

THE MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE

WHEATLEY HILL PARISH COUNCIL

HELD ON MONDAY 12 MAY 2014

Present: Councillors Mrs E Carr, E Goyns, Mrs M Goyns,
B Maddison, J Miller, Mrs M Nicholls, M Nicholls,
and Mrs C Stogdale

Apologies: Councillor Mrs L Stewart

Also Present: Mr and Mrs Fletcher

1 ELECTION OF CHAIR

RESOLVED that Councillor M Nicholls be elected Chair of Wheatley Hill Parish Council for the ensuing year.

Councillor Nicholls accepted the office of Chair of Wheatley Hill Parish Council and thanked Members for their help and support. He thanked them for their confidence in him and stated that he would act in the best interests of the village and community over the forthcoming year.

2 APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIR

RESOLVED that Councillor Mrs E Carr be appointed Vice-Chair of Wheatley Hill Parish Council for the ensuing year.

3 APPOINTMENT OF INTERNAL AUDITOR

RESOLVED that Mr G Fletcher be appointed Internal Auditor to Wheatley Hill Parish Council for the ensuing year.

4 APPOINTMENT OF SCHOOL GOVERNORS

RESOLVED that Councillor Mrs C Stogdale be appointed to serve as School Governor to Wheatley Hill Primary School.

5 APPOINTMENT TO SUB-COMMITTEES

RESOLVED that the following appointments be made:-

Cemetery Sub-Committee
Councillors Mrs M Goyns, B Maddison and Mrs E Carr

Allotment Sub-Committee
Councillors B Maddison, M Nicholls and J Miller

6 REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES

RESOLVED that the following Members be appointed to serve as representatives of the Parish Council on the following external bodies for the forthcoming year:-

East Durham Association of Town and Parish Councils
Councillors Mrs M Goyns, E Goyns and J Miller

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County Durham Association of Local Councils
Councillors Mrs M Goyns and E Goyns

Citizens Advice Bureau
Councillor Mrs L Stewart

Durham Rural Community Council
Councillor Mrs L Stewart

7 DATE AND TIME OF ORDINARY MEETINGS OF WHEATLEY HILL PARISH COUNCIL

RESOLVED that meetings of Wheatley Hill Parish Council be held on the second Monday of each month commencing at 6.00pm, with the exception of August where no council meeting would be held due to recess. Meeting dates were subject to change with the consent of the Chair of the Parish Council.

8 THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING held on 7 April 2014, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member, were approved and signed by the Chair.

MATTERS ARISING

Minute Number 3 – Community Policing

Councillor Mrs Goyns reported that at the last meeting she reported the cars parked at the entrance to Johnson Estate and the Chair reported the cars parked in the vicinity of East View.

9 PUBLIC QUESTIONS

The Chair welcomed Mr and Mrs Fletcher of 14 Weardale Park, Wheatley Hill to the meeting.

Mr and Mrs Fletcher advised that they were present at the meeting to report an increase in fly tipping to the rear of Weardale Park.

The Chair advised that the Parish Council were aware of the fly tipping at this location. The information provided would be passed to the Street Wardens with a request for a site meeting.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

10 COMMUNITY POLICING

The Chair welcomed PC S Rowe to the meeting.

Members were advised that since the last meeting there had been 2 burglaries, 3 thefts, 1 criminal damage, 1 theft from a motor vehicle and 5 reports of anti-social behaviour.

With regard to Burns Street no incidents had been reported since the last meeting.

The Chair reported that cars were still parking at the entrance to Johnson Estate and large vehicles were still parking outside the pizza shop on the Front Street and restricting the visibility of oncoming traffic.

Reference was also made to a caravan which was parked on the Front Street/Granville Terrace and causing an obstruction.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted and the Police be thanked for their

continued efforts in the village.

11 CORRESPONDENCE

(1) Request for Financial Assistance

(i) St Godric's RC Primary School

The Clerk reported the receipt of a request for financial assistance from St Godric's RC Primary School to purchase equipment to make a banner for Durham Big Meeting.

RESOLVED that a donation of £300 be made from the Section 137 Budget.

(2) Letters of Thanks

The Clerk reported the receipt of the following letters of thanks: -

Wheatley Hill Heritage Society
Wheatley Hill Community Association
Peterlee Town Twinning

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

(3) East Durham Association of Parish and Town Councils

The Clerk reported the receipt of correspondence from the East Durham Association of Parish and Town Councils.

Members were advised that meetings of the Association were a good opportunity for member councils to engage with colleagues and discuss issues, share good practice, raise concerns, seek support, and generally come together for healthy debate on a range of topics affecting our communities.

Over the previous year there has been limited attendance at meetings and with this in mind a proposed range of topics, which could be discussed at future meetings had been put forward. The proposed topics included planning, traffic enforcement, Police and policing matters, Street Wardens and health and safety.

Members were requested to select up to 2 preferences, or suggest alternative topics, which could provide some direction for future meetings and allow guest speakers to be invited.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

(4) Planning Application - Wheatley Service Station

The Clerk reported that the planning application for the erection of a canopy and retrospective erection of store extension and widening of the rear access at Wheatley Service Station, Durham Road, Wheatley Hill was to be considered at the Central and East Durham Area Planning Committee on 13 May 2014.

