

THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF WINGATE PARISH COUNCIL
HELD ON MONDAY, 9th DECEMBER 2019

Present: Councillors J Hogg (Chair), E Mason, J Higgins, S Williams,
K McGonnell, P Mason, J Bradley, J Cairns

2019/12/09/01

PUBLIC QUESTIONS

The Chairman welcomed three members of the public who were in attendance to discuss allotment issues. Two of the representatives spoke in relation to the Woodmans Cottage site. They spoke particularly about the need for a fencing to be erected on part of the site which had been trashed by previous occupiers.

The third member of the public queried why the Parish Council was liaising with some allotment tenants regarding the potential of buying their allotments but had not opened discussions to all tenants. In response to this the Clerk stated that the Parish Council was dealing with one particular group of tenants on one site because of problems associated with it.

Lengthy discussion followed regarding the potential sale of allotments and the queries raised by the member of the public. It was suggested that the Parish Council should discuss matters further and then meet again with the individual.

The three members of the public left the meeting and discussion continued in relation to allotments. It was noted that other people had expressed an interest in buying allotments. Following ongoing discussion, it was RESOLVED that a special meeting be arranged to discuss allotment issues and the ownership of them particularly.

2019/12/09/02

THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING held on 11th November 2019 were AGREED as a correct record.

2019/12/09/03

POLICE MATTERS

The Clerk presented a written police report which included details of a 59% increase in anti-social behaviour in the Wingate and Station Town area although this was linked to a number of issues at one particular address. It was noted that in the year to date anti-social behaviour had reduced by 17%.

It was noted that there had been reports of vehicles causing damage on grassed areas and flower beds at the park. Fencing was also noted as having been stolen at the park although this had since been recovered.

The following other crimes were reported:

3 burglaries

4 thefts

6 criminal damage

General discussion followed at which point it was felt that not all crimes appeared to have been reported to the Police or included in the report. Vehicles were noted as having been set alight at The Maltings estate and at the rear of Bobby G's.

Discussion followed about an incident in the village the previous Friday evening when it appears that there was in the region of some 50 youths on the front street area who were putting bricks and other debris on the road and throwing eggs and other things at passing cars. It was felt the incident needed to be raised with the Police to understand what action had been taken.

RESOLVED that the information given be noted and the Clerk contact the Police in relation to the anti-social behaviour the previous Friday evening.

2019/11/11/04

PROGRESS REPORT

(1) Pit Heaps Area

The Clerk advised that a letter had been sent to all North Road West allotment tenants regarding a proposal from Durham County Council to install a gate which would be opened and locked by the tenants and which limit access to the pit heaps area. A subsequent meeting had taken place and to date there had been no objections to the proposals.

County Councillor Higgins thanked the Parish Council for its support and advised that it was hoped that funding for the gate and other works would be in place by the spring time.

Following general discussion, it was **RESOLVED** the information given be noted and further progress be awaited.

(2) Intra Health Alzheimer Society

The Clerk advised that following the previous meeting he had met with Intra Health who had advised that a group existed in the village aimed at making the village Alzheimer friendly. Local businesses were involved as was the nursery who was a key driver in progressing and organising events. The Clerk stated that it appeared funding was not an issue at this stage, and it was more about Parish Council engagement.

Members supported engagement and it was noted that County Councillor Higgins has given a financial contribution of £400 to the group. The Chairman apologised for what he described as a misunderstanding on this matter at the previous meeting.

Following general discussion, it was **RESOLVED** that:

- (a) The information given be noted;
- (b) Councillor Williams represent the Parish Council at the Alzheimer Society group; and
- (c) Further progress be awaited.

(3) Nursery/Community Interest Company

The Clerk advised that he had spoken to a representative of the Community Interest Company (CIC) who advised that a meeting had taken place with Durham County Council that day and it had been agreed that the CIC would be granted permission to access the nursery's financial reserves. While further formal word was awaited it meant the CIC could now progress matters.

County Councillor Higgins advised he was having discussions with the CIC regarding potential access to section 106 monies.

RESOLVED the information given be noted and further progress be awaited.

2019/12/09/05

SECTION 106 MONIES

The Clerk advised that along with the Vice Chairman and County Councillor Higgins a further meeting had been held with a representative of Durham County Council to discuss section 106 monies. It appeared that while applications could not be considered formally pre-applications could be submitted. Durham County Council had given an indication of schemes it would consider and details of other staff who could help with funding applications.

It was noted that pre-applications would still be dependent on the housing developments being completed which could be several years away.

Following general discussion, it was **RESOLVED** that the potential use of section 106 monies be discussed at the next meeting of the Parish Council.

2019/12/09/06

PLANNING APPLICATIONS

There were no planning applications to consider.

