

## **TOW LAW TOWN COUNCIL**

Minutes of the meeting of **Tow Law Town Council** held on Tuesday **15<sup>th</sup> March 2011** in the Community Centre commencing at **6.30pm**

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

**Also Present:** County Councillors J. Bailey and P. Jobling, Robert Plews (Resident), Jocasta Lawton (DCC) David Balls (DCC Standards Committee) and G F Smith (Clerk).

**Apologies:** Councillors L. Brown and G. Stevens

### **037/11 Declaration of Interest**

Councillor Grogan declared an interest in agenda item 12 – Trex Gymnasium  
Councillor Batson declared an interest in agenda item 8 – Notice of vacancy for Councillor and item 15 – land to the rear of 44 High Street

### **038/11 Presentation by members of the Parish and Town Council sub Committee of the Standard Committee (Durham County Council)**

Jocasta Lawson informed the meeting of the work carried out by the sub Committee. David Balls informed the meeting of the future role of the committee, disbanding of the Standards Board and the future of the Code of Conduct for Council Members. Followed by a question and answer session.  
Members thanked the officers for the presentation.  
Members agreed to await the details on the Code of Conduct to be used by Durham County Council and requested training on this topic at the appropriate time.  
Jocasta Lawson and David Balls left the meeting.

### **039/11 Police Report**

No Report received

### **040/11 Representation by Residents**

Mr Plews raised a number of issues (police related), Clerk to pass the details onto the PC/PCSO

### **041/11 County Councillor's Report**

#### **County Councillor Jopling reported:-**

- a) Drop Kerb, High Street – no date for the work to be carried out (Highways)
- b) Local bus services (meeting with DCC officer)
- c) Changes to Planning procedure for Town/Parish Councils
- d) Section 106 allocations (item deferred to the next Town Council meeting)
- e) Save our Sports Centre campaign (item to be discussed in Clerk's report)

#### **County Councillor Bailey reported:-**

- a) Planning matters –downloading of documents
- b) Housing Strategy (to arrange with Steven Reed to attend a special Town Council meeting – date to be agreed)
- c) Broadband for Tow Law/Weardale area (subject to a report to DCC Cabinet meeting)
- d) Lack of information from DCC (to speak to relevant officers/portfolio holder)

### **04211 Minutes of the meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> February 2011**

Agreed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

### **043/11 Matters arising**

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#### **Bus Service 1B (Arriva/SB Travel (022/11)**

The Clerk read out details of a letter sent by Pat Glass MP to the Leader of Durham County Council (dated 3<sup>rd</sup> March) regarding the redistributing the cuts to subsidies (less services Monday to Saturday to allow one or two buses to operate on Sundays).

Members noted the contents and were made aware (by Cllr Batson) of a petition being organised in Tow Law.

#### **Planning Matters 151/10)**

#### **Application 3/2010/0444 –Thornley Pit House Farm, Bridge Street.**

Detailed drawings had been received and were available for inspection in the Clerk's office. Councillor Gale informed the meeting of his interpretation of the proposed development.

Members agreed to raise no objection to this proposed development.

**Members Report (175/10)**

b)New Localism Bill - setting up a Partnership Committee  
The Clerk was awaiting files etc from Jenny Flynn

**Page 2****Tow Law Town Plan (011/11)**

The Chairman updated Members on an informal meeting which took place with Bonds Foundry, a number of Town Councillors and Eric Watson (Council Architect). Further details will be reported to the next appropriate Town Council meeting.

**Trex Gymnasium (012/11)**

Special meeting to be arranged

**Millennium Green Trust (014/11)**

Special meeting to be arranged

**Chairman's Report (015/11)**

Meeting with Hilltop Communities

Awaiting details from the Boundaries Committee report, Clerk to write to representatives of the Hill Top Communities to update them of any progress.

**Clerk's Report (016/11)****A)Notice of vacancy for a Councillor**

i)The Electoral Manager DCC had informed the Clerk (by letter) that she had not received any requests for the election to take place, therefore the Town Council may co-opt. Members agreed to co-opt

ii)Application for the vacancy of Councillor

An application had been received from William Grieves Railton, 11 Ironworks Road, Tow Law for the vacancy. Members agreed to interview the candidate at a special Town Council meeting prior to the next ordinary monthly meeting (19<sup>th</sup> April)

**b)DCC – The County Durham Plan – copies of document**

Copies of the document had been sent to all Councillors prior to the meeting.

Members agreed to defer any discussion on this matter until the special Town Council meeting.

**Planning Matters 026/11**

Planning Application from McInerney Homes

The Clerk had spoken to the Planning Officer (Sinead Turnbull) and was informed that the County Council were in discussion with the developer over the 106 allocation. Once agreement had been reached the County Council would inform the Town Council with the decision of the Planning Committee (approval). Clerk to update at the next Town Council meeting.

