

**THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE WHEATLEY HILL PARISH COUNCIL
HELD ON MONDAY 13 JANUARY 2020**

Present: Councillor J Miller (Chair)
Councillors B Miller, L Stewart,
C Stogdale and L White

Apologies: Councillors E Carr, E Goyns and M Goyns

- 1** The Minutes of the last meeting held on 9 December 2019 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 Carr who was present at the meeting to discuss the boulders located at the allotments.

Mr Carr stated that he appreciated why the Parish Council had installed the boulders and understood the problems associated with flytipping at the site and the costs involved.

Mr Carr explained that the boulders presented difficulties for tenants to access their plots other than on foot. Tenants could request the Parish Council to move the boulders to allow access, but this had to be planned and wasn't an easy task. Tenants felt that the gates installed at the entrance to the site worked well and there had been no flytipping since they were erected. Mr Carr offered to install a set of gates in place of the boulders which he suggested could be used elsewhere in the village.

The Chair suggested that consideration of this request be deferred to the next meeting of the Parish Council to be held on 10 February 2020.

3 POLICE

Members were advised that 127 incidents had been reported to the Police which included 14 reports of anti-social behaviour, 1 criminal damage, 4 burglaries and 8 vehicle crimes.

Compared to last month crime had increased by 27% and anti-social behaviour was down 11%.

Members were advised that PC Stuart Dawson was the new Beat Officer for Wheatley Hill.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

4 COUNTY COUNCILLORS REPORT

County Councillor J Grant submitted her apologies and provided an update on the following issues:-

- The Avenue
- Streetlight – Woodlands Avenue
- Potholes – East View
- Off-Road Bikes and Quads
- New Housing – Meadow View
- Doctors Surgery – Car Park

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

5 CORRESPONDENCE

(1) Christmas Card

The Clerk reported the receipt of a Christmas card from Wheatley Hill Heritage Society.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

(2) Believe Housing

The Clerk reported that the Chair had been invited to attend a meeting with Believe Housing on 30 January 2020 to discuss proposed works in the village.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

(3) Wheatley Hill Steering Group

The Clerk reported that the next meeting of the Wheatley Hill Steering Group would be held on 6 February 2020 at 1pm in Wheatley House.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

6 PLANNING

Applications

DM/19/03819/FPA – Construction of two detached dormer dwellings (revised application) at Greenhills Farm Cottage, Wheatley Hill, Durham DH6 3QS for Mr and Mrs Horn

The Clerk reported that the applicants had attended a meeting of the Parish Council in October 2019 where they had sought the support of the Parish Council to strengthen their application.

Mrs Horn had advised Members that Durham County Council had indicated they would not support the application as it was considered to be development within the open countryside, was in an unsustainable location and without adequate justification being contrary to guidance contained in the national planning policy framework.

RESOLVED that Durham County Council be advised that the Parish Council supported the application.

DM/19/03759/FPA – 23 dwellings including new access road with visitor parking, pedestrian link, new drainage and landscaping at land at Meadow View, Wheatley Hill for Dere Street Homes Ltd

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) Allotment 7

The Clerk reported that the former tenant of allotment 7 had contacted the Parish Council to express his concern in relation to the termination of his tenancy, details of which were given to Members.

RESOLVED that that information given, be noted.

(2) Budget Setting 2020/2021

The Clerk reported that Members had previously been provided with figures related to the Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme (LCTRS) grant and tax base for the financial year 2020/2021.

The Clerk advised that in previous years the Parish Council had used reserves to keep the precept low. Members were advised that as a result of the decrease in the LCTRS grant and an increase in the tax base the Parish Council could increase the budget whilst retaining a standstill Band D charge to residents. By keeping a standstill Band D charge the Parish Councils precept would increase by 6.79%.

Members had therefore agreed a 6.79% increase to the precept and the Clerk had prepared a detailed budget based on this, a copy of which was circulated to each Member.

As part of the budget process Members considered the burial and allotment fees and suggested that they be retained at their current levels.

The Clerk took Members through the budget and advised that the Parish Council required £127,507 for the 2020/2021 financial year. It was suggested that the Parish Council use £4,489 of reserves to provide a precept of £108,252 which together with the grant of £14,766 gave a total of £127,507.