2019/12/09/07

CORRESPONDENCE

There were no items of correspondence to consider,

2019/12/09/08

PAYMENTS AND FINANCIAL MATTERS

(a) Authorisation of Payments

RESOLVED that authorisation be given for the following payments:

Npower- Pit Wheel Lighting

Cheque No. 405372 £29.55

Print Centre- Letterhead

Cheque No. 405373 £87.60

Park Keeper- Electric Refund	
Cheque No.405374	£20
BT- Broadband at Park	
Cheque No.405375	£70.80
Parish Notice Board Co- Notice Board Part Payment	
Cheque No. 405376	£810
UK Fuels- Petrol	
Cheque No. 405377	£12.35
Catherine College- Community Xmas Party	
Cheque No. 405378	£270
BC Wolfen Products- Park Sign	
Cheque No. 405379	£156.58
Clerk—Allotment Letters Refund	
Cheque No. 405380	£26.20
TSL- Xmas Tree	
Cheque No. 405381	£900
Horns Garden Centre- Misc items	
Cheque No. 405382	£54.94
Roberts Tours- Parish Away Day Transport	
Cheque No. 405383	£840
UK Fuels- Petrol	
Cheque No. 405384	£12.35
Steadfast Security- November CCTV Monitoring	
Cheque No. 405385	£169
TSL – Line Marker	
Cheque No. 405386	£115.20

Orbis – Security Shutter Hirer	
Cheque No. 405387	£156.15
Orbis- Security Shutter Hire	
Cheque No. 405388	£156.15
Orbis- Security Shutter Hire	
Cheque No. 405389	£171.81
Orbis- Security Shutter Hire	
Cheque No. 405390	£166.26
Park Keeper- Electric Refund	
Cheque No. 405391	£20
Clerk- December Office Allowance	
Cheque No. 405392	£50
Npower- Holy Trinity Church	
Cheque No. 405393	£176.30
Npower- Holy Trinity Church	
Cheque No. 405394	£176.30
Npower- Park	
Cheque No. 405395	£229.18
Park Keeper- Line Rental & Calls	
Cheque No. 405396	£45
Clerk- Line Rental & Calls	
Cheque No. 405397	£45
Clerk- Postage Refund	
Cheque No. 405398	£30.50
Park Keeper- Xmas Gift	

Cheque No. 405399 £25

Assistant Park Keeper- Xmas Gift

Cheque No. 405400 £25

(b) Financial Regulations

The Clerk presented an updated and amended version of the Parish Council's financial regulations which outlined an approach and structure to financial management. The Clerk summarized each of the main sections of the regulations highlighting that the main changes related to section 11 and contracting where threshold amounts and values had been amended.

Following general discussion, it as **RESOLVED** that the amended financial regulations be agreed and adopted for use.

2019/12/09/09

REPORTS

(a) The Clerk

There were no reports from the Clerk.

(b) Members

(1) Vehicles Parked on Paths Near to the Pit Wheel

Following a complaint about vehicles parked on the path adjacent to the pit wheel it was noted that this would be addressed when Durham CC installed parking restrictions.

RESOLVED the information given be noted.

(2) Bus Service 58

A Member reported that concerns had been raised about the performance of bus service 58. It was noted as being a Durham CC contracted service and so performance of it was being reviewed.

RESOLVED the information given be noted and further word be awaited.

(3) Off Road Vehicles

Following a query it was noted that Durham County Council was investigating the possibility of installing boulders along the former railway lines which would prohibit access to the park.

RESOLVED the information given be noted and further progress be awaited.

(4) Xmas Lighting

RESOLVED the Clerk arrange for lights currently not working to be repaired.

(5) Children Crossing/Lolly Pop Lady

A Member reported that the lolly pop lady had raised concerns about near misses from vehicles driving in the vicinity of where she worked. It was suggested this was something she needed to raise with her line manager.

RESOLVED the information given be noted.

(c) County Councillor

County Councillor Higgins gave a brief update on his activities relating to the County Council. It was noted that a regeneration project in the village was being discussed which potentially could among other things give access to funding to local business to improve the façade of their shops. Housing Solutions were noted as also being involved,

It was noted that a site meeting had taken place to discuss the pinch point and it had been confirmed that the County Council was not prepared for it to be removed. The Chairman stated he had attended the site meeting and he felt that County Councillor Higgins opinions had not been fully respected. He also felt the site meeting should have taken place at a busier time.

Following general discussion County Councillor Higgins was thanked for his report and it was **RESOLVED** the information give be noted.

2019/12/09/10 **SCHEDULE OF ONGOING MATTERS**

RESOLVED that the schedule of ongoing matters be noted.

2019/12/09/11 **EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

RESOLVED that the press and Public be excluded from the following item of business due to the disclosure of financial information.

2019/12/09/12 **PRECEPT 2020/21**

The Clerk presented a draft precept for 2020/21 advising that further financial prudence was required, and the Parish Council needed to build up its reserves. Low reserves were noted as exposing the Parish Council to risk.

The Clerk advised that the Local Council Tax Support Grant has reduced significantly as a consequence of new build properties in the village and increased revenue from Council Tax. This enabled the precept to be increased with no additional costs to individual households.

Following general discussion, it was **RESOLVED** the precept for 2020/21 be approved and set at £154k.

CERTIFIED TRUE RECORD

CHAIRMAN

DATE

