

**THE MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE WHEATLEY HILL PARISH COUNCIL
HELD ON MONDAY 9 MAY 2022**

Present: Councillors E Carr, M Goyns, J Huntington,
B Miller, J Miller, L Stewart

1 ELECTION OF CHAIR

RESOLVED that Councillor J Miller be elected Chair of Wheatley Hill Parish Council for the ensuing year.

Councillor Miller accepted the office of Chair and thanked Members for their confidence in him and continued support.

The Chair reported that during the previous year the Parish Council had continued to work closely with the Police, Neighbourhood Wardens, Durham County Council, County Councillors and community groups on matters which affected the parish area.

2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J Collingwood, C Stogdale and L White.

3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

4 APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIR

RESOLVED that Councillor E Carr be appointed Vice-Chair of Wheatley Hill Parish Council for the ensuing year.

5 APPOINTMENT OF INTERNAL AUDITOR

RESOLVED that Mr G Fletcher be appointed Internal Auditor to Wheatley Hill Parish Council for the ensuing year.

6 APPOINTMENT OF SCHOOL GOVERNORS

There were no appointments.

7 APPOINTMENT TO SUB-COMMITTEES

RESOLVED that the following appointments be made:-

Cemetery Sub-Committee
Councillors E Carr, M Goyns, C Stogdale

Allotment Sub-Committee
Councillors J Huntington, B Miller, J Miller, L White

Personnel Sub-Committee
Councillors J Miller, L Stewart, L White

8 REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES

RESOLVED that the following Members be appointed to serve as representatives of the Parish Council on the external bodies listed for the forthcoming year:-

Area Action Partnership
Councillor L White

Citizens Advice County Durham
Councillor L Stewart

Durham Rural Community Council
Councillor L Stewart

East Durham Association of Town and Parish Councils
Councillors E Carr, B Miller and J Miller

Patient Participation Group
Councillors M Goyns, J Huntington and B Miller

Smaller Councils Forum
Councillors J Miller and L Stewart

Wheatley Hill Steering Group
Councillors J Huntington and B Miller

9 DATE AND TIME OF ORDINARY MEETINGS OF WHEATLEY HILL PARISH COUNCIL

RESOLVED that meetings of Wheatley Hill Parish Council be held on the second Monday of each month commencing at 6pm, except for August where no council meeting would be held due to recess. Meeting dates were subject to change with the consent of the Chair of the Parish Council.

10 THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING held on 11 April 2022, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member, were approved and signed by the Chair.

11 POLICE ISSUES

The Police reported that between 1 April and 1 May 2022 there had been 8 reports of anti-social behaviour (ASB), 5 reports of criminal damage and 1 burglary.

The Police advised that the area around Alexandra Terrace was still a hotspot for ASB. Work was ongoing to minimise the issues and positive action was being taken in relation to those believed to be responsible or involved in the ASB.

A PACT meeting was scheduled to be held on 19 May 2022 at Wheatley House.

The Police would continue with their visits to Wheatley Hill and St Godrics Primary Schools to build positive relationships with the young people.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

12 COUNTY COUNCILLORS REPORT

County Councillor J Miller provided an update on the following parish and county wide issues.

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- Durham County Council had amended the collection time and all bins needed to be outside and ready for emptying by 7am. Changes had also been made to the collection day which had resulted in some residents not having their bins emptied. Any issues could be referred to Councillor Miller.
- Issues related to the bungalows behind the doctor's surgery had resulted in a request for a site visit with Durham Aged Miners.
- A meeting was held to discuss the on-going problems at the flats on the Front Street. The meeting was attended by County Councillors, officers from Durham County Council, Police and the Fire service. The issues were discussed at length and various solutions were proposed. It was proposed to hold a further meeting in June.
- Potholes throughout the village had been reported, along with dog fouling and litter.
- Several Ukrainian families were living in neighbouring villages. Ludworth Community Centre was being used as a hub for the families and any donations of clothes were welcomed.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

13 CORRESPONDENCE

(1) Letters of Thanks

The Clerk reported the receipt of the following letters of thanks.

