

Tow Law Town Council  
Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Town Council held on Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> May 2008  
in the Community Centre at 6.32pm following the Annual Meeting of Electors.

Present: Councillors A. Blacker, J. Day, J. Gale, P. Graham, A. Green, L. Rowland,  
G. Stevens, L. Brown and L. Taylor.

Also Present: PC J. Blair (Durham Police) Mrs. D. Pearson (Tow Law Community  
Partnership) Mr. S. Thomas (Wear Valley District Council), Councillor  
C. Hayton, G.F Smith (Clerk) and Mrs. J. Mountain (Youth Worker).

Apologies: Councillors T. Batson, R. Grogan and H. Hail.

Members observed one minute of silence in respect of Councillor Hail's wife who had  
recently died.

AGM 01/08 Election of Chairman.

Councillor Graham was nominated and seconded for Chairman. It was agreed that  
Councillor P. Graham be hereby elected to serve as Chairman of the Town Council  
for the ensuring year.

AGM 02/08 Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

Councillor Graham duly signed his Declaration of Acceptance of Office which was  
counter signed by the Clerk as Proper Officer.

**COUNCILLOR GRAHAM CHAIRED THE MEETING.**

AGM 03/08 Declaration of Interest.

No declaration of interest.

AGM 04/08 Election of Vice Chairman.

Councillors Day and Green were nominated and seconded. A ballot was held and each  
Councillor received four votes each. The Chairman exercised his rights for a second  
vote and voted for Councillor Day. It was agreed that Councillor Day be hereby  
elected to serve as Vice Chairman of the Town Council for the ensuring year.

AGM 05/08 Police Report.

PC Blair updated the meeting with crime and incident figures for April 2008 (copy  
attached to these minutes), followed by a question and answer session. Councillor  
Stevens raised concerns about the Old Station Inn pub, PC Blair to investigate.  
Councillor Rowland raised concerns about the BMX Track, PC Blair to investigate.

AGM 06/08 Representations by Residents.

No residents present.

AGM 07/08 Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> April 2008.

Members agreed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

AGM 08/08 Matters Arising.

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127/07 Tow Law Football Club.

The Clerk was still awaiting confirmation from the SLCC 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 and General Purposes Committee held 9<sup>th</sup> January 2008.

E) Clerk's additional hours.

The Clerk reported that he had worked an additional 12 hours worked on the preparation of the Portfolio. Members agreed to pay the additional hours.

F) Councillors Surgeries

Agenda item no. 21

042/08 Report of the Allotments Sub-Committee.

Clerk to arrange a meeting date with the Chairman. Clerk to report to an appropriate Town Council meeting.

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

A) Millennium Green

Clerk was awaiting site meeting date from the contractor. Clerk to report to an appropriate Town Council meeting.

B) Beehive Coke Ovens.

Clerk to arrange a meeting with a specialist contractor. Clerk to report to an appropriate Town Council meeting

D) Web site for the Town Council

No further progress. Clerk to meet with Councillor Stevens and report to an appropriate Town Council meeting.

E) Town Council News.

No further progress. Clerk to meet with Councillor Rowland and the two Head Teachers and report to an appropriate Town Council meeting.

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G) Pantomime 2008.

Clerk still awaiting details from local production companies. Clerk to report to an appropriate Town Council meeting.

062/08 Planning Matters.

A) Application 3/2008/0046 – Land opposite 59 Bridge Street.

Planning Permission has been refused.

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065/08 Clerk's Report.

B) DCC Childrens and Young Peoples Services – Primary Strategy for Change. (Mrs Jenny Mountain joined the meeting from this item).

Member agreed with the Strategy and the report prepared by Mrs. Mountain (copy attached to the minutes). Mrs. Mountain left the meeting after this item.

Signed by the Chairman.....Page 2

Item 7

E) Banks Developments – West Durham Wind Farm Liaison Committee.  
Councillor Gale updated the Members on the meeting which took place on the 15<sup>th</sup> May 2008. The fund will be administered by the County Durham Foundation Fund and any applications may take up to three months to verify / approve.  
Members requested Councillor Gale to continue to represent the Town Council at the Liaison meetings. All Council Members to suggest ideas for schemes for submission for funding to the Town Clerk.

H) BDO Stoy Hayward – Local Council Briefing; spring 2008.  
Item to be placed on the agenda for the next meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee (date yet to be agreed).