**Page 3****Housing Strategy for County Durham 2010/2015 (032/11)**

Item discussed in the County Councillors report

**Members Reports (035/11)**

B) CDALC - Feedback on meetings (Councillor Grogan)

Chairman/Councillor Batson unable to attend last Executive meeting, but will provide feedback to the Town Council on meetings they attend.

The Clerk had spoken to Steven Ragg (CDALC) and requested the minutes of the two previous meetings

D) Drop Kerb in High Street (Councillor Hayton)

Item discussed in County Councillors Report

E) Smith Street (Cllr Rowland)

i) Road markings (School) – Clerk spoken to DCC and arranged for the work to be added to the works list (no date when this will be completed)

ii) Entrance feature

Clerk to discuss with Councillor Rowland and make an application to the Highways department

F) Entrance feature at Wolsingham Road (Councillor Rowland)

Clerk to discuss with Councillor Rowland and make an application to the Highways department.

G) Cemetery at Dan's Castle (Councillor Rowland)

The Chairman updated the Members on a meeting he had with the officers from DCC who had agreed to carry out a number of repairs/reinstatement/details of state of headstones ie Health & Safety issues and would carry out this work as soon as possible. The Cemetery at Thornley Road was also included in the inspection meeting.

H) Dog bins at Millennium Green (Councillor Rowland)

Work carried out by DCC

I) BMX Track – Drainage problems (Councillor Rowland)

Clerk to contact Sandy Denny (AAP Co-ordinator DCC) and report to the next Town Council meeting.

J) Meeting of Allotment Committee (Councillor Blacker)

Clerk to meet Councillor Blacker after the meeting to arrange a committee meeting for April.

**044/11 Planning Matters**

Application 3/2011/0064 – Greggs North East for new illuminated sign at 47 High Street  
DECISION – Members agreed to raise no objection to this application

**045/11 Accounts for Payment**

That approval be given for the payment of vouchers 75 to 80 in the sum of £1434.54

**046/11 Tow Law Town Plan**

Item deferred until the next Town Council meeting

**047/11 Trex Gymnasium**

- A) AAP funding (Cllr Grogan) awaiting completion by DCC, Legal section (Steve Carrol) before £5000 grant can be released.
- B) Other funding (Cllr Rowland) a further two application forms have been completed
- C) No financial detail have been received (copy of Bank Statement)

**048/11 Area Action Partnership****A) Future Board Meetings:-**

Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> March 2011 between 6pm – 8pm at Crook Council Chamber

Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> May 2011 between 6pm – 8pm at Crook Council Chamber

Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2011 6pm – 8pm at Crook Council Chamber

Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> November 2011 6pm – 8pm at Crook Council Chamber

Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> January 2012 6pm – 8pm at Crook Council Chamber

Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2012 6pm – 8pm at Crook Council Chamber

**B) Next meetings of Task and Finish Groups :-**

Job prospect and Employment Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> April 2011 2.30pm – 4.30pm

Crime & Community Safety Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> April 2011 4.00pm – 6.00pm

Activities for Children and Young people Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> April 2011 4.00pm – 6.00pm

Heathy Lifestyles and Wellbeing Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> April 2011 10.30 am – 12.30pm

i) Members were encouraged to attend these meetings

ii) Councillor Grogan stated that he would report back to the Town Council on any AAP meetings he attends.

**C) Representative on the AAP Board**

Members agreed to rotate the attendance of Council Members at the AAP Board meetings. Report to the next Town Council meeting

d) Participatory Budgeting

An event will be held in the Tow Law Community Centre on Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> May 2011 commencing at 6.00pm

The event will consist of local organisations who have applied for funding (£10,000) to briefly (3 minutes) present their project. Following the presentations members of the public will score each project using an electronic voting system, where projects will then be ranked. Winners will be announced on the night.

**049/11 Millennium Green Trust**

Item deferred to a special Meeting of the Town Council

**050/11 Land to the rear of 44 High Street**

A request had been received by DCC from the owners of the aforementioned property to purchase some land to allow wheelchair access to the rear of his home. The County Council sent an e-mail and plans to the Town Council asking if they had any objections to a possible land disposal to the owner of 44 High Street.

The Members considered the application together with proposals for the Car Park to be located near to this site and agreed to raise no objections to this request. Clerk to inform DCC of this decision.

**051/11 North West Wind Farm**

Cllr Gale updated the meeting on funding availability from the North West Wind Farm (applications to County Durham Foundation). Members were encouraged to come up with any schemes requiring funding and to let the Clerk/Deputy Clerk have the details.

**052/11 Appointment of Internal Auditor**

Members agreed to re-appoint Mr M.G. Ackroyd, Long Acres, Durham City

**053/11 Review of Effectiveness of Internal Audit**

Subject to the following amendment:-

Add to list of Policies (Appendix 3) "Model Code of Conduct (Members) 2007"

Subject to the above amendment Members agreed to accept the report and for the Clerk to place the report in the Audit file and for a copy to be placed on the Council's Website.

