

GREATER WILLINGTON TOWN COUNCIL
Minutes of Ordinary Meeting
2nd March 2016

IN ATTENDANCE

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

1. ACCEPTANCE OF APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor Carr, Councillor Etherington, Councillor Smith, Councillor Cogdon and Town Clerk Helen Cogdon.

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

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.

All councillors declared an interest in item 5. The owner of our new town council office has submitted a change of use planning application.

3. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Residents Agenda Items requested through the Clerk.

None received.

4. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS ORDINARY MEETING ON THE 3rd FEBRUARY 2016

The minutes of the 3rd February 2016 as printed and circulated were approved and taken as a true record.

Proposed Councillor Graham

Seconded Councillor Henfrey

Matters arising (for information only)

Nothing to report regarding the North Dene at the moment.

Items on Part B have been actioned.

5. TO CONSIDER NEW PLANNING APPLICATIONS

- **2 Snowden Terrace, Willington – Single storey extension to rear**

No comments received

- **The Market, 67 High Street, Willington – Change of use of former public house (A4) to Civic Offices (Sui Generis)**

No comments received

- **Goodwell Field Cottage, Brancepeth – Discharge conditions 3,4 & 5 of listed building consent DM/15/03140/LB**

No comments received.

6. CONFIRMATION OF OUTSTANDING PLANNING APPLICATION DECISIONS

- Stonechester, North Lane, Willington – Retention of newly created door opening within farmhouse
Approved

7. CONSIDERATION OF THE ALLOTMENT REPORT

Councillor Tinsley declared an interest as he has an allotment at Springfield.

Season 2016-2017 is about to start. Many tenants have already starting digging and rotivating their gardens.

The hedges have been cut at Oakenshaw and Springfield allotments.

There is still a healthy waiting list for all three sites.

Three residents have been asked to confirm their intentions to cultivate their plots.

Some of which have not been done for 2 years. These tenants have paid full rent because of this.

There has been a problem with rats at Oakenshaw Allotments. One tenant is giving up his gardens for this reason.

Emma Mennouni will be issuing the invoices for 2016-2017 rents. She will also be issuing a Revision of Rent to each tenant detailing the rents for 2017-2018. We usually increase rents by 5% each year.

Average rents for each site range from;

Oakenshaw £51 - £57

Park Top £45 - £54

Springfield £55 - £72

Springfield Allotment Association usually receives 5% of the total income from all Springfield tenants as they collect the rents on behalf of the town council.

Councillor Graham asked what members opinions would be on freezing the allotment rents for 2017-2018.

It was agreed to freeze the rents

Proposed Councillor Henfrey

Seconded Councillor Greensmith

We introduced a Deposit Scheme last year. This is where new tenants pay a £50.00 deposit on taking a plot. If the tenant leaves the plot at a later date in a good condition, their £50 will be returned to them. If the garden is in a mess, then the deposit is retained and used to bring the garden back to a condition to relet.

When the garden is left in a bad condition and no deposit was paid, we must clean the garden before a new tenant can accept the plot so costs will be incurred by the town council to do this but the new tenant coming on to this garden will then pay the Deposit Scheme of £50.00.

Councillor Tinsley asked what happens if tenants are on low incomes and can't afford to pay the allotment rent and the deposit scheme all at one time. Councillor Graham said there is discretion for tenants to come in to the council office and speak to staff and agree some kind of plan which they can both agree.

The road at Springfield still needs doing. Councillor Graham asked if he can progress forward getting quotes to have this done.

Councillor Tinsley said he had spoken to the developers of who will be building the houses at the rear of the allotments. They have informed him that there is no set date of when their work will start. He suggested Councillor Graham push ahead with getting quotes and see what's next.

Councillor Graham said there is £1682 in our reserves which belongs to Springfield Allotment Association. It was suggested to speak to the Association regarding using this money towards the road. With additional surplus that has accumulated from the allotment budget we are on track for the works to be done. A large skip costs around £300. We would need approximately 8-10 skips to remove all the waste that has been left at the top of the allotments. In total, this project will cost IRO of £5k. Councillor Graham said he will look at prices and report back.

8. TO RECEIVE THE TOWN COUNCILLORS MONTHLY REPORT

Councillor Graham said the sinks in the High Street need emptying. Also, the guttering needs cleaning and a street cleaner out to tidy up the area. Emma Mennouni informed members this had been reported and references numbers provided by Durham County Council.

Councillor Tinsley said the funding from the AAP was approved for the CCTV project. Start date for the project will be May 2016 and should be in place by September 2016. He had met with the contractors and everything is in place. Police are happy about this. Additional cameras can be added when money becomes available.

