

GREATER WILLINGTON TOWN COUNCIL

13th May 2015

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting

IN ATTENDANCE

Councillor Tinsley, Councillor Henfrey, Councillor Carr,
Councillor Cogdon, Councillor Etherington, Councillor Graham,
Councillor Greensmith, Councillor Smith, Councillor Todd
County Councillor Gunn
Helen Cogdon (Town Clerk)
Emma Mennouni (Community Services Officer)

WELCOME

Councillor Tinsley welcomed everyone to the Annual Parish Meeting. He informed those present of the housekeeping rules and fire exits. He said it was customary for the Chair of the Parish Council to Chair the Annual Parish meeting however as it is not a Council meeting, it can be called by local parishioners.

The Parish meeting is the opportunity for local groups to share information and update other organisations on their progress throughout the year.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies had been received from Councillor Bennett.

The Clerk said Councillor Bennett had tendered her resignation on Wednesday 12th May 2015.

Councillor Tinsley thanked Mrs Bennett for her work on the Town Council and said he hopes her health improves soon.

Resolved 1. To note Councillor Bennetts resignation.

2. To inform Durham County Council, Electoral Services and display the Notice of Vacancy.

DECLARATION OF PERSONAL AND OF PREJUDICIAL INTEREST

None received

TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING ON THE

7th MAY 2014

Councillor Tinsley asked for consideration of the last Annual Parish

Meeting minutes that had been previously approved at the 4th June 2014 meeting to enable the transaction of business.

Resolved: that the minutes are a true record as written, circulated and agreed

on the 4th June 2015.

Proposed: Councillor Cogdon

Seconded: Councillor Etherington

THE CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Councillor Tinsley said;

It is with pleasure I present the 2014/15 Annual Report.

This is the second year of business for the new Town Council which was formed in May 2013. We have continued to work as Local Councillors by assisting in the resolution of neighbourhood issues and working in partnership with Durham County Councillors.

I have enjoyed developing stronger working relationships with Community Group members and would like to thank volunteers for the time they give tirelessly to help others.

This year I sought t..

Develop the environment to improve the quality of life for us all and increase the appeal of Greater Willington.

Address issues related to the High Street and develop commercial activity and investment in the Town

Engage with our community bringing it closer to the Town Council.

I am pleased to say we have had an exceptionally busy year in terms of planning, developing and delivering projects and initiatives. To mention just a few, these include:

Walk Leaflets

St Thomas Community Garden

A new Interpretation Board at the Pay Bridge

Planting and Landscaping schemes around the area

The Responsible Dog Ownership Scheme

South Dene Woodland Restoration Project

Developing a Civic and Market Square

Protecting and design work to extend the Town Green Play Park

WW1 Centenary activities

Promoting the Anti Fly Tipping Campaign

Developing a Heritage Project

The Civic Service

The Remembrance Sunday Service

Scary Street and Halloween Activities

The extended Christmas Lighting Display and Carol Service
More detailed information describing the outputs we have achieved is contained in Section 6 of the Town Council 2014-15 Annual Report.

On budget and including the Community Fund and Civic Fund awards we have invested £88328 into local projects, services and parish improvements.

Alongside the Ordinary council meetings we have organised both Community and Business Forum events often in response to requests from residents. Your interest in meeting with the council is appreciated and we welcome public participation on each council agenda.

The Council Newsletters have been well received and this together with the Council Website is our way of keeping residents up to date and providing information about activities, responsibilities and progress.

Planning work has been high profile over the last few months. Also reflecting the recent changes in planning legislation which gives greater scope for the development of agricultural buildings in our area.

Detailed work and submissions have been made about our area towards the County Durham Plan which sets out future development opportunities for the parish.

Recently I was delighted to support Oakenshaw Community Association from the start of their journey towards the production of their very own Neighbourhood Plan.

The importance of partnership working is vital to the success of the area and we have worked closely with D.C.C Neighbourhood Wardens and Civic Pride Officers, Durham Constabulary P.C.S.Os and residents to provide local solutions to local problems.

Working with our younger residents is also an important way forward. We have promoted the D.C.C Mega Motion and our own Environment Improvement projects with local schools and also involved pupils in the South Dene Restoration project.

We are also pleased to announce that we will benefit from travel activities associated with the £840,000 allocation from the Local Transport Fund to the D.C.C Local Motion Project with neighbouring areas in Crook and Spennymoor. The Travel Advisors will be working from the council office when they come into the Willington area.

The provision of Allotment gardens continues to be an important and popular service. We provide 189 plots. All council managed plots are let and a Waiting List applies. Each tenant receives an Allotment Newsletter and each site is has regular inspections.

We have some exceptional gardeners and their work is recognised on an annual basis through the Allotmenteeer Gardening Awards.

On behalf of all Council members would like to say thank you to Emma Mennouni, Community Services Officer and Helen Cogdon, Town Clerk our part time members of staff. They have a considerable workload and diligently maintain the legal and professional standards required of a local authority.

