

**THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE WHEATLEY HILL PARISH COUNCIL  
HELD ON 14 FEBRUARY 2022**

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

**Also Present:** County Councillor L Hovvels

**1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillors L Stewart and L White declared an interest in item number 9(5) – Land opposite Wheatley Hill Primary School.

- 2** The Minutes of the last meeting held on 10 January 2022 together with those of the special meeting held on 10 January 2022 copies of which had been circulated to each Member, were approved and signed by the Chair.

**3 PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

There was no public present at the meeting.

**4 POLICE**

The Police reported that between 1 January and 1 February 2022 there had been 5 reports of anti-social behaviour (ASB) and 4 reports of criminal damage.

The Police advised that Alexandra Terrace was a hotspot for ASB, and a multi-agency approach was planned to reduce the number of issues in this area.

The Police reported that the three main issues in Wheatley Hill were ASB, off road vehicles and speeding. They had visited Wheatley Hill Primary School to discuss these issues with pupils and consider ideas such as mini speed watch, leaflet making and handouts.

The Police had hoped to be present at this meeting but were still unable to attend face to face meetings but were arranging a PACT meeting on their Facebook page.

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

**5 COUNTY COUNCILLORS REPORT**

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

- Meeting held with the Police and the Crime Commissioner's Anti-social Behaviour Champion to discuss hotspot areas in the village.
- Meeting held with Believe Housing to discuss their plans for the wider area. County Councillors had raised issues about properties within Wheatley Hill. This would be a regular meeting and a positive move for the area.
- Quad bikes – There would be an action plan to deal with this on-going problem.
- CASBRAC meetings - County Councillors were concerned at being excluded from the process at various levels within the Police and County Council.
- Front Street flats – Request for an increase in visibility of Street Wardens. There was an open investigation and a request for better information sharing. It was hoped CCTV would be erected at the flats. A Health and safety advisor had carried out an assessment and new safety measures were being put in place. SOP had been added

to the addresses and information was being shared between the ASB team and Police. The Police would take positive action against known individuals.

- Funding had been agreed for the Royal British Legion Banner.
- Percy Street – Following a break in a property was boarded up. County Councillors had agreed funding for a long lens camera to be used in the area.
- Section 106 money was available from the bungalows at Nicholls Close.
- Full Council was scheduled to set Durham County Councils budget.

County Councillor L Hovvels referred to the problems associated with fires at Gore Burn and the County Councillors involvement with the foodbank.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

## 6 CORRESPONDENCE

### (1) Application for a Premises Licence – Warden Lodge

The Clerk reported the receipt of correspondence from Durham County Council advising of an application for a new premises licence at Warden Lodge, Durham Road, Wheatley Hill. The application was for live and recorded music (outdoors) Monday to Sunday 12pm to midnight, Performance of dance (outdoors) Monday to Sunday 12pm to midnight, late night refreshment (outdoors) Monday to Sunday 11pm to 1.30am and the sale of alcohol (on the premises) Monday to Sunday 10am to 1.30am.

Members expressed concern at the timings requested for outdoor drinking and live and recorded music and the impact this would have on nearby residential properties.

The Clerk advised that any representation the Parish Council made would need to be relevant to the 4 Licensing Objectives which were the Prevention of Crime and Disorder, Public Safety, Prevention of Public Nuisance and Protection of Children from Harm. Any representation that did not relate to the 4 Licensing Objectives would be deemed not relative.

Members expressed concern regarding the following issues:-

**Prevention of Public Nuisance -** Wheatley Hill had a record of anti-social behaviour/youths causing nuisance and this was often linked to alcohol abuse. A further establishment selling alcohol would exacerbate the problem. Residents living in the vicinity would suffer noise and disturbance if outdoor drinking was allowed until 1.30am. It would affect residents to the rear of Woodlands Avenue and Wingate Lane as it was the access road to Warden Lodge. People leaving the premises in the early hours of the morning would pass these properties, either on foot or in a vehicle, possibly whilst drunk and creating a disturbance. Warden Lodge was accessed via Wingate Lane. There was concern that additional vehicle movements in and out of the establishment would pose a road safety issue as well as a disturbance to nearby residential properties.

**Prevention of Crime and Disorder -** The premises were accessed by a track off Wingate Lane which was isolated. Residents living on Wingate Lane already suffered an elevated level of noise nuisance and anti-social behaviour, particularly on a weekend. Youths regularly parked up in vehicles, congregated and loitered on Wingate Lane to drink alcohol as the area was isolated and poorly lit. This leads to significant noise disturbance, nuisance, and disruption to residents. Residential gardens on Wingate Lane were often used as a toilet by drunken youths, leaving residents with a real sense of threat late at night.

