

GREATER WILLINGTON TOWN COUNCIL
Minutes of Ordinary Meeting
1st July 2015

IN ATTENDANCE

Councillor Tinsley, Councillor Henfrey, Councillor Townsend, Councillor Carr,
Councillor Graham, Councillor Smith, Councillor Elgie
Helen Cogdon, Town Clerk,

1. ACCEPTANCE OF APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Emma Mennouni, Councillor Greensmith,
Councillor Todd, Councillor Etherington and Councillor Cogdon.
County Councillor Gunn.

Acceptance of apologies were proposed by Councillor Henfrey and seconded by
Councillor Carr.

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 7.i as he has an allotment tenancy.

3. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Residents Agenda Items requested through the Clerk.

John Spencer, Oakenshaw Community Association Chairman, introduced Emma Foster
who will be acting as Secretary. Councillor Tinsley welcomed Emma and asked that
they convey the council's best wishes to Nicola Parker who is unwell.

John Spencer said the Community Day Trip to Whitby had gone well. Councillor
Graham said he had, had a good day.

Talks are ongoing with Banks regarding the Nature Reserve there will be another
meeting next week. The Steering Group consists of Fraser Tinsley, The Town Clerk,
John Spencer, Jon Huston and Banks. Councillor Tinsley said he proposed to continue
with this Committee arrangement. This was AGREED.

If the project goes forward Banks have agreed to meet the Council's legal costs of £750
plus vat to formalise the Heads of Terms Document and management arrangements.

With regard to ongoing maintenance work in the Nature Reserve, Oakenshaw
Community Association propose to resurface the path leading to the ponds. The cost of
this will be iro 2.5k. Mr Spencer said in view of the forthcoming partnership arrangement
he asked if the council would like to match fund the work.

This was AGREED in principle subject to written quotations.

4. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS ORDINARY MEETING ON THE 3rd JUNE 2015

The minutes of the 3rd June 2015 as printed and circulated were approved and taken as a true record.

Proposed Councillor Carr

Seconded Councillor Henfrey

Matters arising (for information only)

Item 12. Councillor Tinsley said the Oakenshaw Neighbourhood Planning group had met with D.C.C Planning Officers to discuss the content of the Plan. It is proposed that the Neighbourhood Plan boundary extends from Oakenshaw to Brancepeth, subject to agreement from Brancepeth Parish Council.

Item 14. Councillor Tinsley said he and County Councillor Gunn had met with D.C.C Highway Officers to discuss parking in the High Street. They have suggested usage of the parking bays would be improved by increasing the parking time from 30 minutes to 3 hours.

Cars parked at the Post Office and on Commercial Street do create pinch points which has the advantage of slowing traffic. However it is difficult to satisfy everyone's differing opinions in this matter. The production of a Leaflet is being considered.

Public consultation on proposals will be undertaken.

Item 15. Councillor Tinsley said with regard to the Oakenshaw footpath. Mr John Spencer had spoken to D.C.C who have confirmed that there is no money available to widen the footpath. He considered that the work was of a poor quality and weeds were growing through the surfacing.

D.C.C have now added Oakenshaw path to the Schedule of Works and it will be receiving attention.

John Spencer thanked County Councillor Gunn and Tinsley for their help in progressing this matter.

5. TO CONSIDER NEW PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Garage Plots 13 and 14 Sycamore Grove, Willington – Retention of garage and erection of double garage on land adjacent to Sycamore Grove.

Councillor Carr declared an interest in this matter.

The application is retrospective and work has now stopped. D.C.C Highways have no objections and there is no detrimental effect on visual amenity providing it is for residential use.

6. CONFIRMATION OF OUTSTANDING PLANNING APPLICATION DECISIONS

17 Prospect Terrace, Willington - Flexible change of use of an existing dwelling (Use Class C3) to a mixed residential and business use (Use Class C3 and Sui Generis) including new access arrangements and the creation of a hard standing turning area
Councillor Tinsley said he had made representations in response to resident requests which D.C.C Highways Officers had considered and determined that the turning circle was acceptable.

Hillcrest 25 Cumberland Terrace, Willington – Application to vary condition 5 of Application DM/14/01112/FPA to increase upper age limit of residents to 19 years.

There had been objections from neighbouring homes. This had subsequently been approved under delegated powers.

Hillcrest 25 Cumberland Terrace, Willington - Application to replace garage door with windows and revision of on-site parking arrangements. Approved

17 Rockingham Road, Sunnybrow - Single Storey rear extension. Approved

31 Hall Lane Estate, Willington –Retention of single storey rear extension. Approved

7. CONSIDERATION OF THE ALLOTMENT REPORT

Councillor Graham said the date for this year’s Allotment Inspections is the 16th July 2015. All Councillors are welcome to attend.

The Clerk has asked the tenant of Plot 13 Springfield to vacate due to neglect. Having met with the tenant she has determined that the site is not suitable for the tenants needs.

It is proposed to divide this site into two plots. The garden will not be relet until decisions are agreed on the proposed improvement works to the site boundary.

Plot 4 Oakenshaw the tenant has cleared the site and informed staff that she does not want to continue gardening. Despite the garden being demanded by an Oakenshaw resident the plot will be let from the Waiting List. It is not acceptable for staff to be subject to abusive and intimidating behaviour.

