

Tow Law Town Council

Minutes of a meeting of Tow Law Town Council held on Tuesday 19th February 2008 in the Community Centre commencing at 6.30pm.

Present councillors: J Gale (chairman), T Batson, A Blacker, J Day, A Green, H Hail, L Rowland, G Stevens and L Taylor.

Also Present: Inspector Tony Avery (Durham Police) Mr Steve Thomas, (Wear Valley District Council), A Wigley, G Nicholls, P Nicholls, R Plews (Resident) and G Smith (Clerk).

Apologies: Councillors P Graham, R Grogan, County Councillor T Carroll, District Councillor C Hayton, PC Blair and PCSO Strong (Durham Police).

019/08 Declaration of Interest

Councillor Rowland declared an interest on item 15a - Clerks report; she left the meeting whilst this item was discussed.

Councillor Rowland declared an interest in item 15 b - Clerk's report

Councillor Gale declared an interest in item 15 w - Clerks report.

Councillor Stevens declared an interest in item 12 c – Planning Matters.

020/08 Police Report

The report was circulated at the meeting (copy attached to the minutes).

Inspector Avery introduced himself to the meeting followed by a question and answer session. He informed the meeting of the next Neighbourhood Forum at St Catherine's Community Centre, Crook, 7pm to 9pm on 6th March 2008.

021/08 Update Report by Mr Steve Thomas (Wear Valley District Council).

Mr Thomas informed the meeting of an event at Willington Cricket Club 4pm to 6pm on 19th March 2008. Funding of £5550 still available (1 bid received from the Hill Tops Community for £700), bids are to be agreed before 31st March 2008.

He offered to work with any group to complete application forms to prepare any bids for the funding.

022/08 Update from the Community Partnership

Report circulated at the meeting (Copy attached to the minutes)

023/08 Minutes of the Town Council meeting held 15th January 2008.

The minutes were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

024/08 Matters Arising

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127/07 Tow Law Football Club

The Chairman and Clerk had met with officials of the Football Club. Information had been received on the status of the Club and the charitable status with the Inland Revenue. The Clerk was making inquiries regarding charitable status and would report to the Town Council at the next appropriate meeting.

161/07 Clerks Report

f) County Durham & Cleveland Training Partnership

Dates for Councillors Training have been arranged for 26th February, 11th March, 1st and 22nd April and 6th May, all sessions are at the Community Centre from 6.30pm to 8.30pm

175/07 Clerk's Report

o) Quality Town and Parish Council Status

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010/08 Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee held 9th January 2008

d) Allotments Sub-Committee

Meeting to be arranged (Councillor Graham)

e) Clerk's additional hours

The Clerk reported that he had worked an additional 6 hours work on the preparation of the Portfolio, Members agreed to pay the additional hours.

f) Councillors Surgeries

The Chairman and Clerk to meet next week to produce a rota for Councillors to approve.

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016/08 Clerk's Report

q) Resignation of Councillor Judith Stevens

The Clerk had informed WVDC of the vacancy. The notice informing the public of the vacancy had been placed on the Council's notice board and each Councillor had been sent a copy for information. The Closing date for requests to hold an election was 26th February 2008. Clerk to Report to the next Town Council Meeting.

Item

e) DCC – Parish Paths Partnerships Applications 2008

Members are to contact the Clerk if they have any suggestions for this funding application

j) Report on the Development Day held on 28th March 2007

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025/08 County Councillor's Report

No Report

026/08 District Councillor's Report

Councillor Hayton - No Report

Councillor Grogan - The Clerk read out Councillor Grogan's Report which included:

- a) Barclays Bank Premises, High Street - Planning Stage**
 - b) Recreation Ground, Gym - work to commence beginning March
- Sponsor for Next Year's Insurance costs**
 - c) Unitary Authority – Possible Boundary Commission which could result in a further election in 2010.**
 - d) Bank's Development - Talks ongoing with District Council Planning Officers**
 - e) Supermarket Store - No further developments**
 - f) Opencast Site - No further developments**
 - g) Wind Farm at Stanley, Crook - Awaiting Judicial Review**
- Councillor Gale - gave an update report on the Unitary Authority for County Durham**

027/08 Report on the Development Day held 28th March 2008

Members agreed to receive the Report with no action approved.

028/08 Planning Matters

- a) Application 3/2008/0020 at a field, High Houselop, Members agreed to raise no objections.**
- b) Application 3/2008/0040 at 42/43 High Street, Members agreed to raise no objections.**
- c) Application 3/2008/0046 at Land opposite 59 Bridge Street, Members agreed to raise no objections.**
- d) Application 3/2008/0077 at 5 Atlee Estate, Members agreed to raise no objections.**
- e) Application 3/2008/0078 at 4 High Street, Members agreed to raise no objections.**

Item

029/08 Accounts for Payment

That approval be given for the payments of voucher numbers 56 to 62 in the sum of £1463.18.

