

Tow Law Town Council

Minutes of a Meeting of Tow Law Town Council held on Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> March 2008 in the Community Centre commencing at 6.30pm.

Present Councillors: J. Gale (Chairman), T. Batson, A. Blacker, A. Green, R. Grogan, L. Rowland, and L. Taylor.

Also Present: L. Hodkinson (WVDC Street Warden), Mrs D. Pearson (Tow Law Community Partnership) and Councillor C. Hayton.

Apologies: Pc Blair, PcsO Strong (Durham Police) Councillors J. Day, P. Graham, H. Hail and G. Stevens.

035/08 Declaration of Interest

Councillor Rowland declared an interest in Item 10-(4a) Finance & General Purposes Committee, she left the meeting whilst this item was discussed.

Councillor Gale and Hayton declared an interest in Item 10 – (2) Finance & General Purposes Committee, they took no part in the debate.

036/08 Police Report

The Report was circulated at the Meeting (copy attached to the Minutes). Members were pleased that the total number of incidents had reduced.

The Chairman agreed to move the next item forward on the Agenda.

037/08 District Councillor's Report

Councillor Grogan Reported:-

- a) The Supermarket Development to complete within 3 months
- b) Old Barclays Bank Premises
- c) Bull Ring
- d) Extension to the Gymnasium
- e) Wind Farms – Community Funds

Councillor Grogan left the Meeting (To attend another meeting on Wind Farms).

038/08 Representation by Residents

No residents present

039/08 Update from the Community Partnership

Mrs Pearson give a verbal update on the ongoing work of the Partnership (Clerk to circulate a copy of the report to all Town Council Members, copy also attached to the Minutes).

Signed by the Chairman.....Page 1

040/08 Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held 19<sup>th</sup> February 2008

Amendment to Page 1 – add “Councillor Stevens declared an Interest in Item 12c- Planning Matters”.

Subject to the above amendment the Minutes were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

041/08 Matters Arising

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127/07 Tow Law Football Club

The Clerk was awaiting confirmation from the Society of Local Council Clerks regarding the position of the Football Club and Charitable Status. Clerk to report to an appropriate Town Council Meeting.

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

d) Allotments Sub-Committee

Agenda Item No.8

e) Clerk’s additional hours

The Clerk reported that he had worked an additional 9 hours work on the preparation of the Portfolio. Members agreed to pay the additional hours.

f) Councillors Surgeries

The Chairman and Clerk to produce a report for consideration by Town Council Members for the next Town Council Meeting.

016/08 Clerk’s Report

A) Resignation of Councillor Judith Stevens

The Clerk informed Members that the Notice of a Casual Vacancy had expired and no requests have been made for an election to take place. The Council may co-opt a replacement Member.

The Clerk also informed Members that the following four people had expressed interest in the vacancy:-

Mr Colin Hayton, Mrs Carol Hurton, Ms Louise Brown and Mr Neil Stevens. Councillor Hayton left the Meeting whilst the following item was discussed.

Councillor Batson moved, seconded by Councillor Blacker “That Councillor Hayton should be co-opted onto the Town Council”. A vote was taken, two for and four against the motion.

Councillor Green moved, seconded by Councillor Taylor “That the Council interview all four people who had expressed an interest in the vacancy”. A vote was taken, four for, two against the motion.

It was therefore agreed to fill the vacancy by co-option and the Town Council to interview all four people who had expressed an interest in the vacancy.

Councillor Hayton returned to the Meeting.

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031/08 Clerk’s Report

g) DCC – Speed Limit review on road B6297

Letter received from Durham County Council.

Agenda item 17B – Clerk’s Report

H) G8 Joint County/District Members Group – Key Stakeholders Meeting.

The Clerk informed Members that he had attended the meeting on Monday 10<sup>th</sup> March 2008. Officers had expressed a willingness to work with Town/Parish Councils on Devolving of Services where they had expressed an interest and had the capacity to carry out this work.

I) WVDC – Bus Shelter at Helme Park

The Clerk had ordered the End Panel to be installed by WVDC but this could take a number of weeks. It was agreed for the Clerk to contact WVDC to obtain an installation date and report to an appropriate Town Council Meeting.

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031/08 Clerk’s Report

W) Tow Law Millennium Green – Referred to the Finance & General Purposes Committee, meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> March 2008.

Agenda Item No. 10(2)

X) Beehive Coke Ovens – Referred to the Finance & General Purposes Committee, meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> March 2008.

Agenda Item No. 10(3)

Y) Department of Communities and Local Government – Powers to create Parish Councils.

The Clerk reported that there was no further progress with this item. Clerk to report to an appropriate Town Council Meeting.

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042/08 Report of the Allotments Sub – Committee held on 12<sup>th</sup> March 2008.

Members agreed to accept the report with the following recommendations:

A) Site at rear of Dan’s Castle

- i) The site requires a major tidying up (as funding becomes available).
- ii) Boundary/intermediate fencing to be replaced / repaired (as funding becomes available).
- iii) For the Clerk to obtain from WVDC an original site plan to assist in determining site boundaries.
- iv) To invite Allotment holders to attend a Joint Working Party meeting in order to help with the management of the site and any possible funding opportunities.

B) Site at the rear of High Street

- i) For the Clerk to obtain from WVDC an original site plan to assist in determining site boundaries and to also check who is responsible for the access track leading to/from the site.
- ii) For the Clerk to contact the Allotment holders to help determine who owns the number of sheds/Pigeon Lofts on the sites.

Signed by the Chairman.....Page 3

C) Site at Ridley Terrace

This appeared to be missing from the Allotment Survey. It was agreed for the Clerk to arrange a site visit with the Chairman of the Allotments Sub – Committee and report back to the next Town Council Meeting.