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066/08 Update on Quality Town Council Status.

Agenda item no. 26.

AGM 09/08 Minutes of the Special Town Council Meeting held on the 28<sup>th</sup> April 2008.

Agreed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

AGM 10/08 Declaration of Office of Councillor.

Members agreed to accept the Declaration of Office of Councillors from Louise Brown, 100 Dan's Castle, Tow Law. The Clerk and Proper Officer of the Council signed the form in the presence of the Councillors.

AGM 11/08 Cheque Authorisation.

It was agreed that the Chairman, Vice Chairman and Chairman of the Finance and General Purposes Committee would be authorised signatories and that any two signatories from the three approved would be acceptable. Clerk to make the necessary arrangements with the Co-operative Bank.

AGM 12/08 Committee Membership.

It was agreed to appoint Members to the following committees:-

A) Finance and General Purposes Committee.

Councillors Blacker, Brown, Green, Rowland and Stevens plus Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Town Council. Members also agreed that Councillor Rowland be Chairman of the Committee.

B) Allotments Sub-Committee.

Councillors Batson, Blacker, Hail, Rowland and Taylor plus Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Town Council. Members agreed that Councillor Blacker be Chairman of the Sub- Committee.

C) Allotments Joint Working Party.

Councillors Hail and Stevens plus the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Town Council.

D) Councillors Portfolio.

Councillors Blacker, and Rowland for Children and Young People. Members agreed to defer any further appointments until after obtaining Quality Town Council Status.

Signed by the Chairman.....Page 3

AGM 13/08 To Appoint Members to Outside Bodies.

It was agreed to appoint Members to the following outside bodies:-

A)Tow Law Community Partnership.

Councillors Batson, Blacker, Day, Gale, Green, Rowland and Stevens.

B) County Durham Association of Local Councils

Councillor Batson.

C) Police Community Liaison Committee

Councillor Batson (and other Council Members as and when).

D)WVDC Parish/Town Council Forum.

Councillor Gale to discuss with Councillor Batson to determine who should be the most appropriate representative plus the Clerk.

AGM 14/08 Update from Mr. Steven Thomas, Neighbourhood Arrangement Officer, Wear Valley District Council.

Mr Thomas updated Members on the work of the Neighbourhood Arrangement Teams and left each Member an information pack which included:-

Area Conference on 5<sup>th</sup> June 2008 at Bishop Auckland (10am to 4pm)

Area Partnership Workshop on 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2008 at Tow Law (6.30pm to 8.30pm)

Area Partnership Funding Criteria & Guidance Notes

AGM 15/08 Update from the Community Partnership (Mrs Diane Pearson)

Report circulated at the Meeting. Members asked Mrs Pearson to leave the meeting while they discuss various matters on the report. Mrs Pearson left the meeting.

Members were in favour of retaining the Partnership (in a changed format) and agreed that the Council representatives on the Partnership should work with other representatives to continue meeting and arranging events. Funding for a Development Worker would require further discussion as well as the new IMD figures (which means that Tow Law is no longer eligible for certain funding). Concerns were raised about the extension to the Recreation Grounds building. It was agreed for the Council's representatives to report back to the next Town Council meeting.

AGM/16/08 Unaudited Statement of Accounts for the Year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2008

Members received a copy of the Financial Statement for the Year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2008. It was agreed to formally receive and adopt the statement and for the Clerk to complete the Annual Return in conjunction with the Internal Auditor. The Clerk informed Members that the Internal Audit would take place on 12<sup>th</sup> June 2008 and a report would be compiled for the Finance & General Purpose Committee to discuss and report to an appropriate Town Council meeting.

AGM/17/08 County Councillors' Reports

No Reports

AGM/18/08 District Councillors Reports

Councillor Gale Reported:-

- a) Home/Three Rivers Housing Association no interest in lettings on the newly built estate.
- b) WVDC new administration (Council Structure)

Councillor Grogan reported (The Clerk read Councillor Grogan's report):-

- A) Gymnasium extension
- B) EDF Windfarm – re section 106 arrangements
- C) Talk with Supermarket Developers
- D) Incident at Deerness Estate Play Area

Councillor Hayton

No Report

AGM 19/08 Councillors Surgery held on 16<sup>th</sup> May 2008

Councillors Graham and Grogan attended the session at the Community Centre on Friday 16<sup>th</sup> May 2008 (5 to 7pm). No residents turned up. It was agreed to continue with the surgeries but if after one hour no one has attended then the rest of the session should be cancelled.