RESOLVED that; -

- (i) the Parish Council set a budget of £127,507 for the 2020/2021 financial year
- (ii) approval be granted to use £4,489 of reserves to give a precept request of £108,252
- (iii) Durham County Council be advised that the Parish Councils precept request for 2020/2021 was £108,252 in addition to a grant of £14,766 giving a total of £123,018.

(3) 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 at the Greenhills Centre, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member.

Members were advised of the costs incurred by Wheatley Hill Community Association to provide the Meals on Wheels service as well as the take up from residents from Wheatley Hill.

The Parish Council had been providing financial support for the Meals on Wheels service since 2013 and following a lengthy discussion it was **RESOLVED** that no provision be made within the 2020/21 budget to assist with the Meals on Wheel service.

(4) Community Defibrillator

The Clerk reported that a quotation was being sought for the installation of the defibrillator in the Cemetery.

The Clerk advised that once the defibrillator was installed and registered free awareness training would be provided by the Community First Responder team, possibly at the Community Centre.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

(5) Off-Road Bikes and Quads

The Clerk reported details of an incident where the grassed area at the Pit Wheel had been damaged by off-road bikes and quads.

The Police had advised they were aware of the incident which had been caused by off-road bikes, quads and road legal vehicles. The Police had been given the vehicle registration of a vehicle however, the number plates were stolen and had been put on a different vehicle to cause low level crime.

It was reported that incidences involving off-road vehicles were becoming a common occurrence throughout the area. The local Policing team had recently used a SelectaDNA spray in Shotton.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

(6) Wordsworth Avenue – Racecourse Fencing

The Clerk reported damage to the racecourse fencing at Wordsworth Avenue. The Parish Council had been advised that the damage was caused by a vehicle that had crashed into the fence. Believe Housing were in the process of obtaining quotations for its replacement.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

(7) Sycamore Tree – Cemetery

The Clerk reported that a large Sycamore tree in the Cemetery was diseased and had to be removed at a cost of £500.

A replacement tree would be planted as soon as possible.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

9 PAYMENTS

The following schedule of payments was circulated together with figures of all income and expenditure as at 31 December 2019.

CHQ NO	PAYMENT TO	DETAIL	COST	VAT	TOTAL
105663	DESTROYED				
105664	Anglian Water Business	Water - Allotments	46.25		46.25
105665	npower	Electric - Heritage Centre	229.99	11.50	241.49
105666	J Thompson	Telephone Allowance	25.00		25.00
105667	J Thompson	Reimbursements	29.39	4.42	33.81
105668	British Gas	Gas - Heritage Centre	679.95	34.78	714.73

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105669	J Dent		Skip Hire		220.00	44.00	264.00
105670	JAC's Accountancy Limited		Payroll Services - January 2020		15.40	3.08	18.48
105671	S K Home Improvements		Removal of Tree - Cemetery		500.00		500.00
Internet Banking	Payroll		Wages - January 2020		4,453.34		4,453.34
Internet Banking	HMRC/DCC		PAYE/Pension - January 2020		2,795.51		2,795.51
Direct Debit	British Telecom		Telephone/Internet		45.83	9.16	54.99
Direct Debit	O2		Chairs Mobile Telephone		25.62	5.12	30.74
Invoice 32	Co-Op Bank		Service and Commission Charges		11.45		11.45
					TOTAL	9,077.73	112.06
							9,189.79

RESOLVED that the information given, be received and the payments be approved.

10 RISK MANAGEMENT

There was nothing to report.

11 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

(1) Doctors Surgery - Car Park

At the last meeting Members reported that parking at the Doctors surgery was becoming increasingly difficult and patients attending the surgery were often unable to get parked.

It was reported that residents had been seen using the car park at the surgery when shopping at the Co-op food store.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

(2) Dog Fouling

Members reported the increasing problem of dog fouling outside the school. It was suggested that the school be provided with a supply of dog bags.

RESOLVED that the dog fouling be reported to Durham County Council and the school be provided with a supply of dog bags.

(3) Pavement Parking - Wordsworth Avenue

Members reported cars parked on the pavements at Wordsworth Avenue.

The parked cars caused a hazard and obstruction to pedestrians, forcing them to step off the pavement into the road. The cars restricted the width of the pavement, which made it difficult for anyone with a pushchair or wheelchair to pass safely. The cars could also damage the pavement.

RESOLVED that the matter be reported to the Police.

..... Signed

..... Dated