

TOW LAW TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE COUNCIL – 17TH MAY 2005

PRESENT : Councillor J.Flynn (Chairman)

**Councillors T.Batson, J.Day, P.Graham, A.Green, R.Grogan,
E.Gwynnette, E.Morris, J.Stevens**

1 resident of the Parish

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE :

**Councillors J.Gale & C.Rand,
District Councillor C.Hayton & County Councillor T.Carroll**

2. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN :

Councillor T.Batson was Nominated and Seconded, and there being no further nominations, it was

**Agreed : That Councillor T.Batson be, and is hereby elected, to serve as Chairman of
the Tow Law Town Council for the ensuing year.**

Councillor Batson in the Chair

3. DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE :

Councillor Batson duly signed his Declaration of Acceptance of Office, which was countersigned by the Clerk as Proper Officer of the Council.

The Chairman paid tribute to Councillor Flynn for her 14 years of service as Chairman of the Town Council and thanked her for her sterling efforts on behalf of the Council and the wider community. The Chairman's remarks were received with acclaim.

(Councillor Flynn responded in suitable terms, and left the meeting)

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST :

There were no Declarations to report

5. ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN :

Councillor R.Grogan was Nominated and Seconded, and there being no further nominations, it was

**Agreed : That Councillor R.Grogan be, and is hereby elected, to serve as Vice
Chairman of the Tow Law Town Council for the ensuing year.**

6. POLICE REPORT :

There was no Police officer in attendance

7. APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO FINANCE COMMITTEE :

Agreed : That the Chairman, together with Councillors Day, Graham, Green, Morris and Rand be re-appointed to serve as members of the Finance Committee for the ensuing year.

8. REPRESENTATION ON OUTSIDE BODIES :

Agreed : That the following members be appointed to serve on other bodies as follows

a) **Community Partnership**

Councillors Day, Flynn, Gale, Green, Grogan, Morris and Stevens

b) **Durham Association of Parish & Town Councils**

Councillor T.Batson

c) **Local Strategic Partnership**

It was Agreed to with-hold this appointment until the appropriate protocol was established.

9. REPRESENTATIONS BY RESIDENTS

The resident present expressed continuing concern at the situation at the recreation ground, and questioned when the facilities were likely to re-open. Discussion took place on the nature of the defects, and it was explained that these would be dealt with in the near future. Looking to the longer term, he was advised that finance was now available to carry out a feasibility study into the area's future use, which would include consultation with potential user groups.

10. COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

In the absence of County Councillor Carroll, there was no report.

11. DISTRICT COUNCILLORS' REPORTS :

a) **Councillor R.Grogan**

Councillor Grogan reported that he had been appointed to the "shadow" board of the District Council's ALMO housing management group, and that a high proportion of his time would be spent in that capacity. He again expressed satisfaction at the good response to the ASBO diary reporting system, and the consequent improvement in the situation, although there was a danger of problems moving elsewhere. He drew attention to a situation at Thornley Road, where the occupiers of a newly built house had appeared to have fenced off a piece of land which had formerly been open space. Enquiries were ongoing

- b) Councillor J.Gale
Councillor Gale was not in attendance
- c) Councillor C.Hayton
Councillor Hayton was not in attendance

12. MINUTES :

Agreed : That the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on Tuesday 19th April 2005 (a copy of which had been sent previously to each member) be Approved and Signed as a correct record.

13. COMMUNITY FUND – RECEIPT OF GRANT :

The Clerk reported receipt from Beaufort Wind Ltd., of the sum of £2517 in respect of the Community Fund for the year 2005/6. £356 had been carried forward from the previous year, leaving £2873 available for distribution. To date, the sum of £502 had been allocated to two applicants. The report was Noted.

14. TRAFFIC SPEEDS – A68 :

The Clerk reported receipt of further correspondence from the Traffic Management Officer of Durham Constabulary regarding the ongoing monitoring of traffic speeds in the town, following a request by the Council for more attention to be given to the hours 7 a.m. to 9 a.m. and again in mid-afternoon. The response indicated that the traffic data so far accumulated did not justify any additional Police attention. The report was Noted

15. LITTER BIN – HELME PARK SERVICE STATION :

The Clerk reported that Wear Valley District Council had felt unable to respond favourably to the request to provide a litter bin at the Helme Park Service Station to assist in maintaining the area adjoining the A68 in a tidy condition. The report was Noted.

