

TOW LAW TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING – 20TH JUNE 2006

PRESENT : Councillors A.Blacker, P.Graham, A.Green, R.Grogan, E. Gwynnette, E.AMorris, & J.Stevens

**District Councillor C.Hayton
Sergeant F.Hewison (Police), E.Walsh & L.Hodkinson (Street Wardens),
P.Shaw (Anti-Social Behaviour Officer)
Mrs. B.Robinson (Northern Echo), 6 Residents**

CHAIRMAN : In the absence of the Chairman of the Council, Councillor R.Grogan (Vice Chairman) took the Chair

(Councillor R.Grogan in the Chair)

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE :

**Councillors T.Batson, J.Day, J.Flynn, J.Gale & C.Rand
County Councillor T.Carroll**

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST :

There were no Declarations to report

3. COUNCILLOR A.BLACKER – DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE

Councillor Adrian Blacker, having been co-opted to serve as a member of the Town Council, duly signed his Declaration of Acceptance of Office. which was countersigned by the Clerk as Proper Officer.

4. REPRESENTATIONS BY RESIDENTS :

The Chairman welcomed a number of residents who had asked to attend to give a presentation to members as part of their efforts to reduce the incidence of anti-social behaviour in the community. The spokesperson. Rebecca Tyler explained that they were interested in acquiring the former Barclays Bank building in the High Street with a view to converting it to a drop-in centre for local youngsters. The project, which was to be privately funded, was expected to operate on 3 or 4 nights of the week, and possibly on a Saturday morning. It would be closely supervised at all times, there would be a continuous presence on site, and it would be totally alcohol free.

The Police officer present together with the Anti-Social Behaviour *Officer* and the street wardens spoke enthusiastically in support of the proposal, and felt that it would be a very valuable and attractive way of curtailing the ongoing nuisance which was currently being experienced by residents.

- 2006/2007/007 -



5. POLICE REPORT :

Sergeant Frank Hewison reported a significant increase in reported incidents during May the Tow Law area. These numbered 78 of which 24 covered instances of rowdy behaviour and nuisance, and 17 involved actual crimes. Sergeant Hewison reported that the community was to benefit from a greater police presence in the near future, and this would complement the work currently being done by the street wardens. Contact had been made with some of the unruly young people and some progress had been made. He explained that Housing Associations had the power of eviction from their properties where necessary, without the involvement of the Police, while there was a perceived need to adopt a "name and shame" policy. Police officers were also to make visits to Wolsingham School and Community College.

6. MINUTES :

Agreed : That the Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Council held on Tuesday 16th May (copies of which had been sent previously to each member) be Approved and Signed as a correct record.

7. FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT :

Agreed : a) That the Report of the Finance Committee Meeting held on Tuesday 6th June (copies of which had been sent previously to each member) be Noted and the recommendations contained therein be Confirmed and Adopted.

b) That in connection with Item 5, the community workers be requested to make the arrangements for the trip to the Wet 'n Wild Water Park during the school holidays, so that an application could be made to the Community Fund for financial assistance towards the cost of admission.

8. COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT : County

Councillor Carroll **was not in** attendance.

9. DISTRICT COUNCILLORS' REPORTS :

a) Councillor C.Havton

Councillor Havton reported that Wear Valley District Council's administrative function had been re-organised, resulting in a reduction in the number of departments from 4 to 3. He also advised members that the forthcoming Lyons Report into the future of local government. due in June, had been delayed until later in the year.

b) Councillor R.Grogan Councillor Grogan reported that he had joined the board of Dales & Valley Homes, Funded by the Government to operate the Councils housing function.

10. ADFIMASTER PLANNING FOR TOW LAW :

The meeting considered as Appendix 1 the report by the Clerk on this initiative which was currently ongoing. The report of the consultants was awaited. The report was Noted.

11. PARISH/TOWN COUNCIL FORUM :

The Clerk reported having attended a meeting of the Forum on 15^h June together with the Chairman. A presentation had been given on the District Council's Best Value Performance. The report was Noted.

12. ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR :

The Clerk reported having met with Phil Shaw, Anti-Social Behaviour Officer with Wear Valley District Council on the afternoon of 20th June, to seek advice and guidance on ways of combating the increasing incidence of anti-social behaviour in the community. During the meeting, Mr. Shaw referred to the interest which was being shown in the former Barclays Bank building, with a view to possibly using it as a drop-in centre for young people. He had indicated that a representation would be made to the Council at that night's meeting, at which he would be present (see Minute No.4 above). The report was Noted.

13. DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL – PROPOSED PARK WALL NORTH SURFACE COAL & CLAY MINE SCHEME :

The meeting considered as Appendix 1 the report by the Clerk on this proposal. At this Stage, the enquiry by UK Coal was at the preliminary stage of requesting a Scoping Opinion from the County Council prior to a possible planning application.

Agreed : That the report be Noted, and that an expression of concern be sent to the County Council regarding environmental and traffic implications.

14. DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL – RIGHTS OF WAY IMPROVEMENT PLAN :

The Clerk reported receipt of documentation outlining the Council's plans in this connection, and he advised members of having already approached the County with a view to having a survey of all footpaths within the Town Council's boundary to check on their condition.

15. PLANNING MATTERS : The following new application was Noted without

comment : a) Proposed single storey extension to rear at 99 High Street for

Mrs.L.Gray

The Clerk further reported that subsequent to a letter which had been sent to the Director of Regeneration at Wear Valley District Council in response to an outline planning application by Banks Developments for the erection of 20 dwellings and a 40 bed nursing home at Inkerman Road, the Chairman and he had held an informal discussion with Banks' representatives to consider the Town Council' stance of requesting a reduction in the proposed size of the nursing home, and the inclusion of bungalows in the plan. Banks had agreed to review the situation and to look at other options for the site, including the provision of sheltered accommodation. Accordingly, a further letter had been sent to the Director of Regeneration advising of the slight change of view, and expressing the opinion that formal outline planning approval was preferable at this time, and that detail could be



16. ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT :

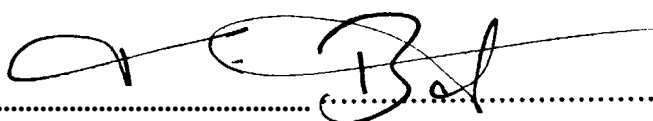
Agreed : That Approval be given to the payment of Invoices Nos. 007 to 009 in the sum of £673.67 as listed on the meeting Agenda

17. MATTERS OF AN URGENT NATURE : The Clerk reported receipt of a letter of resignation from Councillor C.Rand, and it was

Agreed : That Councillor Rand's letter of resignation be accepted with regret, that a Casual Vacancy be declared, and that the appropriate procedure be put in place to fill the vacancy.

18. DATE OF NEXT MEETING :

It was Noted that the next scheduled meeting of the Council would be held on Tuesday 18th July 2006 at 6 p.m.

Signed.....Chairman

1 e July 2006