

Tow Law Town Council

Minutes of a meeting of Tow Law Town Council held Tuesday 17th June 2008 in the Community Centre commencing at 6.30pm.

Present Councillors: J. Day (Chairman),. A. Blacker, J. Gale, A. Green, H. Hail and L. Taylor.

Also Present: County Councillor P Jopling, Mr Victor Cadaxa (Wear Valley Community Network) Mrs D. Pearson (Tow Law Community Partnership) Mrs Jenny Mountain (Youth Worker), PcsO Strong (Durham Police) Mr Robert Plews (Resident) and Mr G F Smith (Clerk).

Apologies: Councillors L. Brown, P. Graham, R. Grogan, L. Rowland, G. Stevens and County Councillor Bailey.

069/08 Declaration of Interest

Councillor Gale declared an interest in agenda item 17 (1B) Clerk’s Report. He took no part in the debate.

070/08 Police Report

PcsO Strong updated the meeting with Crime and Incident figures for May 2008 (copy attached to these minutes), followed by a question and answer session.

071/08 Representation by Residents

Mr Plews raised concerns of the amount of litter (alcohol bottles/cans) at the rear of High Street. Councillor Gale agreed to report the problem to the District Council’s Neighbourhood Warden (who is on holiday at the moment).

072/08 Presentation by Mr Victor Cadaxa of the Wear Valley Community Network

Mr Cadaxa updated the meeting on the following:-

- A) Wear Valley Community Network; what it is? And what it does?
- B) Proposed Local Governance Structure; Partnership Arrangements; Local Strategic Partnerships and Town/Parish Councils.
- C) Area Partnership Workshop – 3rd July in the Community Centre(6.30 to 8.30pm)
- D) Elected Members and Community Activists Event – 9th July at the Spectrum Leisure Complex, Willington (9.30am to 1.00pm)

Members Thanked Mr Cadaxa for his Presentation.

073/08 Update from the Community Partnership

Mrs Pearson updated the meeting on the ongoing work of the Community Partnership (copy of the report attached to these Minutes). Members raised concerns regarding the delay at the extension to the Recreation Ground.

Mrs Mountain updated the meeting on her work with the young people in Tow Law (copy of the report attached to these Minutes). She requested Council Members E-Mail addresses to keep them up to date with the availability of funding streams. It was agreed for the Clerk to co-ordinate this request and contact Mrs Mountain with the information.

074/08 Minutes of the Annual Council Meeting held 20th May 2008

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

075/08 Matters Arising

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127/07 Tow Law Football Club- Charitable Status

The Clerk had received all the necessary details from the Football Club but was still awaiting confirmation from the SLCC. The Clerk would chase up the response and report to the next Town Council meeting.

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

e) Clerk's additional hours

The Clerk reported that he had worked an additional 21 hours on the final preparation of the Portfolio. Members agreed to pay the additional hours.

f) Councillors Surgeries

Agenda Item No. 11

042/08 Report of the Allotments Sub – Committee

Proposed visit to allotments at Ridley Terrace

Agenda Item No 9. (2)

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

A) Millennium Green

Agenda Item No. 9 (7)

B) Beehive Coke Ovens

Agenda Item No.9 (8)

D) Website for the Town Council

Agenda Item No.9 (9)

E) Town Council News

Councillor Rowland and the Clerk had met with the Head Teacher of the Millennium Primary School on 16th June 2008. They were due to visit the Head Teacher of the Blessed John Duckett Primary School on 19th June 2008. A report will be presented to the next Town Council meeting.

G) Pantomime 2008

Agenda Item No. 9 (10)

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AGM 11/08 Cheque Authorisations

Clerk to make the arrangements with the Co-operative Bank PLC and to report to the next appropriate Town Council meeting.

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AGM 20/08 Planning Matters

A)Application 3/2008/0077-5 Attlee Estate

Planning permission had been granted for private use only.

B)Application 3/2008/0235 – The New Market Hotel

Planning Permission has been granted, Part of the permission would be Building Control which would include reference to the Disability Discrimination Act.

C)Application 3/2008/0084 (Resubmission) – Land rear of 9/10 Campbell Street

The Planning Officer confirmed that Planning Permission would only be granted for private use.

D)Application 3/2008/0078 (resubmission) – 4 High Street

The Planning Officer confirmed that Planning Permission would only be granted for private use.

AGM 22/08 Chairman's Report

Camera signs and hard standing for Police vehicles at Tow Law. A response had been received from the County Council regarding the reasons behind installing a safety camera route on the A68 between Toft Hill and Tow Law. The County Council had worked in partnership with Durham Constabulary analysing traffic data and accident data. Funding (at short notice) had become available during 2007/08 and the safety camera signage was put into place. The Officer (in the letter) apologised for not briefing the Town Council on the scheme and hopes the scheme will have significant benefits in terms of road safety and speed reduction within the area. Members expressed concerns at the lack of consultation by the County Council.