**054/11 Review of Risk Assessment Statement 2010/11**

Members agreed to accept the report and for the Clerk to place in the Audit file and for a copy to be placed on the Council's Web site.

**055/11 Chairman's Report**

CRB Checks – Members agreed for the Clerk to arrange for CRB forms to be completed by all Council Members and forwarded onto the relevant authority.

**056/11 Clerk's Report****Items for Discussion:-**

A)DCC – Response regarding Grot Spots Campaign (3 Towns AAP)

The Clerk read out an e-mail received from Anne Lambert, Special Projects Officer, Direct Services, Durham County Council.

**Members agreed the following actions:-**

i)For the Clerk to obtain details from the AAP Co-ordinator of the 46 areas within the AAP that work had been carried out, including the £5000 budget allocation.

ii)For the Clerk to respond to the County Council stating that the Town Council is unhappy with the reply and it did not answer the concern relating to the budgets and reserves transferred from the District Councils (WVDC) to the County Council to continue the works being carried out by them prior to Local Government Review (County Unitary) by Environment clean –up Task Forces.

B)BDO External Auditors – Audit Briefing; Winter 2011

a copy had been sent to all Councillors prior to the meeting

C)CDALC – Sports and Leisure Facility review consultation

Members noted that the report proposed to close six sports centres around the County (Abbey Leisure Centre at Pity Me, Coxhoe Leisure Centre, Deerness Leisure Centre at Ushaw Moor, Ferryhill Leisure Centre, Glenhome Leisure Centre at Crook and Sherburn Leisure Centre).

**Members agreed:-**

i)To support the "Stop the closure of Leisure Centres by Durham County Council" campaign

ii)Campaign leaflets to be distributed in Tow Law (via Greens Newsagents)

iii)Petition sheets for members of the public to sign in support of the campaign to be placed in the Community Centre and Green's Newsagents.

D)Litterfree Durham's Big Spring Clean campaign; 19<sup>th</sup> March to 16<sup>th</sup> April; organising a litter pick and posters for notice boards.

**Members agreed:-**

i)to pass details onto Jenny Mountain (Youth Development Worker), Tow law Community Association for some young people to volunteer.

ii) For the Clerk to place the notices on the Council's Notice Boards and local shops to help promote the scheme

E)Durham Rural Community Council – Community Partnerships and Development Trusts;

Details of information session on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> April at Park House; Lanchester.

Cost £27 per delegate (2 delegates per Local Council). Details available from the Clerk.

**Items for Information:-**

f)Stanley Village Hall – Stanley Cinema 6 weeks programme

g)Durham Police – Out of the Blue newsletter; January 2011; Issue No. 4

h)CDALC – E Bulletin (various topics)

j)Clerks & Councils Direct magazine; March 2011; Issue No. 74

k)Local Council Review magazine; Spring 2011

l)DCC – Free seminar "Climate Change and Carbon reduction in the Community" on Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> March 2011, from 5.30 to 8.00pm at St. Anthony's Priory, Durham City

m)Arriva – Bus update; February 2011

**057/11 Members Report**

A)Library at Millennium school (Cllr Grogan)

Councillor Grogan updated the meeting on the project.

B)Property details by local Estate Agent (Cllr Gale)

Councillor Gale read out details from a web-site of a local Estate Agent regarding local information being incorrect.

Members agreed for the Clerk to write to the Estate Agent and point out the inaccuracies

**058/11 Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Tow Law Town Council will be held on Tuesday **19<sup>th</sup> April 2011** in the Community Centre commencing at 6.30pm.

**THAT PURSUANT TO SECTION 100A OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 THAT THE PUBLIC BE EXCLUDED FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE MEETING DURING CONSIDERATION OF THE ITEMS LISTE DBELOW ON THE GROUNDS THAT IF THEY ARE PRESENT DURING DISCUSSION OF THSES ITEMS THERE COULD BE DISCLOSURE OF THEM OF EXEMPT INFORMATION AS DEFINED IN SECTION 100.**

**Confidential Item**

**059/11 New HMRC Guidance on the Employment status of Town and Parish Clerks**

HMRC have just released information that all employees of Town and Parish councils must be registered with HMRC for PAYE and NI contributions. All must be classified as employees of the Council which makes the Council an employer and no one should be paid gross salaries without the relevant deductions of PAYE tax and NI contribution from their salaries. This is to take effect from 6<sup>th</sup> April 2011.

Members agreed to register as an employer from 6<sup>th</sup> April 2011 and deduct PAYE and NI contributions for all employees.

The meeting finished at 8.45pm

Signed by the Chairman.....Page 5