The granting of a licence for these premises did not promote the licensing objectives

of Prevention of Public Nuisance and Prevention of Crime and Disorder.

RESOLVED that the concerns of the Parish Council be forwarded to the Licensing Authority with a request that the operating schedule be amended so the timings of outdoor drinking and music was restricted so as not to adversely affect residential amenity.

(2) Outdoor Theatre

The Clerk reported the receipt of correspondence from East Durham Trust which gave details of a static outdoor theatre coming to Wheatley Hill as part of a Wellbeing Festival. The work was called 'Take Ten' and was by a company called Fluid Motion. It was essentially swinging chairs that encouraged people to take 10 minutes out of the day while listening to music.

The event was touring locations in East Durham between 14 and 18 March 2022 and would be at the Greenhills Centre on 15 March 2022 between 11am and 5pm.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

(3) Peter Lee's Grave – Information Sign

The Clerk had previously reported a request from Wheatley Hill History Club to erect a new information board at the grave of Peter Lee. The History Club had provided a proof of the proposed sign, a copy of which was circulated to Members.

RESOLVED that an order be placed for an A3 information sign at a cost of £525 plus VAT.

(4) Area Action Partnership - Community Priorities 2022/2023

The Clerk reported the receipt of correspondence from Durham County Council which gave details of a consultation on the Area Action Partnership's (AAP) key priorities for 2022/2023.

The consultation would run until 11 March 2022 and aimed to find out what mattered most to communities. The results would be available from May and would be used to decide the priority themes for each AAP.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

7 PLANNING APPLICATION

DM/21/04092/FPA – Single storey side and rear wrap around extension with render finish at 105 Wordsworth Avenue, Wheatley Hill.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

8 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.

9 CLERK'S REPORT

(1) Allotments

(a) Fencing

The Clerk reported that the boundary fence at plots 15 and 16 had been damaged and blown down during storm Arwen. The tenants had repaired the fences and kindly donated the old un-damaged fencing to the Parish Council to re-use on plots 17 and 19. Quotations had been sought to replace the boundary fence at plots 17 and 19.

RESOLVED that the quotation of £2,560.70 plus VAT from MKM be accepted.

(b) Application 1/2022

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

RESOLVED that applicant 1/2022 be accepted onto the waiting list for an allotment.

(c) Plot 15

The Clerk reported that the tenant of plot 15 was seeking permission to install a hard standing on the plot to allow a car to be parked to allow for ease of access.

RESOLVED that consideration of this matter be deferred.

(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.

Members were advised that the Parish Council had paid DCYP £829 to fund youth sessions for a 7 week trial at the Greenhills. The trial was a success and the Parish Council agreed to fund the project for a further 6 months which would start 13 January 2022 and end on 9 June 2022. DCYP would not be charging room hire for January and February when they were based at the Greenhills.

At the last meeting it was reported that DCYP were looking for an alternative venue for both groups and Wheatley Hill Primary School was suggested. A meeting was held with DCYP, and the school and it was agreed that following the February half term holidays the school would host both the junior and senior sessions.

The cost for DCYP to deliver both sessions from 13 January to 9 June 2022 at Wheatley Hill Primary School was £2,487 plus £900 room hire giving a total of £3,387.

RESOLVED that DCYP be paid £3,387 to deliver youth sessions at Wheatley Hill Primary between 13 January and 9 June 2022.

(3) Changing facilities – Football Field

The Clerk reported that Mac Container Company attempted to deliver the changing rooms to the football field on 26 January 2022. Access to the football field was steep and as the ground was soaking the haulier was worried the truck would get stuck and therefore it was not possible to site the container. As a temporary measure Mr C Gregory kindly agreed to store the container at his premises until arrangements could be made to have the container sited.

As the ground where the container was to be placed was uneven it had been agreed that a concrete base was needed and this would be done as soon as possible

An application had been made to Durham County Council for the Section 106 money that had been awarded to the Parish Council and an amount of £20,420 was received.

**RESOLVED** that a letter of thanks be sent to Mr Gregory and further developments be awaited.

**(4) 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 and had approached Wheatley Hill Primary School with the suggestion that this be undertaken as a joint project. The school had confirmed the school could be used as the venue for the beacon.

The Clerk advised that two companies were approached 21CC Group and Bullfinch Gas Equipment. Both could supply a gas-fuelled beacon at a cost of £490 plus VAT. The only difference was the style of the beacon.

**RESOLVED** that an order be placed with 21CC Group for a Platinum Jubilee Gas-Fuelled beacon at a cost of £490 plus VAT.

