

GREATER WILLINGTON TOWN COUNCIL
Minutes of Ordinary Meeting
1st June 2016

IN ATTENDANCE

Councillor Tinsley, Councillor Henfrey, Councillor Townsend, Councillor Elgie,
Councillor Greensmith, Councillor Etherington
Emma Mennouni, Community Services Officer (minutes)

1. ACCEPTANCE OF APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor Carr, Councillor Todd, Councillor Cogdon, Councillor Graham and Helen Cogdon Town Clerk. Also from Olwyn Gunn County Councillor

Acceptance of apologies were proposed by Councillor Tinsley and seconded by Councillor Henfrey

2. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

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

Councillor Tinsley declared an interest in item 17 CAB Funding as he is providing funding for the same project as a County Councillor.

3. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Residents Agenda Items requested through the Clerk.

None received.

4. PRESENTATION BY DURHAM WILDLIFE TRUST ON THE ECOLOGY OF SOUTH DENE

Councillor Tinsley introduced Laura Tedstone from Durham Wildlife Trust who reported the following;

South Dene woodland has been designated as an ancient semi natural woodland. 'Ancient' meaning that there has been a wood continuously on this site since 1600. The woodland is in favourable condition ecologically speaking. The Environment Group has asked if DWT can be involved to assist and guide a local volunteer group to carry out management of the woodland. A basic management plan will be written up showing the times of year to carry out certain tasks, how to do the task and why.

A recent botanical assessment survey carried out by volunteers including those from the Environment Group provided data on ancient woodland indicator species confirming the designation. The data collected also confirmed the favourable condition of the woodland against specified conditions - amounts of standing and lying deadwood, % native tree species for example. The group also concluded that the bluebells within the woodland were a mix of hybrid, Spanish and English bluebells. Our survey noted all species as 'bluebells' and they were abundant throughout the woodland and were recorded in 10 out of the 11 transects walked. The lovely Goldilocks Buttercup was also found on site during the survey.

There are areas of hazel which could be coppiced to prolong their life. The coppice could be used for pea sticks within the local community allotments.

The woodland has good access with a well maintained path providing a circular walk around the woodland. The footpaths may need to be strimmed back and over hanging vegetation cut back on occasion. There are areas of litter but apart from the culvert area the litter is minimal for such a well-used site. The unblocking of the culvert has been addressed with DCC. There is an issue with fly tipping down the steep sided bank above the culvert. If this was blocked off restricting access this would decrease the possibility of the culvert blocking. We could also address the amount of debris coming down the burn by adding check dams to counteract erosion by reducing water flow velocity.

The local secondary school will be carrying out a litter pick and I will take the opportunity to meet with them to raise their awareness of how important their woodland is. I also plan to engage with the primary school and will offer them outdoor learning sessions within the wood focusing on woodland habitat and mini beasts. I also aim to build confidence within the teaching staff to use the woodland as a learning source. There may be a possibility for the school to design an interpretation sign if funds could be made available. This would give the pupils ownership of their wood as well as promoting to the wider public.

Councillor Tinsley thanked Laura for her presentation.

5. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING ON THE 18TH MAY 2016

The minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting on 18th May 2016 as printed and circulated were approved and taken as a true record.

Proposed Councillor Henfrey

Seconded Councillor Elgie

Matters arising (for information only)

None

6. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING ON THE 18TH MAY 2016

The minutes of the Annual General Meeting on the 18th May 2016 as printed and circulated were approved and taken as a true record.

Proposed Councillor Tinsley

Seconded Councillor Henfrey

Matters arising (for information only)

None

7. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS ORDINARY MEETING ON THE 18TH MAY 2016

The minutes of the previous Ordinary Meeting on the 18th May 2016 as printed and circulated were approved and taken as a true record.

Proposed Councillor Elgie

Seconded Councillor Henfrey

Matters arising (for information only)

None

8. TO CONSIDER NEW PLANNING APPLICATIONS

- Land to the South East of Unit 8 Harvey Court, Low Willington – Motor vehicle repair/MOT testing station and workshop vary conditions 2,3, 5, 6 and 7
No comments received
- 1 Rosedale Terrace, Willington – Single storey rear extension
No comments received

9. CONFIRMATION OF OUTSTANDING PLANNING APPLICATION DECISIONS

- 62 Abbots Green, Willington – Single storey rear extension
Approved
- 7 Burn Place, Willington – Retention of timber shed to front garden and retention of 1.25m high fence to front
Approved
- Willington Methodist Church, Lydia Street, Willington – Conversion of church and village hall now disused to residential dwelling
Approved
- 11 Carville Estate, Willington – Detached dwelling and alterations to existing bungalow (resubmission)
Approved

10. CONSIDERATION OF THE ALLOTMENT REPORT

In Councillor Grahams absence Emma Mennouni reported there were no issues on allotment sites. Inspections will take place next month. The refurbishment works to Springfield Allotments is now complete. Good feedback has been received from the tenants on site.

11. TO RECEIVE THE TOWN COUNCILLORS MONTHLY REPORT

Councillor Henfrey said there had been an article in the Northern Echo where they have 30 defibrillators free. He suggested Emma and Councillor Tinsley apply via email before the closing date.

