

GREATER WILLINGTON TOWN COUNCIL
Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting
8th March 2022

IN ATTENDANCE

Councillor Henfrey, Councillor Smith, Councillor Berry, Councillor Elgie
Councillor Hales, Councillor Jordan, Councillor Read,
Emma McCann, Deputy Town Clerk (DTC)
Helen Cogdon, Town Clerk (TC) (minutes)

1. ACCEPTANCE OF APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were apologies from Councillor Hales and County Councillor Gunn.

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.

Members are reminded to update their Declaration of personal and prejudicial interest register as and when required, and as soon as is reasonably possible.

Councillor Henfrey asked members to indicate if anything had any relevance to them throughout discussion.

ii) Councillor Code of Conduct

The Clerk said she has been asked to highlight how important it is for members to be familiar with the Councillors Code of Conduct and particularly personal conduct during meetings.

The agenda is there to help everyone make decisions and resolutions. It is a tool through which the Chairman manages meetings. Best practice is that if it is not on the agenda then it is not mentioned as there are no decision to be made.

Staff and members have expectations of each other. These may not always be the same. From expectations come behaviours.

To keep us working together and moving forward for the community which is why we are all here. Remember to consider how you behave. i.e.

- How we do things
- How we treat others
- What we say and how we say it.
- How we expect to be treated

3. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Residents agenda items requested through the Clerk

None received.

Chloe Steffani and Keith Jayne PCSOs were welcomed to the meeting and introduced themselves.

4. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY MEETING 8th FEBRUARY 2022 MATTERS ARISING (FOR INFORMATION ONLY)

Matters Arising

The minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on the 8th February 2022 as written and circulated were approved as a true record.

Proposed Councillor Smith
Seconded Councillor Berry

5. TO APPROVE THE ALLOTMENT REPORT

Councillor Berry reported;

ParkTop

Inspection of the sites where eviction notices have been given. Cockerels are still on the plot and are vocal. I can understand why complaints have been made regarding noise.

The Clerk said her last letter threatening legal action has worked as there has been a reduction in birds. She will be making an appointment with the Solicitor.

Councillor Berry said some of the pallets have gone from the lower damaged plot and have been used appropriately by other tenants with permission.

Some efforts have been made to tidy some plots that were of concern. Would suggest a follow up viewing pre April.

Springfield

Treatment of the effected sites has taken place, unfortunately due to weather and time constraints a full inspection was not possible. Again suggest an inspection pre April.

Oakenshaw

The allotment track is still a massive concern. A site inspection confirmed parts of the path way are very difficult to get through. Certainly not possible for cars.

Advice given so far:

Leave as is this has been like this for many years and dries up during the spring, it is a track and not for vehicular access.

Remove all the grass and soil on the top of the hard core, this would be at considerable expense and there would be many skips involved to remove the debris.

Drainage channels linking into the green drainage. The OCA has been very clear that they will not use their funds to pay for any work done on the allotment lane. The OCA are currently working with head of council drainage re how best to move forward.

Drainage channels, a test drain was dug to see if the water would move and drain onto the green and be soaked up by the trees. This was a success, worked exactly as described. Members thought this was a sensible way forward.

To ask Gordon Proctor to price up improvement options. It must be noted however that the water table is high in places.

Councillor Berry was approached and requested that the green have a very wide road put up to the middle gates to allow people to get to their birds.

Village members have been very vocal re the lack of action from GWTC, I would welcome advice on a statement or phrasing to be used as some of the interaction is uncomfortable without been able to say how things are moving forward.

More Cockerels are back.

Emma will address the plots with letters.

Asked for members views on updating the letters that are issued and have the regulations re access and animals and locking gates etc put in with the new bills. Members AGREED with this and also placing signs on gates, stating Allotment tenants only.

The report was APPROVED.

The Deputy Town Clerk reported on increasing Allotment rent by 3 or 5 % 2022/23.

At the last meeting we discussed the options for the Revision of Rents for 2022-2023.