Wheatley Hill Workmens Social Club
Wheatley Hill Heritage Society

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

(2) PACT Meeting

The Clerk reported that a PACT meeting would be held on 19 May 2022 at Wheatley House.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

14 PLANNING APPLICATION

DM/22/01098/VOC – Variation of Condition 2 (approved plans) pursuant to planning permission DM/19/03759/FPA for 23 dwellings at land at Meadow View, Wheatley Hill for Dere Street Homes.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

15 HEAD GROUNDPERSONS REPORT

The Clerk reported that routine work had been undertaken in the Cemetery and around the village since the last meeting, details of which were outlined to Members.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

16 CLERK'S REPORT

(1) Internal Audit Report for the Year ending 31 March 2022

The Clerk reported the receipt of the internal audit report for 2021/2022 undertaken by Mr G Fletcher.

Members were advised that every smaller authority in England that received either gross

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income or expenditure exceeding £25,000 must complete Part 3 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) at the end of each financial year. The AGAR was made up of 3 sections along with an annual internal audit report which was to be completed by the Parish Council's independent internal auditor, who gave an opinion of the Parish Council's internal controls, details of which were outlined to Members.

The internal audit concluded that all the key controls contained within the internal audit section of the AGAR were examined and found to be working satisfactory.

RESOLVED that the internal audit report for 2021/2022 be accepted.

(2) Annual Governance and Accountability Return for the Year Ending 31 March 2022

Consideration was given to a report prepared by the Clerk which reviewed the effectiveness of the council's internal controls and supported the Annual Governance Statement, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member.

The Clerk proceeded to take Members through Section 1, Annual Governance Statement, which was approved and then Section 2, Statement of Accounts which was also approved.

RESOLVED that Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return for the year ending 31 March 2022, be approved and signed by the Chair.

(3) Allotments

(a) Fencing

The Clerk provided an update on the fencing at plots 17 and 19.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

(b) Allotment 14

The Clerk reported that allotment 14 had been provisionally allocated to applicant 10/2020.

Members were advised that the allocation of the plot was deferred to allow access to clear the rubbish from the plot to the rear of allotment 14. The Clerk reported that the rubbish had been removed and the plot was ready to be allocated.

RESOLVED that plot 14 be allocated to applicant number 10/2020.

(c) Application 2/2022

The Clerk reported the receipt of an application for an allotment.

RESOLVED that applicant 2/2022 be accepted onto the waiting list for an allotment.

(4) Trade Waste

The Clerk reported that the Parish Councils trade waste contract with Durham County Council was for three 240L general waste bins and three 240L recycling bins. The Parish Council also had a skip permanently located on site in the Cemetery.

Members were advised that the recycling bins were not being used correctly. There were also difficulties related to the length of time the Parish Council could retain a skip.

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It was suggested that the Parish Council replace all six 240L bins with three larger 660L bins. The annual cost for three 660L bins was £1,467.18, an additional £785 per year.

RESOLVED that Durham County Council be requested to replace all six 240L bins with three larger 660L bins at a cost of £1,467.18 per year.

(5) Heritage Centre – Non-Domestic Rates

The Clerk reported the receipt of correspondence from Durham County Council advising that there had been a change in the rateable value of the Heritage Centre. The County Council had been advised by the Valuation Office Agency that the Heritage Centre was now classed as a museum and subject to business rates.

The Clerk had submitted a claim under the business rates appeal process known as check, challenge, appeal and was awaiting the outcome.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted and further developments be awaited.

(6) Community Centre – New Play Park

The Clerk reported the receipt of an invitation for Members to attend the official opening of the new play park at the Greenhills Centre on 1 June 2022.

The play park was to be named “The Morris Nicholls Community Play Park” and Mrs M Nicholls and K Nicholls had been invited to officially open it.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

(7) Changing facilities – Football Field

The Clerk reported that Members had previously been advised that Mr C Gregory had been storing the changing rooms at his premises since they were delivered.