Councillor Elgie said there are potholes on the roads between the two care homes on Hall Lane Estate. Emma Mennouni will report to DCC.

12. TO RECEIVE THE COUNTY COUNCILLORS MONTHLY REPORT

The Annual General Meeting of DCC was held on Wednesday 25th May 2016. Councillor Edward Bell is the Chairman for 2016/2017. Councillor Michael Dixon is the Vice Chairman.

13. TO APPROVE THE BANK RECONCILIATION

The Bank Reconciliation starting 1st May 2016 was £9,888.54 with credits of £23,779.74 and minus debits of £13,993.01 leaving a balance of £19,675.27 on the 31st May 2016.

Proposed Councillor Tinsley

Seconded Councillor Greensmith

14. TO APPROVE THE BUDGET REPORT

The budget for 2016/2017 has increased to £119,479.60 after transferring £4,000 from Allotment Reserves. Spend to date is £13,962.87 and committed costs of £14,986.97 leaving an available resource on budget of £90,529.76.

Proposed Councillor Henfrey
Seconded Councillor Elgie

15. TO CONSIDER COMMUNITY FUND APPLICATIONS,

Greater Willington Environmental Improvement Group has applied for £500 towards restocking the 12 planters around the area

The total project cost is £740.

Resolved 1. Approval in principle of £500 subject to receiving signed accounts and constitution.

Proposed Councillor Henfrey
Seconded Councillor Etherington

16. TO CONSIDER CIVIC FUND APPLICATIONS

No new applications received

17. APPROVAL OF FUNDING FOR PROJECT(S)

Previously approved project funding includes the CCTV project and the refurbishment of the play park on the town green.

New projects for discussion are as follows;

• **CAB**

A letter has been received from Citizens Advice County Durham requesting consideration of funding one day a week service of advice to residents of Willington at a cost of £7,000 per annum. They intend to provide three days in Willington with funding already been approved for two days from County Councillor Gunn and County Councillor Tinsley both providing £7,000 each from their Neighbourhood Budgets. Demand is high for this service and during 2015/16 496 clients from Willington used CAB services.

They would use the Town Council office for three days a week for this service.

This was **APPROVED**.

Proposed Councillor Greensmith
Seconded Councillor Etherington

• **Office Move**

The move to the new office has been successful. There are only minor things to do around the office to complete. Having the bigger office space is much better for meeting purposes and storage space.

The signage for the front of the office is still ongoing. Quotes have been received and are in the region of approximately £1,000.

Councillor Tinsley showed members a draft design for the new signage options.

Resolved1. Approval in principle the new signage up to a cost of £1,000.

Proposed Councillor Tinsley
Seconded Councillor Henfrey

Councillor Tinsley suggested getting a TV to place on the wall in the meeting room for use with presentations etc. Councillors agreed this would be a good idea. Councillor Tinsley said a decent TV which would be used would be in the region of around £500 and asked for approval from members.

Resolved2. Approval in principle for a TV up to £500.

Proposed councillor Greensmith

Seconded Councillor Henfrey

18. MEETING ROOM POLICY

Councillor Tinsley tabled a draft meeting room policy to all members detailing the following;

GWTC meeting space (Council Chamber) will be made available to organisations which represent all communities within the Town Council boundary.

Bookings may only be made by Town Councillors and at least one Town Councillor or GWTC employee or agreed representative of the council must be in attendance at any event booked. They are responsible for holding the key and opening / closing the premises.

Bookings will be subject to the authorisation of the Mayor, in his/her absence, the Deputy Mayor and in the absence of both Mayor and Deputy Mayor a designated Member of GWTC with delegated authority of the Mayor, in his/her absence the Deputy Mayor.

A nominal charge of £5 (to cover power and heating costs etc.) will be made to any organisation for use of the meeting space for a period up to 2 hours. Booking will be made via Town Council staff that will refer for authorisation to elected Members as described above and maintain a diary of bookings made.

The setting out and clearing away will be carried out by the booking organisation under the direction of the attending Councillor / employee / representative.

The right to refuse the use of the meeting space is reserved.

This policy will be reviewed annually at the GWTC AGM.

Resolved1. To approve the policy

Proposed Councillor Tinsley

Seconded Councillor Henfrey

19. EMAIL / WEBSITE UPDATE

Councillor Etherington said he will be updating the website with all current up to date information and relevant documents. He will look at updating the cookie policy on the website too.

He said he will be able to make new email addresses for all councillors and put in a redirection so that all the emails to the new email addresses will be sent to the current email addresses that councillors now use. This is so that all councillors have an email containing gwtc.

20. DATE OF OPENING

Councillor Tinsley has approached Ron Hogg, Police and Crime Commissioner to officially open the new office on the 8th July 2016. We are just awaiting confirmation. The proposal is to open the doors to the office at 4pm with the official opening at 6pm. Light refreshments will be served.

21. ANY OTHER BUSINESS (for information only)

The funding for the CCTV project has now come through from DCC. Works should commence sometime in July.

Dale and Valley Homes Area Customer Panel are holding their Street Party for the Queens 90th Birthday tomorrow (Thursday 2nd June 2016) starting at 1pm till 4pm. All are welcome.

22. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Wednesday 6th July 2016 at 6.30pm