Members were advised that residents from Durham Road would be attending the meeting and had registered to speak against the application.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

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(5) Infinis – Wingate Grange Wind Farm

The Clerk reported that Infinis were holding a meeting with representatives from Wingate, Wheatley Hill, Trimdon and Thornley Parish Councils at East Durham College on 21 May 2014 at 4pm. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the community benefit partnerships associated with Wingate Grange Wind Farm.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

(6) Wheatley Hill Heritage Society – Annual Report

The Clerk reported the receipt of the Annual Report from Wheatley Hill Heritage Society which provided details of the work undertaken by the Society during 2013/20 14, details of which were outlined to Members.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

12 PLANNING MATTERS

(i) APPLICATIONS

DM/14/00872/FPA – Erection of single storey extension to rear and extension of porch to front at 5 Quilstyle Road, Wheatley Hill, Durham DH6 3RF for Mr and Mrs Mole

DM/14/00609/FPA – Erection of 65 no dwellings with associated works (revised ownership certificate submitted) at land at Cain Terrace and Henderson Avenue, Wheatley Hill, Durham for Gleeson Developments Ltd

(ii) APPROVAL

DM/14/00347/FPA – Erection of 2 no dwellings at land at Moor View, Wheatley Hill, Durham for Mr T Cunningham

RESOLVED that no objection or comment be made to Durham County Council.

13 DELEGATES REPORTS

The Chair provided an update on the following issues: -

- Front Street – The Chair reported that a meeting was held with the Residents Association to discuss problems related to the growing number of empty properties and absentee landlords in Wheatley Hill. Absentee landlords, with property in Wheatley Hill, had been contacted regarding the state of their properties and the Street Wardens were involved. Further meetings were scheduled to be held.
- New clinic – The Chair reported that work was expected to start on 19 May 2014.
- Arriva – The Chair reported details of a meeting held with Arriva and approximately 40 residents. At the meeting discussion centred on the problems associated with buses running late or not turning up, connections, lack of communication between Arriva staff and passengers, and the cost of tickets and bus passes. People living in rural areas often had to catch 2 buses to reach their final destination and poor time keeping led to passengers missing their connections. Reference was made to the possibility of providing the smaller villages with a link bus. Meetings were planned with alternative providers to ascertain what services they could offer.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

14 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.

15 CLERK'S REPORT

(1) Allotments/Stable Blocks

Waiting List

Members were provided with details of waiting lists for allotments and stable blocks.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

(2) Internal Audit Report for the Year Ending 31 March 2014

The Clerk reported the receipt of the internal audit report for 2013/2014 undertaken by Mr G Fletcher.

Members were advised that local councils in England were expected to complete an annual return which summarised their annual activities at the completion of each financial year.

It was Members responsibility to ensure that financial management was adequate and effective and the Council had a sound system of internal controls.

A section within the annual return 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.

All the key controls contained within the annual return were examined and found to be working satisfactory.

The Report therefore concluded that there were no recommendations concerning the Audit.

RESOLVED that the internal audit report for 2013/2014 be accepted.

(3) Policies and Procedures

The Clerk reported that an Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy had been drafted for Members consideration.

Members were advised that a review had been undertaken of the Councils Risk Management Policy and Risk Management Strategy. A light touch review had also been undertaken of the following policies and procedures:-

Standing Orders
Internal Audit Policy
FOI Publication Scheme
Data Protection Policy
Public Participation Policy
Equal Opportunities Policy
Health and Safety Policy

Grants and Donations Policy
Complaints Policy

RESOLVED that the Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy be adopted and the review of the Councils policies and procedures be noted.

(4) Summer/Winter Bedding

The Clerk reported that Durham County Council had provided a quotation of £18,878.07, including VAT, for the 2014/2015 summer/winter bedding contract based on the current number of flower beds and baskets.

Members had previously discussed the need to make savings and it was agreed that this could be achieved by either reducing the number of flower beds and hanging baskets or looking at alternative suppliers.

The County Council had been advised that the Parish Council would not be renewing the contract based on the current level of service and the Clerk met with J Talbot, Durham County Council on 3 April 2014 to discuss future requirements.

Members were advised that a revised contract, based on the following, had been received:-

- Provision, installation and maintenance of 19 Hanging Baskets and 8 grow bags - £2,253.02
- Provision, planting and maintenance of spring and summer bedding areas - £5,766.78.

Due to the timescales involved it was suggested that the Parish Council accept the quotation and keep the situation under review.

RESOLVED that the revised quotation from Durham County Council be accepted.

(5) Cemetery Boundary Wall

The Clerk reported that at the last meeting Members were advised that Mr Rose, whose property shared a boundary with the Cemetery, had erected a new brick party wall.

Members discussed the cost of the wall and it was suggested that the Parish Council offer a small financial contribution towards the cost, as a gesture of goodwill and appreciation. It was pointed out that Mr Rose had at no time requested any financial assistance with the cost of the wall.

It was agreed that the Clerk contact Mr Rose and offer a small contribution of £50 as a gesture of goodwill and appreciation.

The Clerk advised that Mr Rose was approached and had declined any financial contribution towards the cost of the wall. The Clerk had subsequently sent a letter of appreciation to Mr Rose.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

16 PAYMENTS AND ORDERS

The Clerk presented Members with a written report of all payments and receipts made since the last meeting.

Members were also provided with details of the financial position of the Parish Council in comparison with the Annual Budget.

RESOLVED that the report be received and the payments itemised be approved.

17 RISK MANAGEMENT

The Clerk advised that there was nothing to report.

18 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

(1) Dog Fouling

Councillor Mrs Carr reported that dog fouling was on the increase, particularly along Gable Terrace heading to Vincent’s Corner.

(2) Footpath - Doctors Surgery

Councillor Mrs Goyns reported that the footpath at the Doctors Surgery was unusable as it was covered in weeds, branches, litter and soil.

(3) Ashmore Terrace

Councillor Mrs Goyns reported railings in the road at Ashmore Terrace.

RESOLVED that the issues be reported to the Street Wardens and a meeting be requested to view the areas in question.

..... Signed

..... Dated