

**THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF WINGATE PARISH COUNCIL**  
**HELD ON MONDAY, 11th DECEMBER 2023**

**Present:** Councillors S William (Chair), C Ryan, M Whiting, J Bradley, A Ogle and E Mason

County Councillor Higgins

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor P Mason

2023/12/11/01

**PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

There were no public questions.

2023/12/11/02

**THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING held on 13<sup>th</sup> November 2023** were agreed as a correct record.

2023/12/11/03

**POLICE AND ASSOCIATED MATTERS**

The Clerk presented a summary of crime and anti-social behavioural issues during the period 1<sup>st</sup> to 30 November 2023 during which 84 incidents were reports including:

Criminal damage- 2 incidents.

Anti-social behaviour various off road bile incidents.

Vehicle crime- 2 incidents.

It was noted that there had been a significant decrease in the number of criminal damage incidents.

The Police was noted has having attended local schools to discuss how to stay safe. PACT meeting dates were to be revised with monthly meetings potentially becoming quarterly.

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

2023/12/11/04

**PROGRESS REPORT**

(1) Park Policies and Procedures

The Clerk advised that he had sent around to those with email addresses a number of draft polices relating to safeguarding and health and safety which needed reviewing along with consideration given to the implications of implementing them. Only one Member had put themselves forward to join a working group to review them. Other nominations were sought.

Following general discussion, it was **RESOLVED** that Members further consider the draft policies and those interested in joining a working group contact the Clerk.

(2) Christmas Celebrations

The Clerk reminded Members the carol service was taking place on Thursday

14 December.

**RESOLVED** the information given be noted.

(3) BT

The Clerk advised that while a full response was awaited in relation to a complaint made by the Parish Council, BT had agreed to clear any supposed outstanding debt and reinstate the broadband at no cost.

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

(4) Park Swing Basket

The Clerk advised that a claim had been agreed with Zurich Insurance for circa £6k for a replacement swing basket which was to be installed in the spring when the weather improved.

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

(5) Park Play Equipment

The Clerk reminded Members that the Parish Council had been successful in obtaining a £20k Towns and Villages grant for play equipment. He stated that he had met with a representative from Durham Council who had provided assistance on a process the Parish Council could adopt to appoint a play equipment supplier. However, the Clerk advised that £20k would not provide the three items of equipment previously considered and the Parish Council needed to consider providing additional funding which he suggested be considered later on the agenda when the draft precept for 2024/25 was considered.

**RESOLVED** the information given be noted and further consideration be given to play equipment funding as part of the consideration of the draft precept for 2024/25.

(6) Boundary Commission Review

The Clerk advised that the proposals of the Boundary Commission following its review of County Council boundaries in County Durham had been completed. A new ward covering Wingate, Station Town and the Trimdons was to be created with two County Councillors representing the area which would become effective following the 2025 local elections.

**RESOLVED** the information given be noted.

23/12/11/05

#### **COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT OFFICER UPDATE**

The Community Development Officer the Clerk presented an update on ongoing activities which included a work plan circulated with the agenda. An update of the plan was tabled along with an initial proposal to develop a health and wellbeing programme. The need for statistics relating health and deprivation was noted as being needed to support such a programme and other funding applications.

A children's Christmas event was noted as having been organised but concern was raised by Members that it coincided with a school day for the

RC Primary School. Different school holidays were noted as needing more consideration of in relation to future events.

A successful Welcome Spaces grant application was noted as having been submitted. Members queried what would be on offer to encourage people to use the space and suggested that an internet policy should be established if wi-fi was to be made available.

An information and advice event was noted as taking place in the community centre on 9 January involving many different organisations who could provide advice of a range of subject matters. A Member suggested that the Durham County Council Benefits Team should be engaged and Members recognised the need for the event to be well promoted. A guidance leaflet was felt to be needed which could be made available highlighting details relating to the organisations and key contacts.

Discussion followed relating to recent meetings with representatives of the Holy Trinity Church and the Wingate Junior School and matters raised including foodbank arrangements, community transport and the potential for the community centre to become much more of a community hub. The Chairman advised he had attended a separate meeting with the Church and a representative of Coalfield Regeneration had been in attendance who had referred to potential funding opportunities.

Reference was made to the Community Development Officer needing to raise her profile, develop better community links and improve communication. It was noted she had been invited to attend the junior School and to introduce herself to children.

An AAP grant application was noted as being prepared for a 18 December deadline which included a disabled access ramp for the bowls pavilion.

