

**THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE WHEATLEY HILL PARISH COUNCIL  
HELD REMOTELY ON 11 MAY 2020**

**Present:** Councillor J Miller (Chair)  
Councillors M Goyns, L Stewart  
and L White

**Apologies:** Councillors E Carr, B Miller and C Stogdale

Prior to the commencement of business, the Clerk advised that this meeting was being held remotely via ZOOM in accordance with The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020.

**1** The Minutes of the last meeting held on 17 April 2020 a copy of which had been circulated to each Member, were approved and signed by the Chair.

**2 PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

No public joined the meeting.

**3 POLICE**

Members were advised that since the last meeting there had been 87 reported incidents which included 4 anti-social behaviour, 3 criminal damage and 2 vehicle crimes.

Year to date anti-social behaviour and crime were down 41% and 14% respectively.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

**4 COUNTY COUNCILLORS REPORT**

County Councillor L Hovvels provided an update on the following issues;-

- Attempted theft of the Pit Pony on the A181 roundabout
- Covid 19 referrals to Durham County Council Hubs
- East Durham Area Action Partnership funding for the Greenhills Centre and Wheatley Hill Covid 19 group
- Neighbourhood Budget funding for the Primary School breakfast and teatime clubs
- Support offered to the community by J Chandy

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

**5 CORRESPONDENCE**

Councillor M Goyns expressed her thanks for the flowers, cards and support she received following the death of her husband Councillor E Goyns.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

**6 PLANNING**

There were no planning matters.

**7 HEAD GROUNDPERSONS REPORT**

The Clerk reported that due to the Covid 19 pandemic restrictions only essential work had been undertaken in the Cemetery since the last meeting, details of which were outlined to Members.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

**8 CLERK'S REPORT**

**(1) Covid - 19 Pandemic - Update**

The Clerk provided an update on the following matters associated with the Covid 19 pandemic and the measures implemented by the Parish Council.

- Staff
- Cemetery
- Website

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

**(2) Allotments - Application**

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

RESOLVED that application 5/2020 be accepted onto the waiting list for an allotment.

**(3) Annual Financial Report**

The Clerk provided details of the financial position of the Parish Council at the end of the 2019/2020 financial year.

Information related to the reconciliation of balances, the balance sheet, Section 137 donations and the Parish Councils finances as at 31 March 2020, were outlined to Members.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

**(4) Internal Audit Report for the Year Ending 31 March 2020**

The Clerk reported the receipt of the internal audit report for 2019/2020 undertaken by Mr G Fletcher.

Members were advised that every smaller authority in England that received either gross income or expenditure exceeding £25,000 must complete Part 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) at the end of each financial year. The AGAR was made up of 3 sections along with an annual internal audit report which was to be completed by the Parish Council's independent internal auditor, who gave an opinion of the Parish Council's internal controls, details of which were outlined to Members.

The internal audit concluded that all the key controls contained within the internal audit section of the AGAR were examined and found to be working satisfactory.

RESOLVED that the internal audit report for 2019/2020 be accepted.

(5) Annual Governance and Accountability Return for the Year Ending 31 March 2020

Consideration was given to a report prepared by the Clerk which reviewed the effectiveness of the council's internal controls and supported the Annual Governance Statement, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member.

The Clerk proceeded to take Members through Section 1, Annual Governance Statement, which was approved and then Section 2, Statement of Accounts which was also approved.

**RESOLVED** that Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return for the year ended 31 March 2020, be approved and signed by the Chair

(6) Greenhills Centre

The Clerk reported that at the last meeting Members were advised that due to Covid 19 restrictions the Greenhills Centre was closed.

The Parish Council had allocated £15,000 in the 2020/2021 budget to fund the provision of recreational activities, to be delivered by Wheatley Hill Community Association (WHCA) at the Greenhills Centre, on behalf of the Parish Council during school holidays. As WHCA were unable to deliver the planned activities it was agreed that the payment of any money be deferred.

Members discussed the meals on wheels service being provided by the Greenhills Centre and the financial difficulties they were experiencing due to the restrictions. The Centre had received emergency funding which would enable them to maintain the meals on wheels service for 12 weeks, however, it was not expected that they would be able to operate normally for some time.

It was suggested that if restrictions continued and due to financial difficulties, the meals on wheels service was at risk the Parish Council would consider providing financial assistance to maintain the service in the short term.

**RESOLVED** that the Greenhills Centre be advised of the position regarding financial assistance.

(7) Emergency Foodbank

The Chair reported that the Covid 19 Wheatley Hill group had received a request for an emergency food parcel over the weekend. This request had highlighted the lack of provision in place to help vulnerable families over a weekend.

Members were advised that measures had now been put in place to ensure that an emergency supply of food would be held at the co-op for use on such occasions.

The Chair advised that there were adequate food stocks and supplies available for weekend referrals and funding was available to maintain stocks for the foreseeable future.

It was suggested that if required the Parish Council would provide a financial donation of up to £500 to replenish stocks and ensure the most vulnerable in the village received the necessities they required over a weekend.

**RESOLVED** that the Parish Council give a commitment to provide a financial donation of up to £500 to ensure an adequate supply of stock was maintained to provide emergency food parcels over a weekend.

(8) Pit Pony – A181 Roundabout

The Clerk reported that an attempt had been made to steal the pit pony located on the A181 roundabout.

Members were advised that the horse was recovered by a local resident and there was little damage. The horse was being securely stored and would be re-sited as soon as possible.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

9 PAYMENTS

The following schedule of payments was circulated together with figures for all income and expenditure as at 30 April 2020.

CHQ NO	PAYMENT TO	DETAIL	COST	VAT	TOTAL
Internet Banking	Four Seasons Florist	Flowers	30.00		30.00
Internet Banking	J Thompson	Telephone Allowance	25.00		25.00
Internet Banking	J Thompson	Reimbursements	83.18	10.09	93.27
Internet Banking	North East Regional Employers Organisation	Annual Subscription	295.00	59.00	354.00
Internet Banking	JAC's Accountancy Limited	Annual Pension Report	33.00	6.60	39.60
Internet Banking	JAC's Accountancy Limited	Payroll Services - May 2020	22.00	4.40	26.40
Internet Banking	Councillors M Goyns & L Stewart	Attendance Allowance	434.56		434.56
Internet Banking	Payroll	Wages - May 2020	4,478.62		4,478.62
Internet Banking	HMRC/DCC	PAYE/Pension - May 2020	2,813.06		2,813.06
Direct Debit	British Telecom	Telephone/Internet	45.83	9.16	54.99
Direct Debit	O2	Chairs Mobile Telephone	26.31	5.26	31.57
Invoice 36	Co-Op Bank	Service and Commission Charges	13.15		13.15
		<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>8,299.71</b>	<b>94.51</b>	<b>8,394.22</b>

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

10 RISK MANAGEMENT

There was nothing to report.

..... Signed

..... Dated