

**THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE WHEATLEY HILL PARISH COUNCIL  
HELD ON MONDAY 9 MARCH 2020**

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

**Apologies:** Councillors E Carr and M Goyns

Prior to the commencement of business, the Chair asked Members to observe a minute's silence as a mark of respect following the death of Councillor E Goyns

**1** The Minutes of the last meeting held on 10 February 2020 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 POLICE**

Members were advised that since the last meeting the following incidents had been reported; 17 anti-social behaviour, 3 criminal damage and 2 vehicle crimes.

The Police had advised that action would be taken against youths identified as being involved in anti-social behaviour.

The Police Neighbourhood Newsletter for March was circulated to Members.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

**4 COUNTY COUNCILLORS REPORT**

County Councillor P Brookes provided an update on the following.

- Durham County Councils proposed investment in Leisure Centre's throughout the County
- Details of funding for town and village regeneration projects
- Local planning applications
- Key strategic projects – building on the work undertaken on the Front Street
- Selective Licensing

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

**5 CORRESPONDENCE**

(1) Letter of Thanks

The Clerk reported the receipt of a letter of thanks from Mr G Tempest.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

(2) Requests for Financial Assistance

(i) Wheatley Hill “Afternoon Out Club”

The Clerk reported the receipt of a request for financial assistance from the Wheatley Hill “Afternoon Out Club”.

RESOLVED that a donation of £87.99 be made from the Section 137 Budget.

(ii) Wheatley House Senior Citizens Club

The Clerk reported the receipt of a request for financial assistance from the Wheatley Hill Senior Citizens Club.

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

(iii) Wheatley Hill Disabled Club

The Clerk reported the receipt of a request for financial assistance from the Wheatley Hill Disabled Club.

RESOLVED that consideration of the application be deferred and the applicant be requested to provide further information.

(iv) Wheatley Hill No 2 Allotments Limited

The Clerk reported the receipt of a request for financial assistance from the Wheatley Hill No 2 Allotments Limited.

RESOLVED that no donation be made.

(3) Durham Miners’ Gala – 11 July 2020

The Clerk reported the receipt of correspondence from the Durham Miners’ Association requesting the Parish Council to support the 136th Durham Miners’ Gala by placing an advert in the Gala Souvenir Brochure.

Members were advised that a message of support, up to a maximum of 25 words, cost £45.00.

RESOLVED that the Parish Council support the Durham Miners’ Gala and place a message of support in the Souvenir Brochure at a cost of £45.00.

(4) East Durham Association of Parish & Town Councils

The Clerk reported that the next meeting of the East Durham Association of Parish & Town Councils would be held on 10 March 2020.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

6 PLANNING

There were no planning matters.

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**

**(i) Boulders**

The Clerk reported that Mr L Carr had installed a set of gates at the allotments and the boulders had been removed.

**RESOLVED** that the information given, be noted.

**(ii) Application**

The Clerk reported the receipt of an application for an allotment.

**RESOLVED** that application 2/2020 be accepted onto the waiting list for an allotment.

**(2) Community Defibrillator**

The Clerk reported that the defibrillator and cabinet had been added to the Councils insurance policy. The cost per annum would be approximately £15.

Members were advised that the North East Ambulance Service were holding a free training session on how to access and use the defibrillator and carry out effective CPR on 21 April 2020 at 10am in the Community Centre.

**RESOLVED** that the information given, be noted.

**(3) Internal Audit 2020**

The Clerk reported that the Internal Audit would be undertaken on 18 April 2020 by Mr G Fletcher.

**RESOLVED** that the information give, be noted.

**(4) Policies and Procedures**

The Clerk reported that a review had been undertaken of the Councils Risk Management Policy and Risk Management Strategy.

A review has also been undertaken of the following policies and procedures and where necessary minor amendments were made.

Internal Audit Policy  
FOI Publication Scheme  
Data Protection Policy  
Public Participation Policy  
Equal Opportunities Policy  
Public Filming, Recording and Reporting at Council Meetings  
Health and Safety Policy  
Grants and Donations Policy  
Complaints Policy  
Fraud and Corruption Policy  
Child Protection Policy  
Standing Orders  
Financial Regulations  
Code of Conduct

**Social Media and Electronic Communication Policy**

**RESOLVED** that the information given, be noted.

**(5) Seats – Front Street**

The Clerk reported that County Councillor J Grant had advised that she had received a request from the Police to remove the seats located on the Front Street near the industrial estate. The Police had reported problems related to youths congregating at the seats and causing anti-social behaviour.

Durham County Council had agreed to the removal of the seats and the Parish Council had requested they be re-located to the Cemetery.

**RESOLVED** that the information given, be noted.

**(6) Believe Housing**

The Chair provided a report following a meeting with Believe Housing on 27 February 2020 to discuss the following issues in Wheatley Hill.