There has been a report of a van at Oakenshaw in the middle of the night owned by someone who has previous conviction for stealing from Allotments.

i) Proposal to improve the Springfield Allotment hedge and path

Councillor Tinsley said he had visited Springfield Allotment with Councillor Graham to look at improvements to the boundary path and hedge. It is proposed to progress the refurbishment by gaining quotes for the work to the footpath. Work to the boundary fence will be postponed pending the outcome of the West Road Planning application.

8. TO RECIEVE THE TOWN COUNCILLORS MONTHLY REPORT

Councillor Elgie said there is dog fouling at the top of Sunnybrow. She was advised to report it to D.C.C Help desk with the exact location, time and details of the dog.

Councillor Tinsley said there was a new residents Newsletter regarding the Sunnybrow Planning Application. There are no Committee Dates as yet for Sunnybrow and West Road Applications.

Councillor Townsend said as a new member she was impressed with the work of the Town Council.

Councillor Graham said G.W.E.I.G would be undertaking clearance work around the Bandstand in North Dene.

Councillor Henfrey said thankyou to the Clerk for work she had done organising the clearing of backyards in privately rented houses.

Councillor Smith said the private rented properties on the High Street and near Kensington Terrace continue to be a problem with anti social behaviour leaving elderly residents stressed.

Currently there are problems with noise from quad bikes, a dog with puppies left unattended who had bitten a resident, cars being repaired in the street.

Councillor Smith has reported this to the PACT meeting. Also spoken to D.C.C staff who were lovely people, on both occasions she has been advised to ring 101.

Councillor Tinsley said the private rented properties in High Street, Hutton Terrace, Mill Street and Kensington Tce continue to be a real problem. There are mechanisms to remove people from properties who behave badly. However this would benefit from landlord involvement.

He has spoken to D.C.C Anti Social Behaviour Officers and Pat Glass M.P who has visited the area and sees this issue as a neighbourhood priority. Councillor Tinsley is making progress with one letting agent who is working with him to move towards a section 21 Order.

Durham Constabulary are logging all incidents but also saying that they are inter related. However there has been a noticeable increase in police presence. The issue remains in the area because of an over supply of property with a low rent occupied by anti social tenants with no regard to the quiet enjoyment of neighbouring properties.

Ron Hogg, the Police Commissioner is also asking if we can have a push on anti social behaviour. There are plans to support this with a safe letter scheme.

The infrastructure works on the South Dene Restoration work is now complete with new footpaths, drainage and bridge. Thank you to Janet and Peter Slootweg who have carried out the Woodland research work and designed the Display Boards. The Clerk has raised funds from County Councillor Gunn and Buckham and the AAP.

Councillor Tinsley said the Town Clerk has been looking to identify a suitable dedicated storage space for Town Council assets. She has been in discussions with D.C.C with regard to acquiring the Chapel of Rest.

D.C.C. Clerk of Works is currently assessing the condition of the building.

9. TO RECIEVE THE COUNTY COUNCILLORS MONTHLY REPORT

Councillor Tinsley said;

Proposals are being examined to site a kissing gate on the path to the rear of St Thomas Church, in front of Cumberland Terrace to deter quad bikes.

The results for the vote on the Pound Shop mural have now been counted by Parkside Academy pupils they were...

Option 1. Do nothing and leave the mural in its current form.26

Option 2. Paint over the mural with cream paint – removing the mural.86

Option 3. Paint over the mural with cream paint – removing the mural and providing an area for local Schools to design and paint new smaller murals.23

Quotes are being gained iro £600. The costs will be shared between GWTC and the two Durham County Councillors.

Councillor Tinsley said the D.C.C Budget is now 550 million. D.C.C are being instructed by central government to cut this by a further 100 million in 2017/18. D.C.C are making every effort to retain services and we may see an increase in next weeks final budget. However in 2020 D.C.C will have half the budget to operate with from what they had in 2010.

The Play Area review is going to Cabinet and it is looking favourable that D.C.C will be able to meet the maintenance and insurance costs for the Town Green play space until the end of its natural lifespan.

Councillor Tinsley said he was chairing the AAP Employment and Job Prospects group. The group is undertaking a Scoping Exercise and looking at Careers for young people.

He and the Clerk have been supporting Parkside Academy School Council in organising their Inspire Day. It was well attended by 140 pupils and its something he hopes to continue on a quarterly basis.

10. TO APPROVE THE BANK RECONCILIATION

The Clerk said;

The Bank Reconciliation starting 1st June 2015 was £14,468.35 with credits of £2.59 and minus debits of £5,426.67 leaving a balance of £9,044.27 on the 30th June 2015.

Proposed Councillor Henfrey

Seconded Councillor Tinsley

11. TO APPROVE THE BUDGET REPORT

The Clerk said the budget for 2015/16 is £99,500. Spend to date £18,971.02 with a further £1,564.09 committed. Leaving an available resource on budget of £78,964.89

Proposed Councillor Henfrey

Seconded Councillor Tinsley

12. TO CONSIDER COMMUNITY FUND APPLICATIONS

None Received

13. TO CONSIDER CIVIC FUND APPLICATIONS

There is an outstanding request from last year to make a donation on an annual basis To the Great North Air Ambulance. This is a Registered Charity that does not receive any government funding. Each life saving mission costs £2500 and means that patients can be in Hospital inside 15 minutes.

The Clerk recommended £50. This was AGREED.

14. ANY OTHER BUSINESS (for information only)

Councillor Smith said she had attended the 20 year Service for County Durham Foundation.

21. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Wednesday 2nd September 2015 at 6.30 pm

Section B

The Clerk distributed Councillor Training and Information packs.