needed to be replaced. Quotations were received and following consultation with the Chair, P & P Windows Limited were instructed to supply and fit a new UPVC door at a cost of £1,200.00 inclusive of VAT.

RESOLVED that the action taken be endorsed.

(4) Request to Bury/Scatter Ashes on Peter Lee's Grave

The Clerk reported the receipt of correspondence from Mrs McIntyre, the daughter of Mrs Eltringham (nee Lee) who was the granddaughter of Peter Lee.

Mrs Eltringham had recently passed away and her daughter had requested permission to scatter or bury her ashes near or on Peter Lee's grave and erect a small plaque.

Due to the significance of Peter Lee's grave the Clerk contacted Mrs Coleman, the last surviving granddaughter of Peter Lee to ask for her thoughts on the matter.

Members discussed the request and whilst they had no objection, in principle, to the request they agreed that the views of Mrs Coleman would need to be considered before any decision was made.

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

(5) Flower Beds – Pit Wheel

The Clerk reported that at the last meeting Members agreed to remove the formal flower beds at the Pit Wheel and replace them with wild flowers.

Durham County Council was in the process of removing the beds to prepare the area for sowing and had sought clarification on which beds were to be replaced.

It was suggested that the 3 beds on the corner at the Pit Wheel be removed and the beds directly in front of the Pit Wheel be retained.

In addition there was a formal flower bed at the top of Woodlands Avenue which could also be removed and replaced with wild flowers.

RESOLVED that Durham County Council be instructed to remove the 3 flower beds on the corner at the Pit Wheel and the bed at the top of Woodlands Avenue and replace with wild flowers.

(6) 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.

(7) Dog Bags

The Clerk sought approval to purchase 10,000 economy dog poop bags at a cost of £136.68 inclusive of VAT and delivery.

RESOLVED that approval be granted for the purchase of 10,000 dog poop bags at a cost of £136.68.

(8) Christmas Cheer Packs

The Clerk reported that the Chair and Clerk had attended a meeting with H Jamieson, Manager of the Greenhills Centre. At the meeting a project to provide a Christmas cheer pack for elderly and vulnerable residents was discussed.

Members were advised that the aim of the project was to distribute 200 Christmas cheer packs. The packs could contain items such as a fleece blanket, hand warmers, tea/coffee, bed socks, hat/scarf/gloves, biscuits/chocolates, book/magazine etc. The cost of the pack could be any price per head depending on the content.

The packs would be prepared by Community Centre staff, volunteers and the Wheatley Hill “Mini Police”. Where possible the contents of the pack would be personalised.

The Meals on Wheels delivery service would be utilised as well as existing working partnerships to ensure the packs were fairly distributed. The “Mini Police” would assist with the making and distribution of the packs and the Christmas card to accompany it. By involving the Mini Police the project was truly inter-generational. Local PCSO’s would also be involved where practicable.

The elderly and vulnerable were often socially isolated and the project aimed to develop a social dimension which entailed visiting the elderly or vulnerable person in their own home and spending some time with them for a chat and a cuppa.

Whilst the cost of the pack could be any price depending on the content it was felt it should be a decent size and contain good quality products. The cost to supply the contents for the pack was £2,500.00.

The Chair and Clerk felt this was a worthwhile project which the Parish Council may wish to support. Members discussed that project at length and particularly the benefits of involving the “Mini Police” with older members of the community and the interaction that would take place between the different generations.

It was suggested that the Parish Council fund the cost of the contents of the packs to a maximum value of £2,500.00 from the Section 137 Budget.

Members stipulated that all the packs were to be distributed to residents living in Wheatley Hill.

RESOLVED that;

- (i) a donation of £2,500.00 be made towards the provision of 200 Christmas Cheer packs from the Section 137 Budget,
- (ii) the packs to be distributed only to residents living in Wheatley Hill.

9 PAYMENTS

RESOLVED that the payments listed be endorsed.

Wheatley Hill Parish Council – 10 October 2016

CHQ NO	PAYMENT TO	DETAIL	COST	VAT	TOTAL	
105219	Horns Garden Centre	Grass Seed	7.50	1.50	9.00	
105220	Cochranes Funeral Directors	Gravedigging Fees	80.00		80.00	
105221	J Thompson	Telephone Allowance	25.00		25.00	
105222	J Davies	2nd Instalment - Heating Allowance	100.00		100.00	
105223	J Thompson	Reimbursements	46.30		46.30	
105224	J Davies	Reimbursements	107.43	17.49	124.92	
105225	JRB Enterprise Ltd	Dog Bags	113.90	22.78	136.68	
105226	JAC's Accountancy Limited	Payroll Services - October 2016	14.00	2.80	16.80	
105227	npower	Electric - Heritage Centre	100.55	5.03	105.58	
105228	British Gas	Gas - Heritage Centre	143.13	7.15	150.28	
105229	North East Granit Co Ltd	Cemetery Supplies	192.00	38.40	230.40	
105230	Peterlee Fire Company Ltd	Fire Extinguisher Service	11.96	2.39	14.35	
Internet Banking	Payroll	Wages - October 2016	3834.46		3834.46	
Internet Banking	HMRC/DCC	PAYE/Pension - October 2016	2048.21		2048.21	
Direct Debit	Information Commission	Data Protection Registration	35.00		35.00	
Direct Debit	British Telecom	Telephone/Internet	56.26	11.25	67.51	
			TOTAL	6703.20	107.29	6810.49

10 RISK MANAGEMENT

The Clerk advised that there was nothing to report.

..... Signed

..... Dated