AGM 23/08 Clerk's Report

1.Damage to seat at Ironworks Road

The Clerk was awaiting an estimate for the cost of repairs to the seat and supporting bracket. Clerk to report to the next Town Council meeting.

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AGM 23/08 Clerk's Report

A)Complaint about The Station Public House

The Clerk had received an E-Mail from Mr C Rudman, Wear Valley District Council (Environmental Protection Manager) stating that he would investigate the complaints and confirm in writing the nature of any action(s) that the Licensing Authority are able to take in relation to the matters raised. Clerk to report to the next appropriate Town Council meeting.

B) Area Partnership Development Conference held 5th June 2008. The Clerk updated the Meeting on this event attended by Councillor Green, Rowland and himself. There is a further two events arranged for the 3rd and 9th July 2008.

F) Wear Valley Community Network – Mr Victor Cadaxa

Agenda Item No. 5

H)Durham Miners Heritage Group – request for a donation. The Clerk read out a letter received from the above group. The cost of a school visit is £100 per school covering transport, materials and volunteer expenses. The group had raised £625 towards the cost of the project.

Members decided to defer any decision on this application until the next Town Council Meeting

J)County Durham and Cleveland Training Partnership – Chairmanship Training
The Clerk had requested “In – House Training” for the three Councillors who had requested this training, he was awaiting a response from the organiser. Clerk to report to the next appropriate Town Council meeting.

076/08 Report of the Finance & General Purposes Committee held on 16th June 2008

As the report was circulated at the meeting Members agreed that some items required further discussions therefore they would be deferred to the next Town Council Meeting (Clerk to agenda each item).

2. Allotment

It was agreed for the Clerk to write to one allotment holder regarding the untidy state of the allotment site (reference TT003). It was further agreed to refer the problems of the boundary fencing and the allotment boundaries to the Allotments Sub-Committee, Clerk to arrange a meeting date with the Committee Chairman (Councillor Blacker). It was also agreed for the Clerk to make inquires of the District and County Councils on the availability of land for allotment sites (presently 15 people are on the waiting list) and for the Clerk to report to the next appropriate Finance & General Purposes Committee.

3.Christmas Trees and Brackets

Members agreed the recommendation on the quotations for the supply of Christmas Trees and for a review of charging residents for the part costs of the trees which is to be considered by the Finance & General Purposes Committee. Members also agreed for the Clerk to arrange for the brackets to be inspected (on a Health & Safety issue) before the installation of the trees, and to report the findings of the inspection to the next appropriate Finance & General Purposes Committee.

4. Christmas Decoration Competition

Members agreed the recommendations of the Finance & General Purposes Committee.

5. Bath Bus 2008

Members agreed the recommendations of the Finance & General Purposes Committee.

6. Flower Tubs for 2008

Members agreed not to purchase any flower tubs in this financial year.

7. Millennium Green

Members agreed to await the report of the local Contractor which would be discussed at the next appropriate Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting.

8. Beehive Coke Ovens

Members agreed to await the report of the local specialist Contractor which would be discussed at the next appropriate Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting.

9. Web-Site

Members agreed to await the report of the Clerk following his meeting with Mr Jason Miller which would be discussed at the next appropriate Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting.

10. Pantomime

Members agreed the recommendations of the Finance & General Purposes Committee and await the report on costings /availability of the Community Centre/outcomes of the meetings with the Head Teachers/possibility of a raffle. The report would be discussed at the next appropriate Finance & General Purpose Committee meeting.

11. Standing Orders

Members agreed the recommendations of the Finance & General Purposes Committee. The Clerk to amend Standing Orders 57 and 59 by replacing them with 57a and 57b (as per the Clerks report).

12. Review of Financial Regulations

Members agreed the recommendation of the Finance & General Purposes Committee to make no amendments to the Council's Financial Regulations.

13. Review of the Effectiveness of the Internal Audit

Members agreed the recommendations of the Finance & General Purposes Committee.
This item to be further discussed at the next Town Council meeting.

14 Key Issues from the Audit

Members agreed the recommendations of the Finance & General Purposes Committee.
This item to be further discussed at the next Town Council meeting.

16 Annual Audit 2007/08

Members agreed the following:-

- a) Section One – Statement of Accounts
- b) Report on the Variances in the Statement of Accounts
- c) Section Two – Annual Governance Statement (following the report of the Clerk
Members agreed to answer questions 1 to 8 “yes” and question 9 “not applicable”).

This item to be further discussed at the next Town Council meeting.

17(B) Pensioner's Christmas Party 2008

Members agreed the recommendations of the Finance & General Purposes Committee.
This item to be further discussed at the next Town Council meeting

17(C) Proposed Play Trail at the Millennium School

This item to be further discussed at the next Town Council meeting

17(D) Joint Working (Town Council, Community Partnership and Community Association)

This item to be further discussed at the next Town Council meeting

077/08 County Councillor's Report.

