

**THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE WHEATLEY HILL PARISH COUNCIL
HELD ON 10 JANUARY 2022**

Present: Councillor J Miller (Chair)
Councillors E Carr, J Collingwood, M Goyns,
J Huntington, B Miller, C Stogdale, L White

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor L Stewart.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

3 The Minutes of the last meeting held on 13 December 2021 a copy of which had been circulated to each Member, were approved and signed by the Chair.

4 PUBLIC QUESTIONS

The Chair welcomed 3 residents to the meeting.

The first resident advised that they were present at the meeting to discuss concerns related to the following issues.

- Potholes in the road at The Avenue.
- Paths at The Avenue were churned up and in a poor state of repair.
- Street Lighting – A streetlight had been out for a considerable length of time on Thornley Road.
- A steel pole was lying on the path at Vincents Corner.
- The white lines along Thornley Road were all in need of a refresh.
- Speeding along Thornley Road.

The Chair advised that the Police were undertaking a speed watch in Wheatley Hill and Thornley Road could be added to the list, the other issues would be referred to the relevant sections at Durham County Council.

A further two residents advised that they were present at the meeting to discuss the ongoing problem of wheeled bins being stolen from residential properties in Wheatley Hill.

The resident advised that the theft of wheeled bins in Wheatley Hill had been on-going for some time. Members were advised that on Christmas day the resident had three wheeled bins stolen from their property. The bins were taken to Gore Burn wood and set on fire.

The residents both confirmed that the thefts were reported to the Police. Those responsible were known to the Police and had previously been taken to court. It was felt unfair that residents had to pay to have their bins replaced when they were stolen, especially when it was happening on a regular basis.

It was suggested that the County Council be asked to provide figures for the number of bins that had been requested by residents in Wheatley Hill following the theft of their original bin. It was also suggested that Durham County Council be asked if they had insurance to cover the cost of the bins that were being stolen.

The Chair agreed to contact the Police and ask for some additional work to be undertaken

around Miners Villas and Gore Burn with the possibly of introducing Dispersal Orders.

The Chair thanked the residents for their attendance at the meeting.

RESOLVED that the Information given, be noted.

5 POLICE

The Police reported that between 1 December 2021 to 1 January 2022 there had been 6 reports of anti-social behaviour (ASB), 3 criminal damage and 1 criminal damage to a vehicle.

The Police had attended the Christmas event at the Greenhills Centre as well as the Mothers Club meetings and the Scouts.

The Police had plans to work alongside the traffic unit to tackle concerns around speeding and off-road vehicles and were looking for volunteers from the community to help with a speed watch campaign in Wheatley Hill.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

6 COUNTY COUNCILLORS REPORT

Councillor J Miller provided an update on the following parish and county wide issues.

- HGV's leaving the petrol station via Wingate Lane were causing damage to parked cars as well as damaging the road itself. Durham County Council's Highways section had been asked to stop HGV's entering Wingate Lane.
- Meadow View – an update had been requested on the boundary fence at the new bungalows. The developer had agreed to install a fence, but to date it had not been erected.
- Front street flats – an update had been requested on safeguarding concerns that had been raised with Durham County Council, the Police and the Police and Crime Commissioner.
- A meeting was held with Inspector Smith to discuss issues related to the flats on the front street. A CASBRAC meeting had been held to discuss issues related to the flats and an explanation was given as to why County Councillors had not been invited to attend. It was agreed that there would be an increase in street warden investigations, CCTV would be installed, and information would be shared with the Police.
- Local emergency plan - Following storm Arwen, the County Counillors intended to create a local emergency plan for the Division. The local plan would be separate from the countywide plan. A meeting was held on 4 January 2022 with parish councils, community centres and community groups to present the idea and share what had been done to date. Feedback was positive and each group agreed to report back to their respective groups to build on this in the upcoming months.
- The Police and Crime Commissioner had appointed Andrew Patterson as an anti-social behaviour champion. It was intended to hold a site visit in the area and highlight the hotspots.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

7 CORRESPONDENCE

(1) Letters of Thanks

The Clerk reported the receipt of thanks from J Davies, D Lamb, J Thompson and the History Club.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

(2) Member Briefing Sessions

The Clerk reported the receipt of an invitation for Members to attend a free online briefing session on Member Interests on 18 January 2022 and Neighbourhood Planning on 1 February 2022.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

8 PLANNING

There were no planning matters.

9 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.

10 CLERK'S REPORT

(1) Allotments

The Clerk reported that a site visit was needed to decide on a course of action for plots 17 and 19 which were vacant. Due to the size of the vacant area, it had previously been suggested that a boundary fence be erected, and it be divided into plots with paths to separate the plots.

Following discussion it was RESOLVED that a boundary fence be erected around the vacant plots with the intention of then dividing the area into plots separated by paths.

(2) Durham City Youth Project

The Clerk reported that Members had previously agreed to fund Durham City Youth Project (DCYP) to deliver weekly youth sessions in Wheatley Hill. The cost of the project for 1 year was £7,646, including staff costs and room hire and was based on 2 sessions a week, one for juniors and one for seniors.

Youth provision in the village was a priority and Members had agreed to fund the project for a period of 6 months, including the 7 week trial period at the Greenhills for the juniors.

DCYP had provided positive feedback on the trial at the Greenhills and the seniors had been meeting at the workmen's club. However, moving forward an alternative venue was needed for both the juniors and seniors. It was suggested that Wheatley Hill primary school could be used for both sessions as they had the space to accommodate both groups. It was suggested that DCYP meet with the school to see if an agreement could be reached to use the school as a venue for both sessions.

