

**GREATER WILLINGTON PARISH**  
**16<sup>th</sup> May 2023**  
**Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting**

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**IN ATTENDANCE**

Councillor Ken Henfrey, Councillor Angela Smith, Councillor Margaret Elgie,  
Councillor Emma Berry, Councillor Dorothy Hales, Councillor Charles Hales,  
Councillor Emma Jordan, Councillor Pauline Savage  
Councillor Ursula McArdle, Councillor Fraser Tinsley  
Emma McCann (Deputy Town Clerk)  
Helen Cogdon (Town Clerk)

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**WELCOME**

Councillor Smith opened the Parish meeting and welcomed those in attendance.

The Clerk outlined comfort and evacuation procedures.

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Councillor Jackson, Councillor Savage

**2. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL AND OF PREJUDICIAL INTEREST**

None received

**3. THE CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

Councillor Smith presented the report she said;

She was sorry that there were not any public representatives present as residents attendance last year created a positive and enjoyable meeting.

This is the second year of business for the new council members who were elected unopposed in May 2021. Our thanks are extended to parish residents who volunteered their time to stand to become a Town Councillor and take an active part in supporting the Town Councils neighbourhood and environmental activities. Following the election there were still seats available and these were filled later through co-option.

Despite the fact that Councillors operate in a volunteer capacity we are always looking for more people with an interest in voluntary work with the skills and behaviours that will build the capacity of our community.

A big thank you to existing volunteers whose enthusiasm and efforts to invest time to make the parish a better place for families to live is much appreciated.

Having purchased 67 High Street, Willington. 2022-23 saw GWTC continue to refurbish Town Council building. The refurbishment was the main focus of activity throughout the year to create a more accessible and usable Council Office and provide facilities to encourage community involvement and engagement. The Council reintroduced Councillor Surgeries, PACT meetings and Citizens Advice. They were successful in raising funds for Warm Spaces

Signed by the Chairman .....

Dated 11<sup>th</sup> July 2023

and this has left a legacy of the Craft Club which is getting stronger each week with new members. A big thank you to Judith for her creative crafting.

The management of allotments is an important competence of the Town Council. We let ninety-six allotment plots at Springfield, Oakenshaw and Park Top. We also own and lease the Rosedale and Victoria Allotment Site. This continues to be a key role for the Town Council providing an important facility for the Town. Allotment rent includes access to a water supply, the provision of skips and boundary maintenance.

An Allotmenteer Growing competition is held every year and tenants receive an Allotment Newsletter.

Councillor Hales and Councillor Berry are your Councillors with responsibilities for allotments and are always happy to talk to you.

Members are aware how important it is to be approachable and look for ways to support the networking of community activities outside of the Council. We therefore continue to grant financial help to community groups and clubs through the Civic Fund, Community Fund and Sponsorship.

Also through partnership work project partners including Durham County Council and County Councillor Tinsley and Councillor Gunn.

Durham County Council, Care Connect who monitor the towns CCTV provision. Durham Constabulary and the Durham Police Commissioner, Joy Allen who attends meetings and visited the area.

Durham Constabulary PACT meetings

Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Service are a vital and important resource and can be relied on to attend our regular Community Events throughout the year.

Durham County Council, Street Lighting install the Willington Christmas Illuminations and dress the Christmas Tree.

County Durham Citizens Advice Service who assists many residents with budgetary, health and education needs.

The Open Door Church, St Stephens and St Thomas Churches and the five schools with whom we maintain a close mutual working relationship. All of whom provide a range of excellent services to respond to resident needs.

We must recognise the great work of Willington Wombles and also the individuals who have come to us to loan a litter picker so they can tidy up around where they live.

Greater Willington Environmental Improvement Group developed from the Council and work with us on wider environmental improvements around the parish. The Councils recent focus has been on continuing to stock the Planters around the Parish and extending the Bulb planting and Birch Tree planting. The primary school pupils have played a big role in the bulb planting and have enjoyed this activity enormously. A big thank you to everyone.

It was a huge achievement for our little parish to win an Its Your Neighbourhood, Northumbria In Bloom Award and we look forward to entering the main competition next year. This will include Spring and Summer judging.

Signed by the Chairman .....

Dated 11<sup>th</sup> July 2023

Despite the provision of social events and entertainment not being a primary pre requisite for a local authority GWTC has responded to resident requests for these opportunities.

There is an Annual Programme of events including activities during Easter, Halloween, Remembrance Day, Christmas and School Holidays. These will continue together with more Away Days and Family Fun Days.

Officer time is allocated towards developing community projects. Grant applications are submitted to raise funds for all community activities for example, the Away Days. Most events are match funded from a number of external organisations including the Three Town Partnership, County Councillors Neighbourhood Budget, The National Lottery and Charities and Trusts.

Helen Cogdon, Town Clerk and Emma McCann, Deputy Town Clerk work tirelessly, on behalf of Greater Willington and the Town Council. They have delivered their best.

Staff pride themselves on providing the administrative and advisory support to the Councill and its members. They produce the necessary reports, agendas and minutes for meetings.

Staff produce the annual budget and monthly financial statements for members consideration.

Staff also try to assist and signpost residents who present with day-to-day problems by offering advice and guidance.

I would also like to thank staff who have supported the Town Mayors attendance at Civic Events and maintained the Civic Diary.

I cannot end without offering sincere condolences to the Royal family on the passing of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth 11 in September 2022. She was the longest reigning British monarch and displayed fortitude and faithfulness throughout her life.

More details can be found in the rest of the written report which I hope you find interesting to read.

#### **4. COMMUNITY FORUM**

There were no residents in attendance.

#### **5. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

Annual Parish Meeting 21<sup>st</sup> May 2024 at 6.00pm  
Meeting closed at 6.15 pm

Signed by the Chairman .....

Dated 11<sup>th</sup> July 2023