Regarding the Queens 90th Birthday, Councillor Tinsley and County Councillor Gunn had visited Graeme Hopper who has agreed to provide our brazier. Assets at DCC have been contacted to get permission for this. We are just awaiting a response. There will be a socket in the ground. The brazier will be put in for events and taken out at the end and stored. Subject to getting permission from assets, it will be in place by the Queen's Birthday celebrations. A budget has been allocated for this brazier for £2000 which includes the socket. The original prices we looked at didn't include the socket.

The latest town council newsletter is being drafted. Councillors have been asked to provide an update about themselves to go in the newsletter and will also be used for the website. There is lots of information to go in this time.

There will be a road closure from West Road heading to Crook due to improvement works. The engineer has informed that it will be for three weekends commencing on 5th March 2016. There will be diversions in place.

There are some potholes to the rear of the High Street, at the Allotments and the rear of the Phoenix Christian Centre. Councillor Tinsley informed he may be able to access some materials in order to fill these holes.

9. TO RECEIVE THE COUNTY COUNCILLORS MONTHLY REPORT

County Councillor Gunn said the CCTV project is well worthwhile in Willington. The application was successful at the AAP meetings. Willington overall did well at the meeting as Parkside Academy and Cornerstones each received funding for their projects also.

Herself and Councillor Tinsley had helped the police with a Community Speedwatch at Brancepeth. Out of all cars travelling on that road that morning, only 2 were over the limit. They are hoping to set one up on Hunwick Lane as this area remains a problem.

The DCC budget has been set, which again isn't good news. Figures were only received at the end of February.
£211million additional pounds were given to help authorities. Durham got none of that.
£11.9 million went to Surrey, Hampshire received £9.4 Million.
Durham has an £11million reduction.

Social Care Precept and Local Authorities can apply. DCC will be charging this at 2%
Will raise 3.5million for Durham this year.
Using some of the reserves to keep the frontline services.
Social Care bill will keep rising.

Durham has had cuts of 150million since 2011.

Non statutory school transport consultation ended November 2015. They are removing the discretionary school transport. Support may be put in place for families.
750,000 savings

Consultation – non residential social care

Unemployment is high in the area.

Dog microchipping event will be held at Dovedale Community Centre on Monday 25th April 2016 from 11am till 3pm. It is hosted by Dale and Valley Homes and working in partnership with DCC and the Dogs Trust. By April 2016 all dogs must be microchipped by law.

Regarding Devolution, no decision has been made yet. Special group meeting will be held next week.

A decision about the DLI has been made previously. In the new premises it is more accessible and free.

10. TO APPROVE THE BANK RECONCILIATION

The Bank Reconciliation starting 1st February 2016 was £5,900.76 with credits of £10,150.00 and minus debits of £4,444.34 leaving a balance of £11,606.42 on the 29th February 2016.

Proposed Councillor Tinsley
Seconded Councillor Henfrey

11. TO APPROVE THE BUDGET REPORT

The budget for 2015/16 has increased to £119,067 following a successful tree grant application. Spend to date £90,672.68 with a further £452.00 committed. Leaving an available resource on budget of £27,942.32

Proposed Councillor Tinsley
Seconded Councillor Greensmith

Councillor Tinsley said that the budget allocation for Staffing will run over budget by around £400 until the end of March. He asked for approval to move the remaining £500 from Contingency to cover this.

This was approved

Proposed Councillor Tinsley

Seconded Councillor Graham

12. TO CONSIDER COMMUNITY FUND APPLICATIONS

A Community Fund application for £500 was received from Willington Football Club to help pay for a new pathway behind the changing rooms. The area is currently grassed but used regularly as a pathway. The pathway will also be lit. Total cost of the project is £1200.

Resolved1. To approve £500

Proposed Councillor Tinsley

Seconded Councillor Graham

Willington Disabled Club who have been based at Rosedale Community Centre for 30 years are relocating to Willington Methodist Open Door Church from March 2016.

They are asking for £500 towards the cost of one year room hire which will be charged at £25 per session which will include refreshments. Total cost is £1300. The Club has never paid such room hire in the past.

Resolved1. To approve £500

Proposed Councillor Tinsley

Seconded Councillor Henfrey

Following the last meeting, CHI TaeKwonDo has submitted their constitution as requested. Their cheque can now be issued.

Willington Angling Club has not come back to us with their additional information. This was deferred again until we receive the information we requested.

13. TO CONSIDER CIVIC FUND APPLICATIONS

None received. No remaining funds on budget.

A letter of thanks has been received from The Childrens Hospice for their £50.00 donation.

14. ANY OTHER BUSINESS (for information only)

Councillor Tinsley said he had spoken to our current landlord and explained our intentions to move to a larger office.

The building work for the new office will start next week and will take approximately one month to complete.

15. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Wednesday 6th April 2016 at 6.30 pm

Meeting closed at 7.50pm