

GREATER WILLINGTON TOWN COUNCIL
Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting
13th December 2022

IN ATTENDANCE

Councillor Smith, Councillor Berry, Councillor Elgie, Councillor C Hales,
Councillor D Hales, Councillor McArdle, Councillor Tinsley, Councillor Jackson
Councillor Jordan
Helen Cogdon, Town Clerk (TC) (minutes)

1. ACCEPTANCE OF APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were apologies from County Councillor Gunn, Councillor Henfrey, Councillor Savage, Councillor McArdle and Emma McCann.

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 Elgie declared an interest in Item 15. as Chair of the Dovedale Bingo Group.

3. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Resident agenda items requested through the Clerk

Mr Logan expressed his views on the Council's process to inform tenants about the Springfield Allotment Association and the establishment of the proposed Community Garden.

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

Page 1. There has been a meeting with a Springfield Allotment representative regarding the Allotment Association. A further meeting is to be arranged in the new year.

Page 4. Fencing at Park Top has been delayed due to supply issues.

Any other matters arising will be covered in reports.

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

Proposed Councillor Berry

Seconded Councillor Smith

5. TO CONSIDER PLANNING APPLICATIONS AND UPDATE ON PLANNING DECISIONS

New Planning Applications

- DM/22/03106/FPA - Plots 1-3 Oakenshaw Allotments, New Row, Oakenshaw - Erection of pigeon loft, raised lawn area with steps, roof over log shed and pergola (retrospective)

<https://publicaccess.durham.gov.uk/online-applications/simpleSearchResults.do?action=firstPage>

Previous Planning Application Decisions

- DM/22/03189/PNA - Tanners Hall Farm, Stockley Lane, Oakenshaw - Prior notification for the erection of an agricultural general-purpose storage building for the storage of grain / feed and over winter cover for machinery
Prior Approval Not Required 23/11/2022
- DM/22/02841/AD - Monarch Green Land At Hawthorn Drive, Willington - Retention of sign and 2no. flagpoles advertising the residential development approved under DM/20/01960/VOC
Approved 11/11/2022
- DM/22/02613/FPA - 19 Clement Way, Willington - Conversion of garage to living room and replacement of garage door with window
Approved 22/11/2022
- DM/22/02016/FPA - Parkside Academy, Hall Lane Estate, Willington - Enclose external staircase, single storey extension for toilets, 2 No. bin stores, alterations to existing ramped access, relocation of cycle store and formation/alterations to footpaths
Approved 10/11/2022

Previous Planning Applications Waiting Decisions

- 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/21/04140/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)
- DRC/22/00261 - Land Adjacent To (East) Ash Drive, Willington - Discharge of Conditions 5 (Construction Management Plan and Method Statement), 6 - (coal mining legacy), 8 (off-site highways), 10 (Arboricultural Impact Assessment), 14 (contaminated land) and 16 (archaeology) pursuant to planning permission DM/18/03443/OUT (erection of upto 200 dwellings).

For Information Only - Standard Consultation Expiry Date - Fri 19 Aug 2022

6. TO CONSIDER THE ALLOTMENT REPORT AND FUTURE ACTIONS

Councillor Berry said It is a quiet time for allotments at this time of year.

Park Top

Eviction process is complete.

Plot 1 Still needs clearing. Helen chased fencing, waiting for stock.

Plot 9 Rubble still not removed.

No access to number 12 so unable to see if any work done.

Plot 13 No improvement with wood removal.

Springfield

Plots that need action

6, 30, understand these are the plots that are under review currently.

7 7a need work doing.

9 & 10 work has started.

Oakenshaw

Planning objection has been placed on D.C.C Public Access site.

Plots 48-31 good.

30, 29 no work at all. To contact to gauge intentions.
18 no change on plot, still underdeveloped.
16 no change on plot still underdeveloped.
8 & 9 very poor condition, none of the rubbish removed.

I understand it is winter and would not expect to see crops, but clearance should be happening in my opinion.
Letters to be sent where appropriate.

Proposed Councillor Hales
Seconded Councillor Smith
Approved.

7. TO CONSIDER ADOPTING THE CDCF WARM SPACES CHARTER

A meeting was held with Isla Ballard, Durham Community Action to discuss possible funding sources to apply to for funding to provide roof and cavity wall insulation. The buildings cavity walls are open so damp can penetrate. She has emailed a few suggestions. This work will support the Warm Spaces Initiative. The Clerk is submitting a County Durham Community Foundation Warm Spaces Fund application.
Adoption of the Warm Spaces Charter means that;
Everyone has the right to be warm and treated with dignity and respect.
No one will pay to enter Warm Space, take part in activities or refreshments.
Safeguarding and Food Hygiene policies will be followed.
Confidentiality will be maintained and signposting and bespoke help and advice will be offered.
Approved.

8. TO CONSIDER THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOUNDARY COMMISSION DIVISIONS REVIEW

The local authority's electoral arrangements are being reviewed. This will examine the number of Councillors and Divisions. The Boundaries between divisions, names of divisions and number of Councillors elected to each division.
It is thought that Durham has poor electoral equality.
A four-part process will be followed that will include a Parliamentary Bill before implementation.

