

THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE WHEATLEY HILL PARISH COUNCIL

HELD ON MONDAY 11 DECEMBER 2017

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

Apologies: Councillors E Goyns and Mrs M Nicholls

Also Present: County Councillor P Brookes

1 THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING held on 13 November 2017, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member, were approved and signed by the Chair.

2 PUBLIC QUESTIONS

The Chair welcomed Mr L Barnett and Mr T Stephenson to the meeting.

Mr Barnett explained they were present at the meeting to discuss problems at the allotment site.

Discussion ensued in relation to the following;

Fly-tipping – there had been an increase in the number of incidences of fly-tipping particularly on allotment number 14

Fire – fly-tipped rubbish on allotment number 14 was set on fire on 2 December 2017

Water – Youths had been turning on the water tap and leaving it running for long periods of time. There had been reports of water being taken from the tap by people who were not tenants on the site. A water bill in excess of £1,100 had recently been received.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

3 POLICE

The Clerk reported that since the last meeting there had been 72 incidents reported. This figure included 8 reports of anti-social behaviour, 3 criminal damage and 11 thefts.

Members were advised that anti-social behaviour was down 30% year to date and crime overall was down 9% from last month.

The Clerk reported that 2 Community Protection Warnings had been issued in relation to youths causing issues in the area.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

4 COUNTY COUNCILLORS REPORT

The Chair welcomed County Councillor P Brookes to the meeting.

Councillor Brookes provided Members with an update on the following;

Wheatley Hill Parish Council – 11 December 2017

- Front Street – meeting held 30 November 2017 – the Front Street was a priority and further meetings would be required
- School funding - new formula for calculating funding which could impact financially on smaller schools
- Introduction of universal credit and its impact
- Bus route 58 – there would be no changes to this service
- County Councillors Surgery – held 6 December 2017

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

5 CORRESPONDENCE

(1) Request for Financial Assistance - 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 £300.00 be made from the Section 137 Budget.

(2) Letters of Thanks/Christmas Cards

The Clerk reported the receipt of the following.

All Saints Church
Great North Air Ambulance
Wheatley Hill Heritage Society
Wheatley Hill Mothers Club
Wheatley Hill Constitutional Club

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

(3) Haswell & District Mencap Society

The Clerk reported the receipt of an invitation to the Mencap Carol service on 23 December 2017 at Durham Cathedral.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

(4) Greenhills Christmas Events

The Clerk reported that the following Christmas events would be held at the Greenhills Centre.

- 15 December 2017 – Elder Café Christmas Afternoon Tea
- 18 December 2017 - Tea Dance Christmas Party
- 19 December 2017 - Luncheon Club and Men's Cree Christmas Party

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

(5) Royal Garden Party 2018

The Clerk reported the receipt of correspondence from the County Durham Association of Local Councils advising they had been allocated 4 places to attend a Royal Garden Party in 2018.

RESOLVED that Councillor Mrs Stewart be nominated to attend the Royal Garden Party on behalf of Wheatley Hill Parish Council.

(6) Wheatley Hill Steering Group

The Clerk reported that Wheatley Hill Steering Group had requested the Parish Council to appoint a representative to the Steering Group.

RESOLVED that Councillor B Miller be authorised to attend the next meeting of the Steering Group to be held on 11 January 2018.

6 PLANNING

Application - DM/17/03741/FPA – Front porch, two-storey side and single-storey rear extensions at Sandown, 1 Sandwick Terrace, Wheatley Hill, DH6 3LN for Mr J Stutt

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 waiting list for allotments and stable blocks.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

(ii) Annual Rents

The Clerk reported that 4 rents were outstanding.

Members discussed the situation and suggested that the tenants who had failed to pay their rent be evicted with immediate effect.

RESOLVED that the tenants of allotments numbered 14, 15 and 16 and stable block 17 be evicted with immediate effect.

(iii) Allotment Number 14

The Clerk reported that the boundary fence at allotment number 14 had been removed and there had been numerous incidents of fly-tipping on the plot. On 2 December 2017 there was a fire on the plot.