- **Wordsworth Avenue**

Believe advised that Durham County Council's Highways had been asked for their advice on blocking off the road at the top of Wordsworth Avenue and creating a small turning circle. Highways had advised that it was unlikely residents would support this proposal. Believe would now start a consultation process with residents to ascertain their views on the proposal and seek costs for the scheme.

- **Old Council Depot Site**

Believe were obtaining costs to clear the land, remove the fence and landscape the area.

- **Dodds Close**

The Chair advised the meeting that the Parish Council had suggested planting trees and shrubs on the grassed area, and it was hoped that the Woodland Trust, amongst others could help with this. Believe agreed to contact Durham County Council's tree team to get more information.

The Chair had also reported that the Parish Council had three boulders that could be located at Dodds Close to prevent, or at least deter access to the grassed area. County Councillor L Hovvels agreed to contact Highways to see if this would be allowed.

Members were advised that since the meeting arrangements had been made for a site visit on 13 March 2020 to discuss the siting of boulders. Representatives from Durham County Council, the Parish Council, Believe Housing and the Police would be in attendance.

- **Play Park Opposite Sure Start**

The Chair advised the meeting that the Parish Council were interested, in principle, in adopting an area of land opposite Sure Start for a play park. However, no decision would be taken before further consultation with neighbouring properties was undertaken.

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Members thanked the Chair for the report and following discussion it was **RESOLVED** that the information given, be noted and further developments be awaited.

### (7) Dispensation for Extension for Non-Attendance

The Clerk reported the receipt of a request from Councillor E Carr asking Members to consider an application for an extension to the six-month period of her non-attendance at meetings due to ill health.

Members were advised that Section 85 of the Local Government Act 1972 stated that if a Member of a Local Authority failed throughout a period of six consecutive months, from the date of his or her last attendance, to attend any meeting of the authority, he or she shall, unless the failure was due to some reason approved by the authority before the expiry of that period, cease to be a Member of the Authority.

It was reported that Councillor Carr had not attended a Council or Committee meeting since October 2019, and consequently would cease to be a Member of the Council in April 2020, unless the Council approved the reason for the failure to attend before that date.

**RESOLVED** that the failure to attend by reason of illness be approved until Councillor Carr was well enough to return.

### (8) Date of Next Meeting

The Clerk reported that the next meeting of the parish Council was scheduled to be held on 13 April 2020 which was a Bank Holiday.

**RESOLVED** that the next meeting of the Parish Council be held on 6 April 2020

## 9 PAYMENTS

The following schedule of payments was circulated together with figures of all income and expenditure as at 29 February 2020.

CHQ NO	PAYMENT TO	DETAIL	COST	VAT	TOTAL
105679	CDS Security & Fire	Callout Charge	85.00	17.00	102.00
105680	Todds Highway Maintenance	Road Planings	260.00	52.00	312.00
105681	J Thompson	Telephone Allowance	25.00		25.00
105682	J Thompson	Reimbursements	39.61	1.46	41.07
105683	Durham Miners' Gala Brochure	Section 137 Donation	45.00		45.00
105684	G Tempest - Wheatley Hill "Afternoon Out Club"	Section 137 Donation	87.99		87.99
105685	Wheatley House Senior Citizens Club	Section 137 Donation	100.00		100.00
105686	JAC's Accountancy Limited	Payroll Services - March 2020	15.40	3.08	18.48
105687	Durham County Council	Machine Fuel	111.37	22.27	133.64
Internet Banking	J Dent	Skip Hire	230.00	46.00	276.00
Internet Banking	Durham County Council	Machine Repairs	301.24	60.25	361.49
Internet Banking	J Davies	Reimbursements	219.84	40.54	260.38

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Internet Banking	Payroll		Wages - March 2020			4,453.54		4,453.54
Internet Banking	HMRC/DCC		PAYE/Pension - March 2020			2,795.31		2,795.31
Direct Debit	British Telecom		Telephone/Internet			45.95	9.19	55.14
Direct Debit	O2		Chairs Mobile Telephone			25.62	5.12	30.74
Invoice 34	Co-Op Bank		Service and Commission Charges			9.40		9.40
						<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>8,850.27</b>	<b>256.91</b>
								<b>9,107.18</b>

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

**10 RISK MANAGEMENT**

The Clerk reported that a review had been undertaken of the Councils Risk Management Policy and Risk Management Strategy.

**11 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

**(1) Dodds Close**

Members reported a car that was continually parking on the grassed area at Dodds Close.

**RESOLVED** that the matter be reported to Durham County Council.

**(2) Industrial Estate**

Members reported that the fence to the rear of the industrial estate had fallen and was covering the path.

**RESOLVED** that the matter be reported to Durham County Council.

..... Signed

..... Dated