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

(3) Changing facilities – Football Field

The Clerk reported that the order had been placed with Mac Container Company Limited for a 32x10 foot unit at a cost of £18,744 plus £3,124 VAT. Delivery was £895 plus Vat.

Members were advised that a 25% deposit of £4,686 had been paid to Mac containers and

confirmation of a delivery date was awaited.

Sunbelt Rentals would be supplying the trackway for the haulier to drive onto for delivery of the unit at a cost of £822 excl of VAT.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

(4) Local Emergency Plan

The Clerk reported that following storm Arwen the County Councillors intended to create a local emergency plan for the Division. The local plan would be separate from the countywide plan.

Members were advised that an initial meeting was held on 4 January 2022 with neighbouring parish councils, representatives from local community centres and community groups to present the idea and share what had been done to date. Feedback at the meeting was positive and each group agreed to report back to their respective groups.

It was suggested that each parish council allocate a specific amount in their annual budget for emergency planning. Following discussion, it was suggested that an amount of £1,000 be allocated for emergency planning in the 2022/23 budget.

RESOLVED that the information given be noted.

(5) Queens Platinum Jubilee

The Clerk reported that Members had previously been advised that beacons were being lit throughout the UK on 2 June 2022, to celebrate the Queens Platinum Jubilee.

Members had agreed, in principle, to light a beacon on 2 June 2022 and had approached the local primary school with the suggestion that this be undertaken as a joint project. The school had confirmed that they would like to take part and the school could be used as a venue for the beacon.

The Clerk advised that a gas fueled beacon would cost of £490 plus VAT.

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

(6) Dog bags

The Clerk reported that 10,000 economy dog bags had been purchased at a cost of £137.28 inclusive of VAT and delivery.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

(7) Moles

The Clerk had received reports of moles on the football field and in the Cemetery. Local companies were approached and a quotation of £7 per mole caught was received from DWP Joinery.

RESOLVED that the quotation received be accepted.

11 PAYMENTS

The following schedule of payments was circulated together with figures for all income and expenditure at 31 December 2021.

Wheatley Hill Parish Council – 10 January 2022

CHEQUE NO	PAYMENT TO	DETAIL	COST	VAT	TOTAL	
Direct Debit	British Gas	Gas - Heritage Centre	174.16	8.70	182.86	
Direct Debit	e-on Next	Electric - Heritage Centre	67.59	3.38	70.97	
Internet Banking	JRB Enterprises Limited	Dog Bags	114.40	22.88	137.28	
Internet Banking	J Davies	Reimbursements	143.64	27.14	170.78	
Internet Banking	J Thompson	Reimbursements	15.42	1.50	16.92	
Internet Banking	Durham County Council	10 Salt Bins	1,051.50	210.30	1,261.80	
Internet Banking	MKM	Machine Parts	9.54	1.91	11.45	
Internet Banking	MKM	Fencing - Allotments	297.01	59.40	356.41	
Internet Banking	MKM	Fencing - Allotments	232.23	46.45	278.68	
Internet Banking	MAC Container Company Limited	Changing Rooms	12,610.00	2,522.00	15,132.00	
Internet Banking	KBS Depot	Noticeboard	613.00	122.60	735.60	
Internet Banking	DWP Joinery Services	Mole Control - Cemetery and Football Field	140.00		140.00	
Internet Banking	Anglian Water Business	Water - Allotments	77.15		77.15	
Internet Banking	J Davies	2nd Instalment of Heating Allowance	100.00		100.00	
Internet Banking	J Thompson	Telephone Allowance	25.00		25.00	
Internet Banking	Payroll	Wages - January 2022	4,626.41		4,626.41	
Internet Banking	HMRC/DCC	PAYE/Pension - January 2022	2,808.69		2,808.69	
Internet Banking	JAC's Accountancy Limited	Payroll Services - January 2022	15.40	3.08	18.48	
Direct Debit	British Telecom	Telephone/Internet	26.97	5.40	32.37	
Invoice 56	Co-Op Bank	Service and Commission Charges	14.95		14.95	
			TOTAL	23,163.06	3,034.74	26,197.80

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

12 RISK MANAGEMENT

The Clerk advised that there was nothing to report.

13 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

(1) Quads and Off-Road Bikes

Members reported the following locations where quads and off-road bikes were causing a problem.

Front Street – Quads and off-road bikes racing up and down.

Greenhills Centre – Quad bikes had attempted to gain access to the grounds at the Greenhills Centre by ramming the main gates. When they were unable to gain access via the gates, they entered the grounds at the rear of the bungalows on Woodlands Avenue.

Watson Close – quad bikes had churned up and damaged the grassed area.

Pizza Nova – quad bikes had churned up and destroyed the grassed areas.

Wheatley Hill Parish Council – 10 January 2022

Scouts Hut – cement posts, in the lane next to the Scouts Hut, had been knocked down by quad bikes.

RESOLVED that the issues be reported to the Police.

(2) Patton Walk

Members reported that cars were parking on the grassed areas outside the bungalows at Patton Walk and churning up and damaging the grass.

RESOLVED that the matter be reported to Durham County Council.

(3) Dog Fouling

Members reported an increase in dog fouling throughout the village. It was pointed out that information related to those allowing their dogs to foul could be reported to Durham County Council for them to investigate.

RESOLVED that the information provided be forwarded to Durham County Council.

(4) Gore Burn

Members reported that storm Arwen had caused considerable damage at Gore Burn and several trees had come down.

RESOLVED that the matter be referred to Durham County Council.

..... Signed

.....Dated