Following general discussion, it was **RESOLVED** that information given be noted and:

- (1) The community development work plan be updated and presented at the next meeting;
- (2) The Community Development Officer prepare an Information and Advice leaflet with details relating to key organisations for distribution in the community;
- (3) The Community Development Officer prepare a communication plan to raise the profile of the role and the activities being undertaken;
- (4) The Community Development Officer prepare a summary of statistics relating to the health and wellbeing of Wingate;
- (5) The Community Development Officer develop for consideration at the next meeting projects relating to health and wellbeing and the woodland and pond area at the park; and
- (6) The Community Development Officer be asked to arrange and coordinate a community meeting with the Church, local Schools, the Nursery and the Community Association to discuss opportunities to work together on issues such as a foodbank, community transport and a community hub facility.

2023/12/11/06

**PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

**RESOLVED** that no objection be made to the following application:

51 Vicarage Estate- single story side and rear wrap around extension

2023/12/11/07

**CORRESPONDENCE**

There were no items of correspondence to consider.

2023/12/11/08

**PAYMENTS AND FINANCIAL MATTERS**

(a) Authorisation of Payments

**RESOLVED** that authorisation be given for the following payments:

Robinsons of Wingate- Half Term Catering

Cheque No. 406335 £430.00

Ark Therapies- Half Term Activities

Cheque No. 406336 £200.00

1° Sutters and Grills- Laptop Repairs

Cheque No. 406338 £228.00

TSL- Xmas Tree

Cheque No. 406339 £1440.00

Clerk- December Office Allowance

Cheque No.406340 £50.00

Clerk- Line Rental and Calls

Cheque No.406341 £45.00

Park Keeper- Line Rental and Calls

Cheque No.406342 £45.00

Community Development Officer- Line Rental and Calls

Cheque No.406343 £45.00

Community Development Officer- Refund for Samta's Grotto Items

Cheque No.406344 £166.39

Clerk- Refund for Ink Cartridges

Cheque No.406345	£36.11
Park Keeper- Xmas Gift	
Cheque No.406346	£25.00
Assistant Park Keeper Xmas Gift	
Cheque No. 406347	£25.00
Clerk- Postage Refund	
Cheque No. 406348	£40.08
Wingate Community Association- Bingo Refund	
Cheque No. 406349	£182.00
EON Next – Football Changing Room	
Cheque No. 406350	£1548.95

(b) Bank Reconciliation

The Clerk presented two bank reconciliations for the periods to 30 September 2023 and 31 October 2023. The reconciliation for September showed a cash book balance of circa £142,600 and for October it showed a balance of circa £145,400. The Clerk advised that the increase in the balance was due to receipts of a £10k Ballinger trust grant and £6k nursery rent for the former Park Keeper’s cottage.

Following general discussion, it was **RESOLVED** the information given be noted.

2023/12/13/11

**REPORTS**

(a) **The Clerk**

There were no reports from the Clerk.

(b) **Members**

There were no Member reports.

**County Councillor**

County Councillor Higgins presented an update on County Council activities. It was noted that the disabled parking bay at the nurse’s was not going to be removed after having been considered by Durham County Council. The All in One Lounge was noted as having submitted a retrospective planning application relating to additional dining space. Using Town and Villages funding the park area in between the two doctor’s surgeries was to be

improved with new fencing, trees and seating. Two recognition cameras were to be installed with exact locations to be determined.

County Councillor Higgins was thanks for his report and it was **RESOLVED** that the information given be noted.

2023/12/13/12

#### **SCHEDULE OF ONGOING MATTERS**

**RESOLVED** that the schedule of ongoing matters be noted.

2023/12/13/13

#### **EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

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

2023/12/13/14

#### **WINGATE COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION**

The Chairman welcomed two representatives of the Community Association, Mrs Colins and Mr Higgins who advised that the new legal constitution was in the process of being finalised which would see the Association become a Community Interest Organisation which would result in all Trustees having their names added to the current lease. The Association was noted as having reserves of circa £47900 which was to be considered to equate to 6-8 months of the community centre's annual running costs.

NHS and education organisations were noted as using the centre but running costs meant it could not be opened any further with Thursday evenings and Saturday mornings being reduced since Covid restrictions were in place.

The Chairman advised that the Parish Council had met with representatives of the Holy Trinity Church and the Junior School which had resulted in views that that a community hub was needed in the village with the potential for a foodbank to be operated from the community centre with the opportunity for a café, refreshments and better storage facilities. Community transport had also been discussed.

Following general discussion Mrs Colins and Mr Higgins left the meeting after which discussion relating to the operation of the community centre and Parish Council funding towards it continued. Members expressed concerns relating to current arrangements before it was **RESOLVED** that annual funding to the community association be considered as part of further discussions relating to the 2024/25 precept.

2023/12/13/15

#### **DRAFT PRECEPT 2024/25**

The Clerk presented a draft precept for 2024/25 which Members considered. It was noted that there remained scope to amend the draft and some issues needed to be agreed before the precept could be finalised.

Following ongoing discussion, it was **RESOLVED** that the draft precept be considered at the next meeting or, if necessary, a special meeting of the Parish Council.

**CERTIFIED TRUE RECORD**

CHAIRMAN .....

DATE .....