16. QUALITY OF LIFE SURVEY :

A limited number of copies of the preliminary report on the Survey were distributed at the meeting, and early indications were of disappointment at the findings. Following discussion, it was

Agreed : That Dr.Judith Bush, the author of the report, be invited to attend a future meeting of the Council to respond to members' questions

17. COMMUNITY FUND PAYMENT – LETTER OF APPRECIATION :

The Clerk reported receipt of a letter of appreciation from the Head Teacher of Blessed John Duckett R.C. Primary School in response to the grant which they had received from the Community Fund.

18. DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL-LOCAL NATURE RESERVE-CORNSAY COLLIERY :

The Clerk reported receipt of an invitation for the Town Council to be represented at a ceremony on 25th June to dedicate land at Cornsay Colliery as a Local Nature Reserve.

Agreed : That the invitation be accepted

19. PUBLIC SEAT – BRIDGE STREET :

The Clerk informed members that following a conversation with Ken McGurk of the Tow Law Task Force, he had been advised that the seat would be put in place within the next week. The report was Noted with satisfaction, and appreciation was expressed to Councillor Grogan for his efforts in this matter.

20. PLANNING MATTERS :

The following new applications were Noted :

- a) Proposed detached dwelling house on land adjoining Northside Court
- b) Proposed conservatory at Helm Park Cottage
- c) Proposed renovation of Chapel/utility extension at 123a Dan's Castle
- d) Proposed 4 bedroomed 2.5 storey house at 8 Naismith Mews
- e) Proposed single storey extension at 55 Weardale Crescent

The Clerk reported having received via the District Council, the decision of the Government Inspector not to allow the appeal against the rejection of a planning application for housing on land south of Valley Close.

Agreed : That a letter be sent to Wear Valley District Council expressing members' concern and disappointment at the decision.

21. ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT :

Agreed : That Approval be given to the payment of Invoices Nos. 009 to 013 in the sum of £ 1457.10 as itemised on the meeting agenda

The Clerk reported that in connection with Minute No.11(b) of the April meeting, a further quotation had been submitted by St.Philip and St.James Church, and accordingly, it was

Agreed : That the sum of £250 be paid from the Community Fund in respect of this application.

22. APPROVAL AND ADOPTION OF ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2005 :

Members considered as Appendix 1 the report of the Clerk summarising the Town Council's Accounts for the Year Ended 31st March 2005, and nit was

Agreed : That the Clerk's report be Noted, and that the Statement of Accounts for 2004/5 be Approved and formally Adopted.

23. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT :

The Chairman again paid tribute to Councillor Flynn for her long service as Chairman of the Town Council, and the Clerk was asked to send a letter of warm appreciation.

24. CLERK'S REPORT :

- a) The Clerk reported receipt of correspondence from The Right Honourable Hilary Armstrong, M.P. in connection with her approach to the Council's external auditors in respect of the level of fees for the 2002/2003 financial year. The response indicated that the auditors were not able to offer a reduction in the charges made, and it was

Agreed : That the sum of £ 904.75 be paid in respect of the standard fees for the financial years 2001/2 and 2002/3.

- b) The Clerk reported that in connection with the application to the Community Fund by St.Joseph's R.C.Church, no further response had been forthcoming in respect of the Council's request for further details to support the application. The report was Noted.

25. MEMBERS' REPORTS :

- a) Councillor Stevens reported that she and Councillor Green had met with Joanne Morley, the District Council's "Pride in Wear Valley" officer with regard to dog fouling, and that it had been agreed that more bins would be provided. The Clerk was instructed to seek details of the arrangements for clearing the bins.
- b) Councillor Green drew members' attention to the problems and nuisance being caused by a motor cycle being driven on the Millennium Green. It was pointed out that the Police had the matter under surveillance

26. DATE OF NEXT MEETING :

It was Noted that the next meeting of the Town Council was scheduled for Tuesday 21st June 2005 at 7 p.m.