

**THE MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE
WHEATLEY HILL PARISH COUNCIL
HELD ON MONDAY 11 MAY 2015**

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

Apologies: Councillors E Goyns and Mrs M Goyns

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 E Carr, J Miller and M Nicholls

County Durham Association of Local Councils
Councillors J Miller and Mrs L Stewart

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 13 April 2015, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member, were approved and signed by the Chair.

9 COMMUNITY POLICING

The Chair welcomed PCSO's A Jepson and N Holmes to the meeting.

Members were advised that since the last meeting there had been 3 reported burglaries, 8 incidents of criminal damage, 1 theft of a motor vehicle and 18 reports of anti-social behaviour. Anti-social behaviour was down 19% year to date.

The Chair reported that cars were still parking at the entrance of Johnson Estate which obstructed the visibility of cars leaving the estate.

The Chair reported continued problems associated with Wordsworth Avenue, particularly those related to horses being kept in the gardens and garages of residential properties.

The Police were advised that up to 15 pony and traps were racing on the A181 early on Saturday and Sunday mornings. The Officer agreed to investigate.

The Chair reported problems associated with youths congregating on the Front Street and causing a nuisance. Particular reference was made to vandalism at the Greenhills Centre over the weekend. The Centre currently had scaffolding erected on the building to allow repairs to guttering. Over the weekend youths got onto the scaffolding and damaged the roof, removed tiles, broke the newly replaced guttering, smashed brickwork and walk lights. The matter had been reported to the Police.

Reference was made to the PACT meetings which had been moved from Wheatley House to the Greenhills Centre. The Officer agreed to ask PCSO A Robson to contact the Chair to discuss the situation further.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

10 CORRESPONDENCE

(1) Letters of Thanks

The Clerk reported the receipt of the following letters of thanks.

Greenhills Centre
All Saints Parish Church

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

(2) Thomas Kenny Victoria Cross Memorial Stone

The Clerk reported that a meeting was held on 21 April 2015 to discuss possible locations for the Thomas Kenny Victoria Cross Memorial Stone.

Special paving stones would be laid in the home towns of every UK soldier awarded the Victoria Cross as part of World War I centenary events. The stones had been given to the Local Authority in the areas where the VC recipients were born. A total of 7 would be unveiled in County Durham to commemorate medals awarded and would be laid in every year up to 2018.

The stones would initially form part of an exhibition in the DLI museum and from there would be transported to the agreed site. Funding from Durham County Council was available to site the Stones.

Members were advised that the first VC in Durham was awarded to Thomas Kenny on 4 November 1915. Thomas Kenny was buried in Wheatley Hill Cemetery and in 1994 a head stone was erected.

Key to the location of the stone was the wishes of the family who had confirmed they would like the stone to be placed in Wheatley Hill Cemetery.

The group recommended that the date of the event should be Wednesday 4 November 2015. Although the date of the event would be close to Remembrance Sunday, it was felt that having a special commemoration day for Thomas Kenny was more appropriate.

On the day itself it was planned to have a short unveiling ceremony at the Cemetery followed by an event at the Greenhills Centre. It was planned to hold displays at community facilities in Wheatley Hill and Wingate and to actively involve the family, local community and local schools in the event.

Funding for the project was to be determined and in addition to funding from Durham County Council, County Councillors M Nicholls and L Taylor were being asked to support the event with a contribution from their neighbourhood budgets.

The Parish Council was being asked to consider allowing the VC Commemoration Stone to be sited in Wheatley Hill Cemetery and then to consider if they would take on the responsibility for the future

maintenance of the stone.

Following a lengthy discussion it was **RESOLVED** that a Special Meeting of the Parish Council be held on 1 June 2015 at 6pm and representatives from the East Durham Area Action Partnership and Wingate Parish Council be invited to attend.

(3) Village Artwork

The Clerk reported the receipt of an invitation from Wheatley Hill Mothers' Club to attend a meeting on 18 May 2015 at 6pm in Wheatley House.

Members were advised that the purpose of the meeting was to discuss proposals to mark the 50th anniversary of the closure of Wheatley Hill pit which closed on 3 May 1958. Wheatley Hill Mothers' Club wanted to mark the occasion by commissioning a piece of public artwork for the village.

The Mothers Club had met with Ray Lonsdale, the sculptor responsible for 'Tommy' the soldier at Seaham, who was willing to undertake the work.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

(4) Visit to Gurney Valley Traveller Site

The Clerk reported that the East Durham Area Action Partnership (AAP) had arranged a visit to the Gurney Valley Traveller Site on 28 May 2015.

RESOLVED that Councillor Maddison be authorised to attend.

(5) Complaint - Mr D Henderson

The Clerk reported the receipt of a letter of complaint from Mr D Henderson of 11 Greenwood Close, Wheatley Hill, details of which were outlined to Members.

Mr Henderson had asked that his concerns, in relation to the precept amount set by the Parish Council, be brought to the attention of the Parish Council.

The Clerk advised that she had offered to meet with Mr Henderson to discuss his concerns in greater detail.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

(6) Summer Bedding/Hanging Baskets

The Clerk reported that following a request from the Parish Council Durham County Council had agreed to use brightly coloured flowers in the summer bedding displays and hanging baskets.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

11 PLANNING

APPROVALS

DM/15/00774/FPA – Creation of enlarged highway access onto a classified road at Hillcrest, Sandwich Terrace, Wheatley Hill, DH6 3LN for Mr and Mrs R Reay

DM/15/00778/FPA – Creation of enlarged highway access onto a classified road at Glenrae, Sandwich Terrace, Wheatley Hill, DH6 3LN for Mr and Mrs M Turner

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

12 DELEGATES REPORTS

The Chair gave Members an update on the new clinic, particularly the on-going discussions related to the 25 year lease and the possible introduction of a 5 year break clause.

Members were advised of the outstanding issues to be resolved which included an external planting scheme, cycle stands and a shelter. It was expected that the additional expenditure would be approximately £20,000.

Members were advised that it was expected that funding from County Councillors would cover most of the cost but it was anticipated there could be a shortfall in funding. Whilst there was no figures to consider Members were asked to agree, in principle, to fund any shortfall.

RESOLVED that the Parish Council agree, in principle, to fund the shortfall.

13 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.

14 CLERK'S REPORT

(1) Allotments/Stable Blocks

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 2015

The Clerk reported the receipt of the internal audit report for 2014/2015 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. It was however recommended that Members examine the bank statements to confirm the bank reconciliations.

There was no other recommendations concerning the audit.

RESOLVED that the internal audit report for 2014/2015 be accepted.

15 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.

16 RISK MANAGEMENT

The Clerk advised that there was nothing to report.

..... Signed

..... Dated