

THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF WINGATE PARISH COUNCIL
HELD ON MONDAY, 10th JANUARY 2022

Present: Councillors P Daly (Chair), S Williams, J Bradley, S Kelly, M Wilson, T Smith, P Mason

County Councillor J Higgins

The Chairman advised that due to the non-attendance of Heidi Smith for a period of six months there was now a vacancy for a Parish Councillor which had been advertised in accordance with electoral requirements. If an election was not called by 24 January then the vacancy could be filled by way of co-option. The Chairman suggested that it should review its policies on non-attendance and at least notify Councillors when nearing a six month period. The Clerk advised that it was not a policy matter for the Parish Council and instead was a requirement of the Local Government Act with individual Councillors having a responsibility to attend meetings.

2022/01/10/01

PUBLIC QUESTIONS

There were no representatives of the public present.

2022/01/10/02

THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING held on 13th December 2021 were agreed as a correct record.

2022/01/10/03

POLICE AND ASSOCIATED MATTERS

The Clerk presented a summary of crime and anti-social behaviour related statistics for the period from 1 December to 31 December 2021 which included 85 incidents summarised as follows:

14 ASB incidents- the majority of which related to off road/quad bikes
 1 theft of a vehicle
 5 criminal damage

RESOLVED the information given be noted.

2022/01/10/04

PROGRESS REPORT

(1) Woodmans Cottage Allotment Site

RESOLVED that:

- (a) it be noted that the sale of the land was being dealt with by solicitors representing both parties; and
- (b) the Clerk arrange for Mr and Mrs Urwin to meet with the Chair and Vice Chair to discuss the sale and their previous concerns

(2) Community Interest Company (CIC)- Joint Meeting

RESOLVED it be noted that a meeting was to be held with representatives of the CIC on Tuesday 18 January at 6pm to discuss the creation of a project plan for the development of the park at which all Members of the Parish Council were invited to attend.

(3) PACT Meetings

RESOLVED it be noted that the January meeting had been cancelled due to covid restrictions.

(4) Believe Housing Grant Application

RESOLVED it be noted that the outcome of the recent grant funding application was due week commencing 24 January.

(5) Park Tree Felling

RESOLVED it be noted that tree felling works had been completed that day.

2022/01/10/05

PLANNING APPLICATIONS

There were no applications to consider.

2022/01/10/06

CORRESPONDENCE

(a) East Durham AA Board Meeting

RESOLVED that Members contact the Clerk should they be interested in attending the virtual AAP meeting on Wednesday 12 January.

(b) Durham County Council Library Services Consultation

RESOLVED that consultation being undertaken by Durham County Council regarding library services be included as an agenda item at the next meeting.

2022/01/10/07

PAYMENTS AND FINANCIAL MATTERS

(a) Authorisation of Payments

RESOLVED that authorisation be given for the following payments:

Print Centre- Carol Service Printing

Cheque No. 405851 £140

TSL- Xmas Tree

Cheque No. 405852 £1200

Friends of St Marys- Xmas Donation

Cheque No. 405853 £50

TSL- Lawn sand Etc	
Cheque No.405854	£180
Clerk- December Office Allowance	
Cheque No.405855	£50
Steadfast Security- Alarm Monitoring	
Cheque No.405856	£274.56
LITE- Xmas Lighting	
Cheque No.405857	£4023.36
Steadfast Security- CCTV Monitoring September 21 to August 22	
Cheque No.405858	£816
Steadfast Security- Alarm Maintenance September 21 to August 22	
Cheque No.405859	£549.12
Clerk- January Office Allowance	
Cheque No.405860	£50

2022/01/10/08

REPORTS

(a) **The Clerk**

There were no reports from the Clerk.

(b) **Members**

(1) Quad Bikes

RESOLVED a site meeting be held to look at measures to prevent quad bikes accessing the park and issues relating to bikes in other part of the village be raised with the Police.

(2) Speeding- Front Street

RESOLVED that speeding vehicles at the Salters Lane end of the front street be taken up with the Police with a view to a speed gun being utilised in the village.

(3) BT Phone Boxes

RESOLVED that the potential for former BT phone boxes to be installed in the village for community use be considered at the next meeting.

(4) Wildlife Cameras- Park

RESOLVED that the installation of wildlife cameras at the park be considered as part of ongoing discussions with the CIC.

(5) Pit Heaps- Trees and Wild Flowers

RESOLVED that the potential to install trees and wild flowers on the pit heaps be considered at the next meeting of the Parish Council.

(6) Pit Wheel- Graffiti

RESOLVED the Clerk arrange for graffiti to be removed from the seating areas at the pit wheel.

(c) **County Councillor**

County Councillor Higgins gave an update on County Council activities and offered apologies for not being able to attend the previous two meetings.

He advised that staff sickness and isolation due to covid meant staff shortages within the County Council with some staff temporarily moving roles to fill shortages. Longer term contingency plans were noted as being in place.

To further tackle quad bike issues on the pit heaps it was noted that additional boulders had been installed that day. Dog fouling issues on the front street area were being investigated although without specific details little action could be taken.

Discussion followed in relation to a travellers site at the northern end of the village which County Councillor Higgins described as a long term issue for the County Council. A planning application was awaited in relation to the future of the site and it was noted the County Council was not providing any refuse, waste or toilet facilities. Noise levels were noted as being in accordance with local authority requirements.

County Councillor Higgins advised that following ongoing discussions with a contractor regarding a footpath adjacent to Wellfield Community School, the County Council would be undertaking improvement works.

It was noted that only 32p was currently available with section 106 monies for the Wingate area.

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

2022/01/10/09

SCHEDULE OF ONGOING MATTERS

RESOLVED that the schedule of ongoing matters be noted.

2022/01/10/10

EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED that the press and public be excluded from the following items of business under the Public Bodies Admissions to Meetings Act 1960 due to the disclosure of financial information.

2022/01/10/11

WINGATE COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

The Chairman welcomed two representatives of the Community Association, Mrs Collins and Mr Higgins who presented an overview of ongoing issues relating to the Community Association and the operation of the community centre particularly.

It was noted that a number of classes and room hire activities had ceased partly as a result of covid and diminishing attendees. Price increases were felt not to be practical due to deprivation and unemployment in the village. Some birthday parties were being booked but overall activities had reduced significantly.

Staffing levels were felt to have been cut to the absolute minimum but it was highlighted that centre running costs were circa £55k prior to other expenses. Expenses relating to lift maintenance and boiler repairs were noted.

Members felt there needed to be better publication and promotion of the centre's activities through a web site and social media. As an interim measure the Parish Council's web site and Facebook page were offered as resources to use. Volunteering was also suggested as a way of creating additional resources.

The Chairman referred to discussions ongoing with Hutton Henry Parish Council and the potential for collaborative working and joint events. It was felt joint activities could take place in the centre.

Following a question it was noted there were vacancies on the Association's management board and nominations to fill these were welcomed. It was also noted the Association or the centre did not have an alcohol licence.

Mrs Collins and Mr Higgins outlined that under the terms of the existing lease of the centre three signatories were required. The lease was for 99 years with 78 years remaining. It was noted that while discussions were ongoing there would be a need for signatories for the lease.

General discussion continued before Mrs Collins and Mr Higgins were thanked for attending the meeting and it was **RESOLVED** that Community

Association activities be considered as a regular agenda item..

CERTIFIED TRUE RECORD

CHAIRMAN

DATE