043/08 Report of the Finance & General Purposes Committee held on 12<sup>th</sup> March 2008

Members agreed to accept the report with the following recommendations:-

A) Millennium Green

i) For the Clerk to obtain quotations from at least three local Contractors to carry out the grass cutting services and general maintenance items (i.e. fencing, pond, paths (Members were informed that the Trustees had received funding to replace the concrete paths with a soft surface finish pathway), lighting and ditches. The quotations to be reported to the Finance and General Purposes Committee for their consideration and to report to a Town Council Meeting all relevant costings (including an anticipated Precept figure for future years). Members expressed a hope that WVDC would take on the responsibility of cutting the grass on this area and for the Town Council to negotiate with the new Unitary Council when they discuss Devolved Services.

B) Beehive Coke Ovens

i) For the Clerk to obtain quotations ( although this may require a specialist Company) to carry out the repairs and maintenance at the site. The Clerk to prepare a report for the Finance and General Purposes Committee for their consideration and to report to a Town Council Meeting all relevant costings (including an anticipated Precept figure for future years).

Councillor Rowland left the meeting whilst the following item was discussed.

C) Application for funding from Miss J Rowland

i) To support this application (use of Powers within Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972) by granting £125 payable to the Pauline Cook School of Dance, towards the cost of dancing classes.

ii) This application and any future applications must use the following criteria as a condition of funding:-

- a) The applicant must have been training for at least 12 months.
- b) The applicant must personally present their Portfolio/File to the Finance and General Purposes Committee for consideration.
- c) The grant would be for up to £125 within each financial year.
- d) The successful applicant would need to produce at least one public performance to local residents.
- e) Any funds granted must be paid to a Registered Organisation not to an individual.

Councillor Rowland returned to the meeting.

D) Website for the Town Council

For the Clerk (and Councillor Stevens) to make further enquiries from website suppliers and report estimated costs to the Finance and General Purposes Committee for their consideration and to report to a Town Council Meeting with relevant costings.

E) Town Council News

For the Clerk (and Councillor Rowland) to make further enquiries with the two local Primary Schools regarding publishing Town Council News in their school newspapers. Clerk to report to the Finance and General Purposes Committee for their consideration and to report to a Town Council Meeting.

F) Advert in the Tow Law Business Directory

To spend £50 for an advert in the new publication showing details of the Clerk and his office hours, contact telephone number and a list of all Town Councillors.

G) Pantomime 2008

For the Clerk to make further enquires with local Theatre Production Companies on the cost of a Pantomime to be presented in the Community Centre for one or more performances. Clerk to report to Finance and General Purposes Committee for their consideration and to report to a Town Council Meeting.

044/08 County Councillor's Report.

No report.

045/08 District Councillor's Report.

Councillor Hayton reported:-

- A) Election timescale for the New Unitary Authority (1<sup>st</sup> May 2008)
- B) WVDC Council Tax for 2008/9

Councillor Gale reported:-

- A) WoW received the Regional Shine Award
- B) Update on the New Unitary Authority

046/08 Planning Matters

A) Application 3/2008/0084 at land rear of 9 and 10 Campbell Street. Members agreed to obtain further information (Chairman to contact WVDC Planning Officer) before making a decision on this application.

B) Application 3/2008/0105 at 45 Dan's Castle. Members agreed to raise no objections to this application.

C) Application 3/2008/0131 at 34 Alpine Way, Members agreed to obtain further information (Chairman to contact WVDC Planning Officer) before making a decision on this application.

D) Application 3/2008/0171 at Former Village Hall, Campbell Street. Members agreed to raise no objections to this application.

047/08 Accounts for Payment.

That approval be given for the payment of Voucher Numbers 63 to 70 in the sum of £4,637.08

048/08 Chairman's Report.

The Chairman reported on the Fly-tipping taking place around the Bonds Foundry Site. The area was to be cleared by WVDC working in partnership with Bonds and the skips will be re-sited.

049/08 Clerks Report.

A) Banks Development – West Durham Wind Farm Liaison Committee. It was agreed that Councillor Batson/ Councillor Gale (subject to availability) would attend the next meeting of the Committee particularly if funding was to be discussed.

B) DCC- Southern Area Office- Road B6297 Wolsingham Road; Speed limit review.

Members again raised concerns around:-

- i) The proposed resiting of the speed limit signs, too close to the built-up area.
- ii) The road is a series of steep banks with restricted visibility
- iii) The close proximity of the BMX track and the danger of children playing near the road.
- iv) The need for more painted road signs (speed warning) onto the B6297

Members agreed for the Clerk to respond to DCC with the above concerns.

C) County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Service- Application for funding for Children's Safety Carousel 2008.

Members agreed not to support this application.

D) Durham Police Authority - Wear Valley Police Community Consultative Group meeting on the 27<sup>th</sup> March 2008 at 7.00pm in St Catherine's Church Hall, Crook.

E) Durham Rural Community Council – Training session “Parish Plans – What's In It for you?” At the Greenhouse, Annfield Plain on 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2008 at 9.30am - 1.00pm.

F) Tow Law Millennium Primary School – Letter of thanks for donation.

G) Tow Law Tapestry Group – Letter of thanks for donation.

H) Durham Rural Community Council Newsletter; Issue 107; spring 2008.

050/08 Update On Quality Town Council Status.

The Clerk informed members that he continues to work on completing the Portfolio. An offer has been received from Steve Ragg, Executive Officer, County Durham Association of Local Councils to Pre M.O.T. the Portfolio before submission, Members agreed to accept the offer.

051/08 Members Reports.

No reports.

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052/08 Date and time of the next meeting.

The next meeting of The Town Council will be held on Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> April 2008 commencing at 6.30pm

The meeting finished at 8.25pm.

