

GREATER WILLINGTON TOWN COUNCIL
Minutes of Ordinary Meeting
8th January 2014

IN ATTENDANCE

Councillor Tinsley, Councillor Cogdon, Councillor Etherington,
Councillor Carr, Councillor Bennett, Councillor Smith,
Councillor Greensmith,
County Councillor Gunn
Helen Cogdon, Town Clerk
Emma Mennouni, Community Services Officer

Councillor Tinsley welcomed everyone to the meeting.
He outlined housekeeping rules and asked that everyone present turns off mobile phones and electronic equipment during the conduct of council business.

1. ACCEPTANCE OF APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor Henfrey and Councillor Buckham

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

2. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

None received

3. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Resident's agenda items requested through the Clerk.

Mrs Ather's statements were received by the Planning Committee

4. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS ORDINARY MEETING

4TH DECEMBER 2013

The minutes of the meeting on the 4th December 2013 as printed and circulated were approved and taken as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

Proposed Councillor Carr

Seconded Councillor Cogdon

Matters arising (for information only)

The Clerk said she had acted on Councillor Graham request to determine how to tidy up the private garages behind West End Tce.

Addison's Agents have said that they collect the ground rent and would not offer advice/ assistance on how the owners could be contacted or the

area improved.

As the council is unable to list names and addresses, she has asked that D.C.C takes this matter forward as unsafe and untidy land.

5. TO CONSIDER THE ALLOTMENT REPORT

In the absence of Councillor Graham this report was deferred.

The Clerk said development work with Springfield Allotment Association was ongoing and will be picked up again following the Christmas break with the new committee.

6. TO CONSIDER THE RESOURCE REPORT

The Clerk reported that

Total spend to date £70,211.40

Committed costs £893.39

Available resource on budget £30,979.12

The statement of accounts records the current account balance as £12,058.14.

The Town Council has received;

An application from Equalities Officer for Education, Children and Adult Services for funding towards a Holocaust Memorial Day event at Durham Cathedral on the 27th January 2014. This includes a session with Ruth Barnett, a holocaust survivor and a slide show.

The funding will assist the provision of small flat screen televisions that will be fixed to the cathedral pillars. Parkside Academy children will attend. GWTC sponsored this event last year.

Recommend1. £50

Proposed Councillor Tinsley

Seconded Councillor Carr

An application from County Durham School Benevolent fund for funding to assist needy families in County Durham with the purchase of shoes and winter coats for children.

To be eligible to apply parents must be in receipt of benefits entitling children to receive free school meals. Each child receives £35.00 towards the cost of shoes and a winter coat.

GWTC sponsored this scheme last year.

Recommend 1. £50

Proposed Councillor Smith

Seconded Councillor Tinsley

A letter from Willington Luncheon Club for a donation towards a Birthday Party in February for the Club. The Club established in 2002 and provides

a three course lunch for 25 – 30 elderly and disabled residents.

Recommend 1. £50

Proposed Councillor Tinsley

Seconded Councillor Carr

No new Community Fund applications have been received. This budget is now complete.

However Greater Durham Citizens Advice Bureau have made a request for match funding to provide an outreach service from the Resource Centre for a further year.

The project expenditure is £8500. A breakdown has been provided. This is for 44 sessions of 4 x 45 minute appointments £4572.04 plus supervision costs £942.00, Travel and Training £480.00, Volunteer Training £763.00 and C.A.B central costs £1742.96.

Councillor Gunn has confirmed that Wca are providing the room hire free of charge.

CAB email on the 20th December 2013 described as an update confirms that

£5000 AAP is secured subject to match funding of £3500

County Councillors Gunn and Buckham have agreed to provide £1500 each.

GDCAB are requesting £500 from the Town Council.

Recommend1. £500

Proposed Councillor Tinsley

Seconded Councillor Cogdon

7. TO RECEIVE TOWN COUNCILLOR REPORTS

Councillor Smith said Kensington Tce Road surface was in a poor state of repair and she has passed this to D.C.C.