Members were advised that Mr Gregory had transported and installed the changing rooms at the football field. To allow the vehicles transporting the changing rooms to safely access the site Mr Gregory had purchased 2 loads of hard core which was laid at the entrance. The cost of the hardcore was £187.20. Mr Gregory was assisted by Mr Oliver who provided a long farm trailer and Mr Metcalfe who used his high hab wagon.

Mr Gregory would be reimbursed the cost of the hardcore and a letter of thanks would be forwarded to Mr Gregory, Mr Oliver and Mr Metcalfe.

The changing rooms had been added to the Parish Councils insurance policy at a cost of £68.76 to the renewal date. Further consideration would need to be given to how the facility would be managed and the installation of solar panels.

RESOLVED that Mr Gregory be reimbursed £187.20 for the cost of the hardcore and letters of thanks be forwarded to Mr Gregory, Mr Oliver and Mr Metcalfe.

(8) Queens Platinum Jubilee – 2 June 2022

The Clerk provided an update on the arrangements for lighting a beacon to celebrate the Queens Platinum Jubilee on 2 June 2022.

A meeting to discuss arrangements was held on 26 April 2022 and further ad-hoc meetings would be required leading up to the event. Everyone was welcome to attend the meetings.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

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17 MEMBER ISSUES

(1) Potholes

Members reported potholes at Moore Street and Shakespeare Street. The Chair advised that these potholes had been reported to Durham County Council.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

(2) Traffic Calming – Cemetery Road

Members asked for an update on the request for a site meeting with Durham County Council to discuss issues related to the chicane and speed hump on Cemetery Road.

RESOLVED that an update on the matter be requested from Durham County Council.

(3) Barbed Wire Fence

Members reported that a wood post and barbed wire fence had been erected close to the adjacent footpath on the B1279 leaving Wheatley Hill.

The Chair advised that this matter had been reported to Durham County Council for investigation.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

(4) Parked Van

Members reported a van that had been parked up for a considerable amount of time and was not taxed and did not have a valid MOT.

RESOLVED that the vehicle be reported to the Police.

18 PAYMENTS

The following schedule of payments was circulated together with figures for all income and expenditure as at 30 April 2021.

PAYMENT	PAYABLE TO	DETAIL	COST	VAT	TOTAL
Direct Debit	British Gas	Gas - Heritage Centre	87.20	4.36	91.56
Direct Debit	e-on Next	Electric - Heritage Centre	62.76	3.14	65.90
Internet Banking	MKM	Fencing - Allotments	20.75	4.15	24.90
Internet Banking	JRB Enterprise Ltd	Dog Bags	238.80	47.76	286.56
Internet Banking	NEREO	Advertisement of vacancy on N/East Jobs	150.00	30.00	180.00
Internet Banking	G Fletcher	Internal Audit 2021/2022	260.00		260.00
Internet Banking	C Gregory	Hardcore	187.20		187.20
Internet Banking	J Thompson	Telephone Allowance	25.00		25.00
Internet Banking	J Davies	Reimbursements	227.69	45.53	273.22
Internet Banking	J Thompson	Reimbursements	44.87	7.35	52.22

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Internet Banking	Councillors M Goyns & L Stewart	Attendance Allowance			434.56		434.56
Internet Banking	Payroll	Wages - May 2022			4,398.94		4,398.94
Internet Banking	HMRC/DCC	PAYE/Pension - May 2022			2,824.93		2,824.93
Internet Banking	JAC's Accountancy Limited	Payroll Services - May 2022			50.00	10.00	60.00
Direct Debit	British Telecom	Telephone/Internet			29.47	5.90	35.37
Invoice 60	Co-Op Bank	Service and Commission Charges			15.75		15.75
					TOTAL	9,057.92	158.19
							9,216.11

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted and the payments be approved.

19 RISK MANAGEMENT

The Clerk advised that there was nothing to report.

..... Signed

..... Dated