

GREATER WILLINGTON TOWN COUNCIL
Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting
14th March 2023

IN ATTENDANCE

Councillor Henfrey, Councillor Smith, Councillor Berry,
Councillor C Hales,
Councillor D Hales, Councillor McArdle, Councillor Tinsley, Councillor Jackson
Helen Cogdon, Town Clerk (TC) (minutes)

1. ACCEPTANCE OF APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillor Elgie, Councillor Savage, Councillor Jordan, County Councillor Gunn and Emma McCann.

2. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Members are invited to declare any personal and/or prejudicial interest in matters appearing on the agenda and the nature of their interest.

None received.

3. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Resident agenda items requested through the Clerk.

None received.

**4. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY MEETING 14th FEBRUARY 2023
MATTERS ARISING (FOR INFORMATION ONLY)**

Any matters arising will be given through officer reports.

The minutes as written and circulated were signed and taken as a true record.

Proposed. Councillor Jackson

Seconded. Councillor D Hale

**5. TO CONSIDER PLANNING APPLICATIONS AND UPDATE ON PLANNING
DECISIONS**

New Planning Applications

• DM/23/00443/FPA - Oak House, 21A Acorn Drive, Oakenshaw - Conversion of outbuilding to home office <https://publicaccess.durham.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?keyVal=RQ4TOXGDIWR00&activeTab=summary>

• DM/23/00585/FPA - 3 Woodlands Close, Oakenshaw - Single storey side and rear extension <https://publicaccess.durham.gov.uk/online-applications/monthlyListResults.do?action=firstPage>

• DM/23/00437/FPA Change of use of first and second floor residential flat to hair and beauty salon (Sui Generis)

Address: 82A High Street Willington Crook DL15 0PE

Previous Planning Application Decisions

• DM/22/02571/FPA – 2 Country View, Oakenshaw – Conversion of stables to 1No. holiday let

Approved 21/03/2023

- DM/22/03750/FPA - St Stephens Church Of England Primary School Hall Lane Estate Willington - Demolition of existing dilapidated 2 classroom demountable and rebuild of a brick standalone traditional built 2 Classroom building. Built in brickwork and grey timber cladding. Roof grey single ply membrane.

Approved 13/2/2023

- DM/22/03639/FPA - 154 School Row, Oakenshaw - Replacement of existing wooden garage with breezeblock with stone coloured render replacement.

Approved 16/03/2023

- DM/23/00276/PNA - Land South East Of Whitworth Lane - Erection of 1 No. agricultural building for general agricultural storage (machinery, feed, bedding etc)

Prior Approval is required

- DM/22/03563/FPA - 11 Carville Estate, Willington - Detached dwelling and alterations to existing bungalow (Resubmission)

Approved 10/03/2023

Previous Planning Applications Waiting Decisions

- DM/19/02002/OUT – Site of Former Kensington Hall Hotel, Kensington Terrace, Willington – Housing development of 9 no. dwellings (Outline – All Matters Reserved Other Than Access) (Amended 21/04/2021)
- DM/21/04140/RM - Land Adjacent To (East) Ash Drive, Willington - Reserved matters application (appearance, landscaping, layout and scale) for the erection of 88 no. dwellings pursuant to outline planning permission DM/17/00244/OUT (up to 200 dwellings with all matters reserved except access)
- DRC/22/00261 - Land Adjacent To (East) Ash Drive, Willington - Discharge of Conditions 5 (Construction Management Plan and Method Statement), 6 - (coal mining legacy), 8 (off-site highways), 10 (Arboricultural Impact Assessment), 14 (contaminated land) and 16 (archaeology) pursuant to planning permission DM/18/03443/OUT (erection of up to 200 dwellings).
- DM/22/03106/FPA - Plots 1-3 Oakenshaw Allotments, New Row, Oakenshaw - Erection of pigeon loft, raised lawn area with steps, roof over log shed and pergola (retrospective)
- DM/22/03708/NMA - Land Adjacent To (East) Ash Drive, Willington - Non-material amendment to condition 16 (archaeology) pursuant to DM/18/03443/OUT
- DM/22/03678/VOC - 52 Armstrong Drive, Willington - Variation of Condition 2 (Plans) in relation to planning permission DM/21/01808/FPA for resize first floor side window, reduce number of first floor rear windows, additional ground floor side windows and alterations to bi-fold door
- DM/23/00295/DRC - Land To The North Of Hawthorn Drive And West Of Hill Meadows, Willington - Discharge of condition 10 (Ball Stop Fencing) pursuant to permission DM/20/01960/VOC

6. TO RECEIVE THE ALLOTMENT REPORT

Councillor Berry said;

Oakenshaw

Really good overall.