Allotment Rents had an increase of 3% in 2018-2019 and has remained the same rent since then. 2020-2021 was rent free due to Covid.

I have worked out increases of 3% and 5%.

3% increase per annum would be between £1.04 - £2.38 for Springfield, £1.24 - £1.95 for Park Top and £1.57 - £1.86 for Oakenshaw.

5% increase per annum would be between £1.73 - £3.97 for Springfield, £2.07 - £3.24 for Park Top and £2.61 and £3.11 for Oakenshaw.

Councillor Henfrey asked how many vacancies are on each site.

Park Top 0 vacancies

Springfield 9 vacancies

Oakenshaw 0 vacancies

Resolved 1. To increase the annual rents by 5%.

6. TO CONSIDER PROJECT ACTIVITY IN THE PARISH PLAN

• Safe As Houses

The Clerk said the project has been reviewed and reduced in scale. It will focus on home owners and private rented houses around the areas the last two multi agency meetings did the door to door visits.

The contents will remain the same but the costs will be adjusted.

The Town Council has agreed to contribute up to 4k.

County Councillors Gunn and Tinsley have kindly agreed to award £750 each to the project from their neighbourhood budget.

The Police and Crime Commissioner will also provide match funding.

An AB AAP application will be submitted on the 9th March 2022.

Councillor Tinsley suggested the inclusion of bin marking.

PCSO Keith Jayne said the PACT meetings are going to start soon here to run bi monthly.

Councillor Smith will chair the PACT meetings.

• **Jubilee Weekend**

The first steering group meeting was held on 21.02.2022 at 1.30pm. All agreed to identify availability and costs for activities.

Oakenshaw Community Association would like to work with the Town Council to do a shared event. Councillor Berry has collected some ideas. They will be using the Vintage Bus to transport resident.

The open Door Church has asked for the Northern Heartlands glass artist Judith Gill to work with them again.

Ideas include making tables using flowers in wedding dress.

Collecting broken glass to make a mosaic

Making a Tudor Rose in resin possibly to site on the Pit Heap

There are three elements.

Thursday 2nd June 2022 Beacon Lighting, Brass Band and Fire Eaters

Saturday 4th June 2022 Party on the Park with vintage cars, stage performances.

Designing Crowns, Jubilee Sports competitions and inflatables etc

Sunday 5th Pantomime and 1950s Jubilee food & fancy dress.

Other ideas include a Treasure Hunt

The Clerk intends to submit funding applications to County Durham Foundation Charities and Trusts in line with the appropriate approval dates.

Other project meetings included.

Find It and Fix It 22.02.2022,10.30

Councillor Smith said;

The stone planter has been fixed.

A new seat has been provided.

Visited St Thomas Garden, The Town Green and North Dene

Future plans include

Cleaning off footpath edges.

Flowerbeds

Wild flower planting

Cleaning off cobble stones.

And ongoing partnership work with Willing To Bloom on the Town Green.

Home and Away

The Deputy Town Clerk said the first Away day is booked to go to Northumberland Country Zoo on 23rd April 2022.

Concessionary tickets to be £3 each.

Children 12 years and under would receive a packed lunch. Coach and entry fees are paid for using funding but the ticket income will be used to provide the packed lunches. I will approach The Bait Room to provide these.

Posters will be displayed and tickets will go on sale very soon.

The fence for the Railway Lines at Moorland Close will be ordered soon. DCC has confirmed they are happy for us to proceed. They asked us to note that GWTC would be responsible for any maintenance or repairs to the fence.

Army Cadets

Require evidence of

Periodical Electrical Inspections

Pat Testing

Legionella Risk Assessment

Asbestos surveys

Gas Safety checks

The Fire Risk Assessment should include but not limited to

Emergency evacuation plan

Emergency Lighting

Fire Extinguisher testing

Fire Alarm testing

The Clerk said the council has most of this in place but staff are working together on reviewing the documentation and drawing up room hire agreements.

Discussion continued on keyholders and on site supervision. Councillor Tinsley said the army cadets have qualified youth leaders, which who are responsible officers.