**(5) Land Opposite Wheatley Hill Primary School**

Members were advised that Believe Housing had offered Wheatley Hill Primary School a piece of land opposite the school at a cost of £1,000.

The school were in the process of obtaining planning permission to convert the land into a car park. Quotations were also being sought to tarmac the area, erect fencing, and install dropped kerbs. It was suggested that the hooped perimeter fencing, used at Dodds Close, would provide a more robust fence than the wooden racecourse fencing usually installed.

**RESOLVED** that a contribution of £1,000 be made towards the project to convert the land opposite Wheatley Hill Primary School into a car park.

**(6) Salt Bins**

The Clerk reported that the Parish Council has purchased 10 salt bins. Bins were now located at the top of South View, the bottom of Henderson Avenue, the Doctors Surgery, and the Dentists, facing Cyprus View.

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

**(7) Updates**

**(a) Wheeled Bins**

The Clerk reported that following the last meeting Durham County Council were asked about the situation where residents were having to pay for wheeled bins that had been stolen from their properties.

Durham County Council had advised that they were aware of the disproportionate impact that could arise for households of repeated thefts, and for that reason had introduced a policy to limit the maximum annual cost to £20. This meant that if a resident had both bins stolen, or had one, and then another stolen six months later, the most they would pay was £20 for the first replacement bin, all others would be free of charge.

The County Council also salvaged bins and subject to availability could provide a replacement “used” but clean bin for £10.

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

(b) Gore Burn

The Clerk reported that following the last meeting the Chair had contacted Durham County Council regarding various problems and fallen trees at Gore Burn. The County Council had advised that their teams had been busy with Storm Arwen related issues but were now turning their attention to areas like Gore Burn.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

(c) Moles

The Clerk reported that 20 moles were caught on the football field and in the Cemetery at a cost of £140.

RESOLVED that the information given be noted.

10 MEMBER ISSUES

(1) Traffic Calming – Cemetery Road

Members referred to the chicane and speed hump on Cemetery Road and were concerned that vehicles were speeding over it. Motorists were using Moore and Shakespeare Street as a short cut to avoid the speed hump. Motorists had also been seen mounting the pavement to avoid the speed hump. The two bus stops in the immediate vicinity exacerbated the problem.

It was suggested that the chicane and speed hump should be removed as they did not help to slow the traffic and created more of a road safety problem.

RESOLVED that the matter be referred to Durham County Council with a request that a site meeting be held to discuss this issue further.

(2) Trees – South View

Members reported that several trees at South View were overgrown and overhanging onto the public footpath.

RESOLVED that the matter be reported to Durham County Council.

11 PAYMENTS

The following schedule of payments was circulated together with figures for all income and expenditure at 31 January 2022.

CHEQUE NO	PAYMENT TO	DETAIL	COST	VAT	TOTAL
Direct Debit	British Gas	Gas - Heritage Centre	282.50	14.12	296.62
Direct Debit	e-on Next	Electric - Heritage Centre	66.82	3.34	70.16
Internet Banking	Sunbelt Rentals	Trackway for Changing Rooms	822.00	164.40	986.40
Internet Banking	Durham County Council	Machine Repairs	855.71	171.11	1,026.82
Internet Banking	R C & C Gregory & Sons	Machine Fuel	86.88	4.34	91.22
Internet Banking	21CC Group Ltd	Queens Jubilee Beacon	490.00	98.00	588.00
Internet Banking	MkM	Fencing - Allotments	2,560.70	512.14	3,072.84

**Wheatley Hill Parish Council – 14 February 2022**

Internet Banking	J Thompson		Telephone Allowance		25.00		25.00
Internet Banking	Payroll		Wages - February 2022		4,626.61		4,626.61
Internet Banking	HMRC/DCC		PAYE/Pension - February 2022		2,808.49		2,808.49
Internet Banking	JAC's Accountancy Limited		Payroll Services - February 2022		15.40	3.08	18.48
Direct Debit	British Telecom		Telephone/Internet		26.97	5.40	32.37
Invoice 57	Co-Op Bank		Service and Commission Charges		12.40		12.40
					<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>12,679.48</b>	<b>975.93</b>
							<b>13,655.41</b>

**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 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

**RESOLVED** that under the provisions of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that confidential information would be disclosed.

**14 Wheatley Hill Community Association**

The Chair reported on discussions that were currently being held between Wheatley Hill Community Association and Wheatley Hill Primary School. It was hoped that both parties would be able to find a solution that would enable them to work together in partnership.

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

..... Signed

.....Dated