Issues

42 broken fencing

30, 29; what is happening?

18 need to be sure this will be developed

17 has a cockerel
16 bad.

Councillor Berry requested that a letter is sent to the riding school at Oakenshaw about the free range hens.

Park Top

Area has been cleared by entrance, lots of broken glass. Councillor Berry wondered if an organisation could be found to clear it. The Clerk confirmed that it had been levelled with a bull dozer

Boundary fencing re 1 Salisbury Gardens. Helen and Charles have also seen; I do not believe this is council responsibility.

Could not get down to bottom far too slippery and dangerous to negotiate, I think we should add to the agenda closing the bottom plots as soon as possible. Certainly, before new contracts are issued.

Springfield

Confirmed with Councillor Hales would be abandoning the second half of the inspection due to individuals on site.

No loose hens to be seen.

Mr Logan (Resident) said all tenants should have keys.

The problem with the track is its not wide enough.

Councillor Jackson said it needs a retainer to stop erosion.

Councillor Tinsley said top dressing.

Questions

How many miniature fruit trees can be planted on one site, I have looked at the legislation and it is not so specific.

Agreed to determine the Park Top Boundary and to wooden board the open side and tidy the rest of the boundary with wire netting. May finish boarding this year or the following year depending on budget. Clerk will contact DK Landscape and ask him to proceed.

The report was noted.

7. TO RECEIVE THE TOWN COUNCILLORS MONTHLY REPORT

Councillor Jackson asked what the plans were for the Coronation.

Decorated Shop Fronts, Bunting and King Charles Scarecrows was agreed.

Councillor Jackson asked about column testing for hanging baskets. The Clerk

confirmed that Roch are not responding to requests for information. So it may be that columns will have to be retested.

Councillor D Hales suggested that an easter treasure hunt is to be organised with the schools and local business based on finding a word. She will discuss with the DTC.

i)Project Updates.

The Clerk said;

Newsletter

The GWTC Newsletter was distributed on 20 February 2023. The distribution cost was £630.00.

The Allotment newsletter has been delivered by Lintons cost £95.00. It will be distributed with the allotment invoices.

Warm Spaces

The Clerk has submitted the £500 Top Up Warm Spaces grant application.

CDCF have agreed that the existing funding can be used to buy a refrigerator, baby changing cot and wheelchair access ramps.

The remaining grant will be spent on heat light and power, training and weekly activities.

The Clerk has been in discussion with residents about using the Warm Space funding to set up an Arts and Craft Club, £220 is available to buy materials.

The Clerk asked members agreement that the middle rear office space can be used as an Arts & Craft room.

Plans for Remembrance Day include poppy bicycles, chicken wire figures, silhouettes and bunting.

Funday

The road closure has been agreed with D.C.C. Cpal have been informed that we wish licence to occupy the Town Green. St Johns Ambulance have agreed to attend the event. Activities have been booked. A SAG application is requested. Cost to date £15,934.

The Clerk is looking to secure £10,969 for the Funday and a further £4,500 for the Away Days.

Councillor Tinsley said the AAP are introducing an events fund. The Clerk said that was brilliant news and asked if the County Councillors would make a contribution to the events programme as well.

Willington Festival

The road closure and rerouting of bus service has been agreed with DCC.

The Clerk has met with William Clerk from Murphys Funfair to discuss requirements. William was very helpful and will be returning so that he can measure up and finalise a site plan. He also recommended staging company and a band management company for quotations.

The Clerk has also met with Ben Tinkler from Bridge Creative. Ben helped organise The performances for the Bishop Auckland Festival and is happy to work with us and share his knowledge as a festival organiser.

Meetings need to be diared with the Events Team in the new financial year to look at how the events can be supported by volunteers.

This was agreed.

ii) Environmental Improvements

Tree Planting

The three new Silver Birch trees have been planted Thank you to the County Councillors who provided match funding. As the Clerk managed to secure a discount the AAP Funding team have agreed that £250 can be spent on narcissi. This will be mass planting in the triangle next to Public Toilet.

Planters.