Councillor Jopling reported:-

- A) She introduced herself to the Council Members
- B) Asked the Council for feedback on what the Council wants?
- C) Contact address and telephone number

Councillor Bailey – No report

078/08 District Councillor's Report.

Councillor Gale reported:-

- A) BMX Track –WVDC would be installing a disclaimer notice on the site

Councillor Grogan – No report

Councillor Hayton – No report

079/08 Report from Councillors Surgery – 14th June 2008

Councillor Green reported 3 Councillors attended the session (Councillor Green, Rowland and Stevens) but no residents turned up at the surgery. Members agreed to continue with the Surgery dates but reduce the time to one hour.

Review to be discussed at the next meeting of the Town Council.

080/08 Planning Matters

A) Application 3/2008/0342 (Resubmission) – 32 Campbell Street. Members agreed to raise no objections to this application.

B) Application 3/2008/0361 - at 34 Alpine Way. Members agreed to raise objections to this application and for the Clerk to write to the Planning Officer at Wear Valley District Council.

C) Application 3/2008/0384 – 7 Harrison Street. Members agreed to raise no objections to this application.

081/08 Accounts for Payment

That approval be given for payment of voucher numbers 15 to 20 in the sum of £944.68.

082/08 Chairman's Report.

The Clerk (In the absence of the Chairman of the Council, Councillor Graham) read out the report as follows:-

A) Councillors Portfolios

Planning – Councillor Batson & Stevens

Schools – Councillors Grogan & Rowland

Members agreed the above nominations

B) Local Strategic Partnership (Wear Valley)

Members agreed to nominate Councillor Gale

083/08 Clerks Report.

1.Applications for the N-Power Community Fund

A) Members agreed to donate £250 towards the cost of the Sports Day held on 6th June 2008 to the Tow Law Community Partnership.

B) Members agreed to donate £200 towards the cost of providing a storage container for equipment at the rear of the Community Centre to the Tow Law Community Association.

2.Corespondance received from:-

a) CDALC – Nominations for Executive Committee Members, Closing Date 31st August 2008.

Members agreed to defer any decision on this matter until the next Town Council meeting.

b) Durham Police Authority – Appointment of three Independent members, closing date 26th June 2008. For information only.

c) Durham County Council – Local Government Review; An update.

d) DCC – Wolsingham Road, Tow Law (B6297); Speed Limit review response.

e) DCC – Primary Strategy for Change (amended).

It was agreed for the Clerk to copy the document to all Council Members.

To be discussed at the next Town Council meeting

f) Wear Valley District Council – Standards Committee. For information only.

g) WVDC – Neighbourhood Arrangements – 3rd July 2008 at the Community Centre 6.30 to 8.30pm.

h) County Durham Unity Authority/Wear Valley District Council – Local Area Arrangements for Wear Valley area 9th July 2008 at the Spectrum Leisure Complex at Willington 9.30am to 12.40pm (plus lunch).

i) Banks Developments – Invitation to West Durham Wind Farm official turf cutting ceremony 11th July 2008; 12 to 2pm for two Council Members.

Members agreed to nominate Councillors Day & Gale.

j) Zurich Insurance – Change in handling claims

k) Department for Communities and Local Government – Town & Parish Council Elections.

It was agreed for the Clerk to copy the document to all Council Members.

To be discussed at the next Town Council meeting

l) Tees, Esk and Wear Valley NHS Trust – Developing Mental Health Services for older people in County Durham and Darlington; consultation will end 7th September 2008.

m) MENCAP – application for funding.

It was agreed for the Clerk to obtain further details.

To be discussed at the next Town Council meeting

n) County Durham Sustainability and Environment Partnership Newsletter May/June 2008; Issue 37

o) County Durham Learning Disabilities Partnership Board Newsletter May 2008; Issue 21.

084/08 Quality Town Council Status.

The Clerk reported that the Portfolio was now complete and would be submitted for assessment on 30th June 2008. Clerk to report to the next Town Council meeting.

085/08 Members Reports.

Councillor Gale – Members agreed to invite the Unitary County Portfolio holder with Responsibilities for Town/Parish Councils (Coun Brian Stephens) to A Town Council meeting.

Councillor Taylor – raised concerns about storage of farm machinery, alterations to walls And traffic problems (ie low loaders) in the area of North Road / Inkerman Road.

Members agreed for the Clerk to write a letter to the Planning Department at Wear Valley District Council informing them of the above concerns of the Council Members.

086/08 Date and Time of the Next Meeting.

The next meeting of The Town Council will be held on Tuesday 15th July 2008 commencing at 6.30pm.

The meeting finished at 8.50pm.