Councillor Greensmith said she had received a complaint regarding overgrown trees at Cambridge Ave. The Clerk said this matter had been reported to D.C.C some time ago and discussed with Darren Hunt. She will ask why work has not been carried out.

Councillor Greensmith said she also had a problem with trees over growing from the Spectrum Trust site. The Clerk said the council will look at the legislation regarding neighbouring trees.

Councillor Cogdon said Councillor Buckham had contacted him over Christmas to ask the Clerk to use the emergency number regarding the Christmas Tree that had snapped due to the high winds.

The Clerk worked with Direct Services to ensure that the power supply was made safe and the tree removed.

Councillor Cogdon said the National Tree Planting Week event had gone well at Willington wood. We now have three more Oaks and a Sweet and a

Horse Chestnut.

Thanks to Graham Sewell, Alan Townsend and Olwyn Gunn and Ken Manton who joined us.

Councillor Tinsley said it was unfortunate that the Christmas tree had been damaged. However the use of small crowd barriers so that the tree could be seen had been successful.

He thanked everyone who had worked with the council to organise the Civic Carol Service. Particularly Father Murphy, Frances Gowland, the children's choir from Our Lady and St Thomas School, Aycliffe and Brancepeth Brass Band and fellow councillors who had given the readings.

He said the Christmas lights had gone to plan and he thanked Helen and Emma for organising the event and Willington Lodge of Freemasons for their support and use of the premises.

In his Civic capacity he will be attending an event at the Town Hall Durham on Burns Night to represent GWTC.

8. TO RECEIVE COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORTS

County Councillor Gunn said that Brian Myers had been awarded his Certificate as Honorary Alderman. The Clerk confirmed that a letter had been sent from the council congratulating him on this achievement. Councillor Gunn said there were going to be further cuts. This time to the Revenue Support Grant. i.e 30 million 2014/15 and 40 million 2015/16

There has been major consultation on the 2015 D.C.C Budget.

There are savings or cuts that must equal a third of the current budget i.e 223.38 million.

Simon Henig has said this is one of the most difficult period the authority has ever faced.

The reality is that the County must set a budget that balances.

The Budgeting Consultation was attended by 10,693 people.

For the GWTC area this was held at Crook as part of the Participatory Budgeting voting event.

Some results were surprising for example. From the 2000 responses to questions on garden waste. 50% were willing to pay the £25.00 annual charge to have the waste collected.

Councillor Gunn has the consultation results.

Councillor Tinsley said he went to the event and couldn't fill in the form to decide what to cut.

Councillor Gunn said it was important to consider all legal responsibilities including schools and education and protection of vulnerable people.

Councillor Cogdon said it's difficult but we must protect all statutory elements. We can't cut any more transport and lose further bus services.

The Libraries are on reduced hours and many closed and we seem to accept that street lighting will be dimmed after 12 pm particularly in less travelled rural areas.

Councillor Gunn said Durham County is in a better position since it became a Unitary Authority. D.C.C were doing their best to find innovative ways to provide services and still meet the cuts required of the area by central government.

For example after the change to Unitary status, work with the Primary Care Trust ensured that any underspend was transferred to D.C.C. This helped to provide increased gritting in winter months.

The Housing Stock Transfer is proceeding. The Homes and Community Agency will notify D.C.C of the outcome of their application by mid March. If it is approved the Transfer will then go to a Tenants Ballot.

Councillor Gunn has progressed the Street Lighting complaints. She has had the lighting levels and selective design checks completed. The Light in the GWTC area comply with the required standard.

She said that this may not be what people want but there is a saving of 2 Million a year by using LED lighting.

However it is the perceived fear of crime that concerned most residents.

The Clerk circulated an email from County Councillor Buckham concerning land at Rectory Gardens where he would like to run a pilot Resident Caretaking Scheme to combat antisocial behaviour, drug use and chronic dog fouling.

Final management and land ownership contractual issues would need to be resolved. However at this stage he is requesting approval to develop a project proposal with the Clerk so that informed decisions can be made.

This was **AGREED**.

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS (for information only)

None

10. DATE AND TIME OF THE NEXT MEETING

5th February 2014 at 7.00pm

5th February 2014