I would also like to thank fellow Councillors for their commitment to the success of the Town Council and the time and energy they have invested in support of the G.W.T.C area.

COMMUNITY FORUM

Mr John Spencer Oakenshaw Community Association Chairman said he would like to thank the Town Council for their continued support over the last twelve months and he looked forward to further partnership working this year.

Discussions have started with regard to the future of the Nature Reserve between Banks Mining, Oakenshaw Community Association and the Town Council.

There is a Family Fun day on Sunday 17th May 2015, 11.30am - 3.00pm this includes a buffet and free ice cream. Everyone is most welcome to attend.

There is a Bus Trip 21st June 2015, 9.30am- 5.30pm to Whitby. If you would like to join in the tickets are £5.00 each.

The Community Association have produced twenty flower planters which will be situated around the village next week.

Councillor Graham asked if the Community Association will be taking over the GWEIG planter.

Mr Spencer confirmed that they would do this in September 2015.

Councillor Greensmith said herself and Kay Wigham, Trustee and Senior Consultant from Chyrelle Adams Cancer Support Trust had attended a meeting with The Manager of Service, Janet Sedgwick and Head of Service, Dean Trainer who are representatives from the NHS Trust.

She tabled the following report about the meeting;

'There is currently a rumour circulating about The Mara Unit (Chemotherapy Dept) basically that it is going to close I asked if there was any truth in it ...

We were told that as far as Janet was aware there was no truth in it what so ever but she did say that she would look into it and report back at the next meeting.

I asked about the money being ploughed into Durham A&E and not giving

Bishop the opportunity to have our A&E reinstated...

We had an in-depth discussion about the A&E closure and the reasons behind it essentially A&E was closed because there was not the staff and clinicians to cope with the huge rise in admissions to A&E and the majority of emergencies were being re routed to UHD or D/ton where they had more facilities and the necessary qualified staff to deal with them, making it a safer option for the patients. Concentrating patient care on two sites made more sense than trying to manage three when one was way underperforming and in a lot of cases where time is critical it was a better option to go straight to the other depts. Where patients could be treated immediately rather than lose time having to be transported elsewhere.

As I see it based on information given and trying to understand the reasoning behind these decisions you have to look at the bigger picture and its not always going to be black and white...there have been comparisons made to the A&E of years ago and how it functioned perfectly, but times have changed and there are now probably six times more admissions than there were 10/15 years ago due to increase in alcohol related incidents, drug use, an increase in traffic leading to more accidents and the elderly are also living longer so therefore we have more falls etc. all of this resulting in a dept that can't cope and becoming a risk to patient care and safety

I can say that all the petitions in the world will not get the A&E reopened it is closed and will stay closed but I am trying to put together a plan of the hospital and the facilities currently in use.

The other issues we discussed was the screening age for elderly ladies... at the moment once you reach the age of 70 the NHS stop sending your appointments automatically so you have to request a mammogram through your GP. My concern is that a lot of elderly ladies believe that they cannot have any more screening after this age and I had a perfect example of a 91 year old who was quite stressed by the fact that she hadn't had any screening for approx. 20 years at a talk I did for the charity last week . As you get older your risk of Breast Cancer increases so it is imperative that you request your mammogram. I have been assured that plans are in motion to highlight this within the GP'S surgeries and patients will now be monitored and asked when they had their last mammogram, I understand there will be a TV promotion about it as well It would be cheaper to just continue the automated appointment service but there you go...

I also tackled the screening age at the other end of the scale and they were very interested to know we have a petition up and running to get the age lowered to 35 and were quite encouraging as regards this.

The age at the moment is 47 if you are well over this age and have not been sent for go and see your GP.

I have asked If it would be possible to have a breakdown of services currently being used in the hospital and possibly a floor plan so we can get a better idea of all the depts.. That information is going to be sent to me.

As you know the issue of the Breast screening dept was the initial reason for setting up this group and reasons for the move have been explained. The Trust have said that they would like Kay and myself to follow the progress of the new Breast screening facility at D/ton... from the demolishing of the old building to create the new and then follow the installation of any new technology and to relay this information back to the patients and public which I have agreed to do.'

County Councillor Gunn said;
Trish is doing a great job bringing this information to the attention of local people.
Adults Health and Wellbeing is the remit of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at County Hall.

She said she would like to congratulate G.W.T.C on the work they have achieved over the year. Particular thanks goes to Helen Cogdon and Emma Mennouni who have been very helpful in support of the County Council.

With regard to flytipping at Kensington Tce, County Councillor Buckham and County Councillor Gunn have funded C.C.T.V camera which are to be used to investigate flytipping, drug and alcohol incidents.
The D.C.C full council meeting has been deferred due to purdah.

DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

4th May 2016 at 6.00 pm

6th May 2015 at 6.00 pm

Signed by the Chairman

Dated 3rd June 2015

4th May 2016