The Clerk advised that the Neighbourhood Wardens and Police had been advised of the situation and a request had been made for the erection of cameras.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

(2) 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

Wheatley Hill Parish Council – 11 December 2017

by Wheatley Hill Community Association, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member.

Members were advised that Wheatley Hill Community Association incurred the following annual costs related to the provision of the Meals on Wheels service.

- Transport - £4,370.00
- Paid Staff – Meals on Wheels delivery - £4,186.00

The centre currently provided 22 meals in Wheatley Hill, 2 in Thornley, 6 in Wingate, 3 in Peterlee and 3 in Shotton.

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

- (i) a donation of £8,500 be made from the Section 137 Budget to Wheatley Hill Community Association to assist with the costs related to the provision of the Meals on Wheels service
 - (ii) the Parish Council continue with grass cutting at the children's play area during the summer months.
- (3) Meals on Wheels - Free Christmas Meal

The Clerk reported that Wheatley Hill Community Association would provide a free Christmas meal and small gift to Luncheon Club and Meals on Wheels customers on 19 December 2017.

Members were advised that 25 luncheon club members and 25 meals on wheels customers would receive a free lunch. The cost of the meal was £7.50 plus £2.50 for an accompanying small gift giving a total of £500.00.

If the Parish Council wished to contribute towards the costs customers would be advised of this by means of a card and/or word of mouth.

RESOLVED that a donation of £500.00 be made from the Section 137 Budget.

(4) Estimates of Expenditure 2018/2019

The Clerk provided details of the draft expenditure required by the Parish Council for the forthcoming financial year 2018/2019, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member.

Members were advised that the LCTRS grant for 2018/2019 was £20,143.00 which was a reduction of £1,202.00 from the previous year and the tax base had increased from 654.3 to 680.5.

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

Members discussed the options and suggested that as the Parish Council was in a financially stable position the minimum increase be made to the budget. A 1% increase on the precept would give a figure of £100,915.00 which together with the grant of £20,143.00 gave an overall budget of £121,058.00.

The Clerk took Members through the detailed budget and following discussion it was **RESOLVED** that Durham County Council be advised that the Parish Councils

Wheatley Hill Parish Council – 11 December 2017

precept request for 2018/2019 was £100,915.00 in addition to the grant of £20,143.00 giving a total amount payable of £121,058.00.

(5) Summer/Winter Bedding

The Clerk provided details of the Parish Councils current summer/winter bedding arrangements.

- Cemetery - Durham County Council provided the summer bedding plants for the Cemetery at a cost of £300.00.
- Pit Wheel - Formal Beds – Durham County Council supplied and maintained the formal beds at the Pit Wheel.
- Wild Flowers – Durham County Council provided 50sqms of wild flowers at Woodlands Avenue at a cost of £160.00 and 110sqms on the corner at the Pit Wheel at a cost of £352.00.
- Hanging Baskets – Durham County Council supplied, installed and watered 9 hanging baskets on the Front Street and 9 at the Aged Miners Bungalows.

It was suggested that Durham County Council be requested to provide a quotation for the supply only of bedding plants for the 2 formal beds at the Pit Wheel. The Parish Council would undertake the planting and maintenance.

Members discussed the options of retaining the wild flowers, re-instating the formal beds or re-instating the area to grass. Following discussion it was suggested that the Parish Council retain the wild flowers in 2018.

Members were advised that the 9 hanging baskets on the Front Street were positioned too high and were generally not visible, leading to complaints from residents that they were “a waste of time”. It was suggested that as there was proposals to improve the Front Street that the hanging baskets be removed in the interim period with a view to looking at the situation at a later date. With regard to the 9 baskets located on the Aged Miners Bungalows it was suggested that the Parish Council undertake the watering of the baskets.