030/08 Chairman's Report

No Report

031/08 Clerk's Report

Councillor Rowland left the Meeting while the following agenda item was discussed

The Clerk informed the Meeting that the balance in the N-Power Community Fund was £818.

a) Application for Funding from the N-Power Community Fund from Jessica Rowland, 54 High Street for a contribution towards expenses for Dancing School. Members discussed application, as the criteria was for groups within the community to apply for funding. It was agreed to turn down the request as it did not meet the agreed criteria.

Councillor Rowland returned to the meeting.

b) Application for Funding from N-Power Community Fund from Tow Law Millennium Primary School (Mrs Fliss Chesters) for a contribution towards equipment for the School Community Room. It was agreed to donate £250.00 from the fund.

c) Application for Funding from the N-Power Community Fund from the Adults Basic Skills Class at Tow Law Community Centre (Audrey Wilkinson) for a contribution towards the cost of completing a Tapestry. It was agreed to donate £250.00 from the fund.

d) Audit Commission – Appointment of External Auditors for five years from 2007/08; BDO Stoy Hayward. It was agreed to accept the Annual Fee of £135 plus Vat (£10,000 to £25,000 Income/Expenditure)

e) Durham County Council – vacancies on the Community Engagement Group.

f) Durham County Council – Summary of the Rights of Way Improvement Plan for County Durham 2007/11.

g) Durham County Council – Speed Limit Review on road B6297, Wolsingham Road, Tow Law. Members agreed to object to the moving of the speed limit sign plates closer into the built-up area, as shown on the map circulated at the meeting, Clerk to write to the Durham County Council, Southern Area Traffic Office by 22nd February 2008.

h) Chair of the G8 Joint County/District Member Group Invitation to the Chair and Clerk to attend one of the launch events on “Local Government Reorganisation – Invitation to Key Stakeholders” on 10th to 12th March 2008.

i) Wear Valley District Council – Bus Shelter at Helme Park, Tow Law.

Item

Members agreed to contribute £1000 towards the total cost of £1700 of supplying and erecting a Bus Shelter at Helme Park. It was agreed to fund the supply and erection of one panel at a cost of £567.77 plus delivery costs. Clerk to arrange with Wear Valley District Council (Mr B. Featherstone) for the work to be carried out as soon as possible.

- j) Government Office for the North East – N.E. Regional Spatial Strategy further proposed changes.
- k) The Electoral Commission – Timetable for Local Election Day 1st May 2008.
- l) County Durham Association of Local Councils – possible devolved Services to Town/Parish Councils.
- m) CDALC – Delay in Implementation Order for the New Unitary Authority for County Durham.
- n) CDALC – Local Petitions and Call for Action (Government Consultation), response by 29th February 2008.
- o) Department for Communities & Local Government – Consultation on Orders and Regulations relating to the Conduct of Local Authority Members in England.
- p) CDALC – Freedom of Information; Model Publication Scheme: Clerk to Report to the next appropriate Town Council meeting.
- q) CDALC – Newsletter February 2008; issue 17.
- r) County Durham Learning Disabilities Partnership Board Newsletter January 2008; issue 19.
- s) 2D Newsletter Winter 2008.
- t) County Durham Sustainability and Environment Partnership Newsletter Spring 2008; issue36.
- u) Campaign to Protect Rural England Newsletter Spring 2008
- v) The Mineral Valleys Project Newsletter Spring 2008; issue 8
- w) Mrs Jenny Flynn, Trustee of Tow Law Millennium Green – Request for the Town Council to reconsider the Proposal for the transfer of the Green to the Town Council. It was agreed to refer this item to the Finance & General Purposes Committee for further consideration.
- x) Mrs Jenny Flynn – general state (untidy) of the Beehive Coke Ovens at Tow Law which are owned by the Town Council. It was agreed to refer this item to the Finance & General Purposes Committee for further consideration.
- y) Department of Communities and Local Government – Powers to Create Parish Councils confirmed on 15th February 2008. It was noted that Parishes with no Parish Council can be grouped with neighbouring Parishes under a common Parish Council. Local people will be able to petition their Council with recommendations to change the way their community is governed. It was agreed to progress this matter with officers of Wear Valley District Council (Linda Spence) and to report to a future meeting of the Town Council.

Item

032/08 Quality Town Council Status

The Clerk informed Members that he was working on completing the Portfolio and was still on target to complete by June 2008.

033/08 Members Reports

- a) Councillor Day – Code of Conduct for Local Council Members
- b) Councillor Hail – Problem of rats in various parts of Tow Law (rubbish rear of Bonds, High Street and Bridge Street). Councillor Gale would discuss the problem with officers of Wear Valley District Council.

034/08 Date and Time of next meeting

The next meeting of the Town Council will be held on Tuesday 18th March 2008 commencing at 6-30pm

The Meeting Finished at 8-50pm

Signed by the Chairman.....Page 6