The planters have been planted with the new evergreen shrubs. Thank you to Councillor Savage.
Resident volunteers have agreed to help water and feed the plants throughout the year. There will be a competition for the healthiest planter.
Councillor C Hales said he noticed the purchase of Euphorbia and asked if the Clerk realised it was poisonous. Councillor D Hales confirmed that it could cause skin irritation and blindness. The Clerk said Councillor Savage had planted hebe and grasses and suffered no ill effect. Councillor Smith said if this is the case they should be removed as soon as possible.
Councillor Mc Ardle said she had visited the poison garden at Alnwick Castle that had many usual garden plants.

Flower Beds

The Clerk has arranged for plants to be delivered to the office for The Winter Flame bed. DCC Clean and Green have agreed to spray and rotavate the bed. Again volunteers are needed to plant, weed and water the new bed.

Northumbria In Bloom

Our entry will be judged on the 25 April 2023 at 10 am. Please try to attend.
Residents have trashed the crocus rainbow, the narcissi on Empress cinema green and the library. Bird boxes and bee hotels are needed before 25 April 2023 if anyone can donate or make some.
The Willing to Bloom project ends this financial year. More bulbs have been ordered to complement existing planting.
Next years work under discussion we are looking at wildflower planting, more bulb planting, a cherry tree planting and high impact gateway planting.
A meeting is agreed with D.C.C Clean and Green to undertake a project mapping exercise before funding applications are submitted by GWTC /GWEIG.

8.TO RECEIVE THE COUNTY COUNCILLORS MONTHLY REPORT

County Councillor Tinsley said;
D.C.C. Cabinet have approved a significant increase in Council Tax.
There was some sad news regarding the death of Beaty Bainbridge D.C.C Chair. The Funeral is on Tuesday. The Town Council has expressed their condolences to the family.

The County Councillors have been allocating funding to projects aimed at tidying up the town ie Coop Car park.

The County Councillors are supporting the Heritage 100 Project Walk.

Councillor McArdel and Smith had been on the walking for wellbeing walk funded through Northern Heartlands Heritage project, with Hunwick Community Association. They found it very enjoyable. Councillor McArdel has secured an old map of Sunnybrow Colliery and she is carrying out a comparison with where roads are now. Councillor Tinsley said he would forward a 1991 Master Thesis from a Durham University Student who researched Willington. The Clerk confirmed that there was a copy in the office if members wanted to read it.

Councillor Tinsley said there are new proposals to introduce a Supermarket into Willington. Nothing definite at this stage.

9. TO APPROVE THE BANK RECONCILIATION (February 2023)

The Clerk said;

The Council entered into February with a starting balance of £31,830.22.

There was expenditure of £11,041.32 and £1,142.45 received leaving an end balance of £21,931.35.

Proposed Councillor Berry

Seconded Councillor Jackson

10. APPROVE THE BUDGET REPORT (February 2023)

The Clerk said there has been expenditure £119,297.28 leaving an available resource on budget of £4,455.72.

Office and Professional Services £9,427.08 overspend

Transcendit £3912.46

Building £2704.16

Solicitors/ Surveyors Fees £838.08

Total 7454.70

The remaining £1972 is because of higher costs overall.

There will however be a vat reclaim which can be reinvested into budget heads.

Staffing costs have increased because of the National Pay Award and back dated October payments.

Projects. The grants have been added to the budget head which has produced a credit figure the remaining funds are committed to Warm Spaces and the Environment work.

The budget is produced on an annual basis to inform the precept. However the Council can still vire some of its own funds into its budget. The Clerk said in order to sustain the existing level of activity the council needs to consider introducing some flexibility through investing some of its own funds. She suggested allocating 5k in July 2023 and November 2023 into Office and Professional services and/ or other budget heads if required.

The report was agreed.

Proposed Councillor Smith

Seconded Councillor Jackson

11. TO CONSIDER COMMUNITY FUND APPLICATIONS

None Received.

12. TO CONSIDER CIVIC FUND APPLICATIONS

Dovedale Bingo have requested a donation towards an Easter Egg Raffle with cakes and refreshments on Friday 7th April 2023.

Proposed Councillor Tinsley

Seconded Councillor Smith

Resolved 1. To donate £50.00.

13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS (for information only)

King Charles Coronation 6th May 2023

The Big Lunch 7th May 2023

Councillor Berry said she would like an update on the Home 2 School scheme. Councillor Tinsley said the consultation started on the 6th March 2023 and to direct residents to Do it Online.

Councillor McArdle said that she had been working with the Neighbourhood warden regarding litter and anti social behaviour in Sunnybrow.

Councillor Tinsley said there had been a burnt out car in Willington.

Councillor Henfrey said the wall next to the Burn Public House has been damaged.

14. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING.

11th April 2023 at 6pm