RESOLVED that Durham County Council be requested to supply a quotation for the following;

- (i) Supply of summer bedding plants for the Cemetery
- (ii) Supply of bedding plants for the formal beds at the Pit Wheel
- (ii) 50sqms of wild flowers at Woodlands Avenue and 110sqms on the corner at the Pit Wheel
- (iv) supply only of 9 hanging baskets at the Aged Miners Bungalows.

(6) Front Street

The Clerk reported a meeting was held on 30 November 2017 to discuss the Front Street.

At the meeting concern was expressed regarding the lack of powers Durham County Council had in relation of issues including absentee landlords, the condition of properties and boarded up properties which were empty as well as occupied.

With regard to boarded up properties Members discussed the use of vinyl window images which could be used to improve the visual appearance of the empty properties.

Reference was made to previous action plans, multi-agency approaches and completed projects already undertaken to improve the area. It was agreed that the previous action plan for the area would be circulated.

It was suggested that a further meeting, to include a walkabout on the Front Street, be held in Wheatley Hill to allow Members and officers to see the problems first hand.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

(7) Dog Bags

The Clerk reported that 10,000 economy dog poop bags had been purchased at a cost of £136.68 inclusive of VAT and delivery.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

(8) Last Shift

The Clerk reported that Mr Tempest had intended being present at the meeting to provide Members with an update but had submitted his apologies.

Mr Tempest provided with a copy of the new structural survey to include the steel plinth. In addition he provided information related to the schematic arrangement of the statue, plinth and foundation, steel plinth and base plate, setting of the statue surround, reinforced concrete foundation and reinforced steel skeleton.

Details of correspondence between Mr Tempest, the Structural Engineer and Mr Lonsdale were also provided as well as an updated cost breakdown.

The Parish Council would assist with the preparation of the site and the digging of the foundation

RESOLVED

(9) Ex-Gratia Christmas Payments

The Chair suggested that an ex-gratia Christmas payment of £200 be made to J Davies and J Thompson.

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

9 PAYMENTS

RESOLVED that the payments listed be endorsed.

CHQ NO	PAYMENT TO	DETAIL	COST	VAT	TOTAL
105373	CDALC	Training - General Data Protection	30.00		30.00
105374	JRB	Dog Bags	113.90	22.78	136.68
105375	NWG Business	Water - Allotments	1093.91		1093.91

Wheatley Hill Parish Council – 11 December 2017

105376	J Miller	Telephone Allowance	25.00		25.00
105377	J Thompson	Telephone Allowance	25.00		25.00
105378	J Thompson	Reimbursements	38.43	5.00	43.43
105379	Wheatley Hill Community Nursery	Section 137 Donation	300.00		300.00
105380	J Davies	Reimbursements	59.99	10.00	69.99
105381	J Davies	Ex Gratia Christmas Payment	200.00		200.00
105382	J Thompson	Ex Gratia Christmas Payment	200.00		200.00
105383	Wheatley Hill Community Association	Section 137 Donation	500.00		500.00
105384	JAC's Accountancy Limited	Payroll Services - December 2017	14.00	2.80	16.80
105385	CDS Security & Fire Services	Call out Charge	79.00	15.80	94.80
Internet Banking	Payroll	Wages - December 2017	4086.53		4086.53
Internet Banking	HMRC/DCC	PAYE/Pension - December 2017	2535.20		2535.20
Direct Debit	British Telecom	Telephone/Internet	45.74	9.15	54.89
Invoice 7	Co-Op Bank	Service and Commission Charges	9.70		9.70
			TOTAL	9,356.40	65.53
					9,421.93

10 RISK MANAGEMENT

The Clerk advised there was nothing to report.

11 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

(1) Street Light

Councillor Stogdale reported that the street light number 49 was out.

RESOLVED that the matter be reported to Durham County Council.

(2) Overhanging Trees – Office Street - B1279

Councillor Stogdale reported overhanging trees and bushes on the public footpath on the B1279 leaving Wheatley Hill and heading towards Thornley Crossings.

RESOLVED that the matter be reported to Durham County Council.

..... Signed

..... Dated