9. TO RECEIVE THE TOWN COUNCILLORS MONTHLY REPORT

Councillor Berry said thank you to the Clerk for pulling the Warm Space project together. Work will start on a trial basis for two weeks.
Councillor Jordan said she is concerned about a homeless man in Willington who's is sleeping rough. Councillor Berry suggested contacting Homeless 20. Councillor Tinsley suggested Housing Solutions.

i)Project Updates.

The Clerk said;

Low Willington Christmas Trees.

A quote has been received to connect the trees to the NPG power supply and install feeder pillar to trees at £6,200 excl vat. GWTC to provide new lights.

Newsletter

The Newsletter is with design. It will be distributed in the New Year.

This was agreed.

ii) Environmental Improvements

Tree Planting

The Clerk said;

Five new Silver Birch trees have been planted in the town green wildflower area from the Its Your Neighbourhood grant.

Park Corner (Albion Square)

The Clerk has submitted an NB Small Grant application for the Park Corner Community Garden. The costs of the three mature Silver Birch Trees will be shared between County Councillor Gunn and Tinsley and GWTC at £373.00 each. The Clerk has been quoted £125 per year for D.C.C to maintain each tree. This has been passed to CPAL as requested by the AAP, so that D.C.C can offer a licence. Negotiations are ongoing.

Bulb Planting (Cinema Green)

The bulbs have been ordered and delivered.

Children from Our Lady and St Thomas School Council have met with the Town Council and planted the bulbs along the front footpath.

Thank you to D.C.C Clean and Green Officers and Council members who assisted.

Flower Beds and Baskets

The Lavender Flower beds have been planted.

D.C.C are happy to consider column baskets. However, require information on windage and weightage. They have said that the structural tests for Christmas lights are not sufficient for Hanging Baskets and separate tests must be undertaken.

To draw down estimates for this work.

The Council has approved and ring fenced £3000 towards baskets and watering from the vat reclaim.

The report was approved.

10. TO RECEIVE THE COUNTY COUNCILLORS MONTHLY REPORT

Councillor Tinsley said;

Local Leaders and Mayors have been in discussions with Government and following successful talks have been offered a provisional deal which would unlock over billions of pounds of investment and see additional powers transferred from Whitehall to local people.

The new deal would see the formation of a new combined authority, headed by an elected 'Metro' mayor and cover the LA7 area of Newcastle, Gateshead, North Tyneside, Sunderland, South Tyneside, County Durham and Northumberland.

The deal, which is subject to a governance review and public consultation, offers a potential £4.2bn of investment into the region, made up of elements including:

- **An investment fund of £1.4bn, or £48m a year**, to support inclusive economic growth and support our regeneration priorities
- **An indicative budget of around £1.8bn, or £60m a year**, for adult education and skills – to meet local skills priorities and improve opportunities for residents
- **A £900m package of investment to transform our transport system**, with £563m from the City Regional Sustainable Transport Fund, on top of funding already announced for our buses and metro system

- **£69m of investment in housing and regeneration**, unlocking sites to bring forward new housing and commercial development

It is expected to create 24,000 extra jobs, deliver 70,000 courses per year to give people the skills to get good jobs, and leverage £5.0 billion of private sector investment.

Once established the new authority, covering an area which is home to around 2 million people, will have the power to make decisions on areas such as transport, skills, housing, finance and economic development. The potential deal does not involve any changes to existing councils.

A public consultation will take place from early 2023 on the new arrangements which the government have confirmed they are 'minded to' approve.

It is expected a Mayoral election would take place in May 2024 and a new authority formed.

The North of Tyne Combined Authority (NTCA), which was set up in 2019 covering Newcastle, North Tyneside and Northumberland, and the separate North East Combined Authority (NECA) covering Sunderland, South Tyneside, Gateshead and Durham would no longer exist.

Durham County Council continue to use reserves to deliver their budget.

11. TO APPROVE THE BANK RECONCILIATION (November 2022)

The Clerk said;

The Council entered into November with a starting balance of £77,187.91.

There was £31,368.27 spent and £16.99 received leaving an end balance of £45,836.63

Proposed Councillor Smith

Seconded Councillor Berry

12. TO APPROVE THE BUDGET REPORT (November 2022)

The Clerk said there has been expenditure £ 91,648.05 leaving an available resource on budget of £28,490.95. The Clerk has transferred the available funds 2021/22 to the approved costs 2022/23 and paid the deposit for the Fun Day.

Proposed Councillor Smith

Seconded Councillor D Hales

13. TO CONSIDER THE 2023/24 DRAFT BUDGET TO INFORM PRECEPT REQUEST.

The tax base has increased by 47.3 pence. Income remains the same.

The Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme has fallen from £3,912 to £1,187 leaving a net position of being £145.64 better off than last year.

The Clerk tabled a report outlining three budget options ie. standstill or 3%,5% or 20% increase.

Members moved the 3% increase. Proposing a budget of £123,750 resulting in a Band D charge of £62.51 pa. This being a £1.82 pa increase on the 2021/22 Band D charge.

Resolved1. To submit a Precept request of £115,312 and Tax Base request of £1,187.

Totalling £116,499 to DCC by 20 January 2023.

14. TO CONSIDER COMMUNITY FUND APPLICATIONS

A request has been received from Dovedale Bingo Group for a donation towards room hire, refreshments and activities for the social club.

This was approved.

1. Resolved to award £500.

15. TO CONSIDER CIVIC FUND APPLICATIONS

None received.

16. ANY OTHER BUSINESS (for information only)

17. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING.

14th February 2023 at 6pm