

TOW LAW TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Tow Law Town Council held on Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> November 2024, commencing at 6.30pm in the Community Centre, Tow Law.

PRESENT: Councillors M. Craggs (Chair), T. Bland, P. Eastwood, J. Fowler, E. Mather and D. Willock.

ALSO PRESENT: County Councillor R. Manchester and G. F. Smith (Clerk).

260/24 APOLOGIES

Apologies received from Councillors F. Nicol, K. Duffy, J. Gale, P. Stokes and M. Dyer.

261/24 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Councillor Craggs declared an interest in agendas items Nos 7 Allotments, No 9 Tow Law Community Association and item No. 10 Tow Law Food Bank.

Councillor Willock declared an interest in agenda items no. 10 Tow Law Food Bank, and item 22 VE Day 2025.

262/24 MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY MEETING HELD ON 15<sup>th</sup> October 2024

The minutes were not agreed by the Councillors, amendments required.

263/24 ACTION LIST – Were circulated prior to the meeting, agreed as a true record by the Councillors.

264/24 COMMUNITY FUND

The Clerk read out applications for funding from the following:-

- A) St Josephs RC Church – Christmas Story Play  
Joint venture with local community and surrounding villages for the provision of costumes and instruments for the children that are taking part.  
Members agreed to donate £250.00 to this event from the Community Fund.
- B) Event at Christmas for the children of Tow Law , request from Jordan Anderson and Lisa Armstrong for £250.00 towards the event to be held in the Community Centre.  
Members agreed to donate £250.00 towards this event from the Community Fend.
- C) Great North Air Ambulance Service  
Donation towards the cost of purchasing a second hand helicopter within the next five years.  
Members agreed to donate £250.00 towards this project from the Community Fund.

Signed.....Chair

265/24 REPORT OF VICE CHAIR – No report.

#### 266/24 ALLOTMENTS

Members agreed to hold an allotments sites inspection on Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> January 2025.

#### 267/24 LAND REAR OF HIGH STREET, TOW LAW

Fillings to the potholes (was still outstanding). Councillor Mather agreed to meet with the Clerk to take photographs of the site and send copies to all Councillors to discuss at the next Town Council meeting.

#### 268/24 TOW LAW COMMUNITY CENTRE

Councillor Craggs updated the meeting that the Centre was still very busy. Electrical problems with main building and entrance door.

#### 269/24 TOW LAW FOOD BANK

Councillor Craggs updated the meeting that the Food Bank was still very busy. Toys were being collected for distribution (donations still required).

#### 270/24 POLICE /PACT/SPEEDWATCH

No Speedwatch figures.

#### 271/24 COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

County Councillor Manchester reported on the following:-

- Planters in High Street (untidy) - responsibility to be determined.
- Play Area fencing erected
- Review of AAPs (Tow Law to merge with Weardale).

#### 272/24 REPRESENTATION BY RESIDENTS – None.

273/23 BANK ACCOUNT (on-line banking) – Clerk to meet with Councillor Fowler next week and discuss the ongoing problems with the Co-operative Bank, to be resolved ASAP.

#### 274/24 PLANNING MATTERS - None

#### 275/24 ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT

The Clerk reported the following:-

- payments vouchers 47 to 51 sum of £1358.58

Members agreed to pay the above accounts.

Signed.....Chair

276/24 CCTV IN TOW LAW

The Chair agreed to contact the Commissioner and report back to the Town Council.

277/24 TOW LAW MILLENNIUM GREEN

Declaration of Trust Document – The Charity Commission had requested a number of amendments, Clerk to check and to try to complete again and submit it to the Commission as soon as possible.

Charity Commission document – completed and forward onto the Charity Commission. Clerk to chase up a response.

Barclays Bank Account – Councillor Gale signed the authorisation letter to Barclays Bank PLC – still awaiting a response from the Bank.

278/24 BEEHIVE COKE OVENS

The gorse plants required further treatment and trimming back, Clerk to contact the Contractor.

278a/24 FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES – Details received from Councillor Mather regarding Christmas Trees, Clerk to report to the next Town Council meeting.

279/24 THE SKILL MILL – COUNTY DURHAM YOUTH JUSTICE SERVICE – No update, Clerk to chase up response.

280/24 VE DAY 8<sup>th</sup> MAY 2025

Councillor Willock produced a poster for the Council’s Notice Boards, no responses received.

Further discussion at the next Town Council meeting.

281/24 CLERK’S REPORT

The Clerk reported on the following:-

- AGAR Annual Return for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024. Clerk to prepare a response to the External Auditor, this will be discussed at the next Town Council meeting.
- DCC notification of the Tax Base, allocation and request for the Precept 2025/26. Item to be discussed at the next Town Council meeting.
- Christmas activities 2024. Councillor Bland provided details of the estimated expenditure for the Christmas Tree “light-up ceremony” on Friday 6<sup>th</sup> December 2024, this included voucher for resident charging up the tree lights (£40.00), provision of selection boxes, visit by Santa Claus to the Football Club including the provision of refreshments.  
Members agreed to provide £290.00 from the Community Fund, all receipts to be forwarded to the Clerk for recording purposes. Complaint received from residents regarding the use of blue lighting causing problems. It was thought this was not the lighting on the tree but from local residents erecting this type of lighting?

282/24 MEMBERS REPORTS - None

Signed.....Chair

283/24 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> January 2025 in the Community Centre, commencing at 6.30pm

CONFIDENTIAL ITEM

284/24 FINANCIAL POSITION OF TOWN COUNCIL

The Clerk had produced a report showing expenditure from 1<sup>st</sup> April to 31<sup>st</sup> October 2024,

Showing some of the details below for discussion:-

Bank Balance as at 15/10/2024	£38311.57
Outstanding Cheques	£3848.80
Miscellaneous Expenditure to 31/3/2025	£1616.00

Possible expenditure to 31/3/2025

Christmas Trees	£4356
Salary Nov to March	£4555
Tax & NIC Nov to March 2025	£1400
Grass Cutting	£800
CCTV land lines	£288
CCTV Maintenance	£2665* Chair to discuss with Police Commissioner

Use of Community Centre by Food Bank £2000\* Contribution by Town Council

Use of Community Centre by Youth Nights £355\* Contribution by Town Council

**SUGGESTED BALANCE AS AT 31<sup>st</sup> MARCH 2025 £17200.77**

**COMMUNITY FUND BALANCE AS AT 31<sup>st</sup> MARCH 2025 £8017.94\***

**\*LESS ANY APPLICATIONS RECEIVED NOVEMBER 2024 TO MARCH 2025**

285/24 Clerk's Pay Award

The Clerk's Pay award has been received backdated to 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024. Members agreed to the payment to be made in April 2025, further details to be provided by the Clerk

The meeting finished at 8.07pm

Signed.....Chair