Refurbishment Update

The Deputy Town Clerk said the disability toilet has now been tiled and the new wet floor is fitted. Disability alarms have been ordered and will be installed soon. Ceiling cladding has also been ordered and will be fitted by the plumber in due course.

New windows and door have been installed. Rear door is to be replaced with either a composite or PVC to include a thumb turn to allow easy exit in case of a fire.

The fire corridor to the first floor has been completed. This includes all decoration works.

The joiner has boarded the back office, removed the final pieces of the bar and boarded this.

The electrician has started the second fixing within the ground floor. Fire heads are still to be attached. New maglock system on the front door to be fitted.

The plumber will fit new radiators to the new reception area and meeting room.

The new blinds will be fitted on Monday 14th March 2022 throughout the full building.

New telephone cables need to be installed before the final works are completed. The engineer has been out and surveyed the building and said we may struggle to get a strong internet connection on the first floor therefore we may need to install a Wi-Fi port.

Document Solutions have said they can do this for an additional £24 per month for 3 years. I will discuss with TalkTalk about getting an Internet booster upstairs which will be a lot cheaper.

The new defibrillator cabinet is now here. Electrician will install on his next visit to the office.

Phase Two of the Office Refurbishment ideas to think of would be to fix or replace the roof and works to the Cellar. I will obtain quotes for these tasks and report at the next meeting.

Resolved 1. The project reports are approved.

8. CONSIDER PLANNING APPLICATIONS AND UPDATE ON PLANNING DECISIONS

New Planning Applications

- DM/22/00311/FPA - Spar Stores, Low Willington - Installation of CCTV and revised external lighting scheme

Standard Consultation Expiry Date - Tue 01 Mar 2022

- DM/21/04275/FPA - Black Horse Inn, 42 Low Willington - Retention of a raised seating area to front of main car park and retention of converted horse box to form hot food takeaway / outlet (08.00 - 14.00 M-F and 08.00 - 15.30 at weekends) with timber pergola low level fencing and covered seating area to rear

Standard Consultation Expiry Date - Tue 08 Mar 2022

- DM/22/00320/AD – Spar Stores, Low Willington - Display of 10 No. illuminated advertisements

Standard Consultation Expiry Date Tue 08 Mar 2022

- DM/22/00225/LB – Fallowfield, 71 Low Willington - Listed Building Consent for the removal of part of the internal wall between the ground floor kitchen/dining room

Standard Consultation Expiry Date - Wed 09 Mar 2022

- 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)

Standard Consultation Expiry Date - Fri 11 Mar 2022

- DRC/22/00060 - Spar Stores, Low Willington - Discharge of condition 2 (signage) pursuant to DM/21/01694/VOC

Standard Consultation Expiry Date - Mon 14 Mar 2022

- DM/22/00342/FPA - Land North West Of De Lisle, Whitworth Lane, Brancepeth - Construction of horse menage including new 1.2m post and rail fencing

Standard Consultation Expiry Date - Mon 14 Mar 2022

- DM/22/00047/FPA - Oak House, 21A Acorn Drive, Oakenshaw - Single storey rear extension

Standard Consultation Expiry Date - Thu 24 Mar 2022

Previous Planning Application Decisions

- DM/22/00313/NMA - Land Adjacent To (East) Ash Drive, Willington - Non-material amendment to condition 16 (archaeology) pursuant to DM/18/03443/OUT
Approved

Previous Planning Applications Waiting Decisions

- DM/20/01960/VOC – Land at Hawthorn Drive/Hill Meadows, Low Willington – Variation of condition 2 (approved plans) of planning permission 3/2013/0257 and DM/15/02380/VOC substitution of house types for 41 plots to northern part of site
- 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/21/03944/AD - 110 Commercial Street, Willington - Illuminated fascia sign
For Information Only - Standard Consultation Expiry Date – 06.01.2022

- DM/21/03906/FPA - The Barn, 3 Stockley Lane, Oakenshaw - Erection of a log cabin and general-purpose storage shed

For Information Only - Standard Consultation Expiry Date – 06.01.2022

- DM/21/03483/FPA - Land North West Of Unit 12, St Stephens Court, Willington - Erection of 250sqm industrial unit (use class E(g)II)).