AGM 20/08 Planning Matters

- A) Application 3/2008/0077 (amendment) – 5 Attlee Estate. Members asked the Clerk to contact the Planning Officer to ascertain if the proposal was for commercial use. Clerk to inform all Council Members of the reply and Members to respond to the Clerk with their comments.
- B) Application 3/2008/0235- The New Market Hotel, Castle Bank. Members asked the Clerk to contact the Planning Officer to ascertain if the proposal complied with the Disability Discrimination Act. Clerk to inform all Council Members of the reply and Members to respond to the Clerk with their comments.
- C) Application 3/2008/0084(Resubmission) – land rear of 9/10 Campbell Street. Members asked the Clerk to contact the Planning Officer to ascertain if the proposal was for commercial use. Clerk to inform all Council Members of the reply and Members to respond to the Clerk with their comments.
- D) Application 3/2008/0078 (resubmission) - 4 High Street. Members asked the Clerk to contact the Planning Officer to ascertain if the proposal was for commercial use. Clerk to inform all Council Members of the reply and Members to respond to the Clerk with their comments.

AGM 21/08 Accounts For Payment

That approval be given for the payment of voucher numbers 09 to 14 in the sum of £4151.72.

AGM 22/08 Chairman's Report

Councillor Gale read out a letter he had sent to Durham County Council regarding the camera signs that had suddenly appeared in the Tow Law area and the construction of a hard standing for Police vehicles on the North bound side of the A68 on the edge of the Town. No response had been received.

AGM 23/08 Clerk's Report

- 1. The Clerk reported that the seat at Ironworks Road had been damaged around 7/8<sup>th</sup> May 2008, the Police had been informed on 9<sup>th</sup> May 2008. Clerk to report to the next Town Council meeting.
- 2. Correspondence received:-

- a) Email from Councillor Stevens – complaints about the Old Station Public House.

Members agreed for the Clerk to write to the Licensing Section at Wear Valley District Council (copy to area Police Inspector).

- b) Wear Valley District Council – Area Partnership Development Conference at Auckland Castle, Bishop Auckland (10am to 4pm) on 5<sup>th</sup> June 2008.
- c) Durham County Council – Local Government Review; An update.
- d) DCC – Access to the Corporate Procurement Service.
- e) BDO Stoy Hayward – Details of the Annual Audit for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2008.
- f) Wear Valley Community Network –meeting with Victor Cadaxa (Co-ordinator).

Clerk to invite Mr Cadaxa to the next Town Council meeting.

- g) Beaufort Wind Ltd – Community Fund Payment and funding allocation return. Members agree for the Clerk to complete the funding allocation return.
- h) Durham Miners Heritage Group – request for a donation. Members asked the Clerk to obtain further details and report to the next Town Council meeting.
- i) County Durham & Cleveland County Training Partnership – Training Update.
- j) CDCCTP – Chairmanship Training at County Hall, Durham (10 to 12), six Saturdays in July, August and September. Cost £27 per delegate per session.

Members to inform the Clerk if they wished to attend any of the training sessions and for the Clerk to make the necessary booking arrangements.

- k) County Durham Association of Local Councils - Local Government Review; Engagement and Participation.

Members noted that the Clerk was a member of the Co-ordinating group

- l) CDALC – Co-ordinating Group; Work Stream Involvement.

Members noted that the Clerk was nominated to be a Lead Officer on the Community Governance Review (creation of Parish/Town Councils etc) Group.

- m) CDALC - Newsletter February 2008; Issue 17.
- n) Campaign to Protect Rural England – Newsletter; Summer 2008.

#### AGM 24/08 Quality Town Council Status

The Clerk updated Members on the progress of the Portfolio, which is on schedule for submission on 13<sup>th</sup> June 2008.

Members thanked Councillor Rowland for assisting the Town Clerk with research and typing (no payment) in preparing reports for the Portfolio.

#### AGM 25/08 Members Reports

Councillor Rowland – residents concerns on various matters at the new BMX Track.

Members agreed to monitor the situation and wait to see if they continue after the work is complete and the site is officially opened on 8<sup>th</sup> June 2008.

#### AGM 26/08 Date and Time of the Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Town Council will be on Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> June 2008 commencing at 6.30pm.

The Meeting Finished at 8.25pm.