Standard Consultation Expiry Date – 07.02.2022

- DM/22/00101/FPA - Willington Library, 46A High Street, Willington - Replacement roof and cladding
- DM/22/00094/FPA - Spar Stores, Low Willington - Change of use from domestic curtilage to part of petrol station forecourt with car parking, ancillary equipment, fencing and landscaping
- DM/22/00069/FPA - Finchale House, Laburnum Gardens, Willington – Self-contained annexe in rear garden for use as dwelling space for family member (retrospective)

Councillor Tinsley said residents living near the Black Horse Public House, have expressed concerns about catering odour, parking and the use of the main road.

He has emailed D.C.C

Parking is worse on match days.

Councillor Smith said it was good that the football team supports the pub.

PCSO Keith Jayne said if your car is parked on the drive it is an offence to park across your gates however if the drive is empty drivers can park there.

Councillor Tinsley said the 200 property development at Low Willington want to start phase 1 with 88 houses.

Neighbouring residents will be informed.

He said the number of Take Aways in the town had been discussed previously and opposed.

Members agreed that they will not support the start up of any more takeaways.

Resolved 1. To object to any further take away applications in Willington.

9. TO APPROVE THE BANK RECONCILIATION (February 2022)

The Clerk said.

The Council entered into February 2022 with a starting balance of £46,624.90

There was £16,879.74 spent and £9,811.78 received leaving an end balance of £39,556.94.

Proposed Councillor Smith

Seconded Councillor Elgie

10. TO APPROVE THE BUDGET REPORT

The Clerk said there has been expenditure £98,718.26 leaving an available resource on budget of £18,101.74

Proposed Councillor Elgie

Seconded Councillor Henfrey

11. TO CONSIDER CIVIC FUND APPLICATIONS

The Clerk said she had received a request from Ros Gasper, St Thomas Church to support World Day of Prayer.

Resolution 1. members agreed to make a £50.00 donation.

Proposed Councillor Smith

Seconded Councillor Tinsley

12. TO CONSIDER COMMUNITY FUND APPLICATIONS

None received

The Deputy Town Clerk said a thank you had been received from Chyrelle Adams Cancer Trust.

13. TO CONSIDER MATCH FUNDING THE GRGREATER WILLINGTON ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENT GROUPS WILLING TO BLOOM PHASE 2 PROJECT (GWEIG)

The Clerk said the Council is a partner in the environmental improvement work under taken by GWEIG which developed out of a previous Town Council Environment sub-committee. The provision of the town planters is an example of joint working. This arrangement has been maintained so that there is still another responsible body who can also apply for funds to improve aspects of the environment around the parish.

The group have new members and the Clerk has offered support to help them through the first phase of the Willing To Bloom project which has been successful.

They are now writing a funding application for phase two to AAP AB.

They have asked if the council will contribute £500 to continue bulb planting along the A690 corridor through Willington. This will include a crocus cloud, a river of colour below the Cenotaph and a continuation of planting above the Picture House.

County Councillors Gunn and Tinsley have also kindly allocated £1000 each.

Proposed Councillor Smith

Seconded Councillor Tinsley

Resolved 1. to match fund the project with £500

14. TO RECEIVE THE COUNTY COUNCILLORS REPORT

Councillor Tinsley said the Council Tax invoices are in circulation and there will be an increase in Council Tax.

Residents who don't pay by direct debit will need to register to receive the £150 energy bills rebate.

15. TO RECEIVE THE TOWN COUNCILLORS REPORT

The Clerk said she had received a request for evidence of written support from the Council to Victoria and Rosedale Allotment Association approving the introduction of a compostable toilet for disabled and school children using the Sensory Garden.

They will be submitting an AAP application.

Resolved 1. This request to build a compostable toilet on redundant land next to the Sensory Garden is approved.

16. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING.

12th April 2022 at 6pm