

**THE MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE WHEATLEY HILL PARISH COUNCIL  
HELD ON MONDAY 15 MAY 2023**

**Present: Councillors E Carr, J Collingwood, M Goyns,  
J Huntington, B Miller, J Miller, C Stogdale**

**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 L Stewart and L White.

**3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor J Miller declared an interest in item number 14(1)(b)

**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 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 M Goyns, J Miller, L Stewart, L White

**7 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:-

## Wheatley Hill Parish Council – 15 May 2023

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 - CDALC  
Councillors J Miller and L Stewart

### 8 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.

- 9 The Minutes of the last Meeting held on 17 April 2023, together with those of the Special Meeting held on 2 May 2023 copies of which had been circulated to each Member, were approved and signed by the Chair.

### 10 POLICE MATTERS

There was no Police report.

### 11 COUNTY COUNCILLORS REPORT

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

- The Police had released information related to a serious incident on the front street. This was an isolated incident which was not connected to the front street, the flats on the front street or Wheatley Hill generally.
- County Councillors had met with the Chief Executive of Durham County Council to discuss the front street. CCTV had been installed and would remain in place for as long as it was needed. The Chief Executive had requested an update on the Targeted Delivery Plan and a multi-agency meeting would be convened, if needed. A further meeting was to follow.
- A planning application had been submitted for the service station on the A181. Councillor Miller had raised concerns related to the junction and traffic flow on the A181, which the planning section were discussing with the developer.
- The County Councillors had written a letter to the Cabinet Member for Transport. This was following a government grant of £2.8M for Durham City transport, whilst transport in rural communities was being cut.
- Councillor Miller had an online meeting scheduled with A Ballinger to discuss funding for youth provision in the village and a meeting with Durham City Youth Project to discuss the Youth Project in Wheatley Hill.
- County Councillors attended a Coronation Party at the Scouts Hut. The event was well attended, and the Chair thanked everyone involved in the organisation of the event.

## Wheatley Hill Parish Council – 15 May 2023

- Durham County Councils Annual General meeting would be held on 24 May 2023.
- The Area Action Partnership Annual General Meeting would be held in May 2023
- The Local Boundary Commission had released the proposed boundary changes. There was an ongoing 10-week consultation on the proposed changes to the electoral boundaries. The consultation ended on 10 July 2023. It was suggested that a link to the consultation be forwarded to all Members.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

### 12 CORRESPONDENCE

#### Wheatley Hill Banner Group

The Clerk reported the receipt of a request for financial assistance from Wheatley Hill Banner Group.

The Clerk reported that at the last meeting Members were advised that in 2019 the Parish Council gave a commitment to financially support the Wheatley Hill Banner Group. Due to Covid the Gala was cancelled in 2020 and 2021 and no financial assistance was required.

Escalating costs was making it financially difficult for the group to parade the banner at the Gala and Members agreed to give a commitment to financially support the Banner group in 2023.

Members were advised that the Banner Group required £1,700 to parade the banner at the Gala. A fund raising concert was planned for June which they hoped would leave a shortfall of £600.

It was suggested that the Parish Council fund the shortfall of £600 and any further shortfall, following the fund raising concert, would be funded by the Parish Council.

RESOLVED that a donation of £600 be made from the Section 137 Budget and any further shortfall following the fund raising concert also be provided.

### 13 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

- (1) DM/23/01053/FPA – Dropped kerb to allow vehicle access to existing driveway at 1 Byron Street, Wheatley Hill

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

- (2) DM/23/01169/FPA – Erection of 3 additional polytunnels at Green Lane Nurseries, Green Lane, Wheatley Hill

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

- (3) DM/23/01107/FPA - Demolition and removal of all existing structures on site and redevelopment of the site to provide an enhanced domestic forecourt and HGV refuelling positions; provision of an EVC hub including a disabled EV charging bay; sales building including food to go offer, two jet wash bays, vacuum and air/water bay; new access, associated parking and landscaping at Wheatley Service Station, Durham Road, Wheatley Hill

Members discussed the application at length and raised the following concerns.

#### Highway Safety A181

The application proposed closing off the existing rear access/egress point from

Wingate Lane to the service station. This access/egress point was used by local traffic and enabled vehicles to avoid accessing the service station via the A181 which was a fast and busy road.

If the rear access/egress point was closed local traffic would be forced to exit Wheatley Hill at the junction joining the A181 before making a left hand turn into the service station. Local traffic then leaving the service station and returning to Wheatley Hill would need to make a right hand turn onto the A181 heading west. This would result in vehicles crossing the A181 into oncoming traffic heading east. Due to the volume of traffic on the A181 there was the potential for a build-up of traffic wishing to turn right due to the length of time cars would need to wait for a break in the traffic.

The proposed new entrance to the service station had been moved further west, closer to the Wheatley Hill junction. This would create three access/egress junctions all within close proximity to each other. This could cause a road safety hazard and lead to further accidents on this stretch of road.

The Parish Council would prefer the rear access/egress point to remain open, enabling local traffic to avoid the A181 when visiting the garage.

**RESOLVED** that Durham County Council be advised that the Parish Council objected to the application on highway safety grounds.

#### 14 CLERK'S REPORT

##### (1) Allotments

##### (a) Applications

The Clerk reported the receipt of 2 applications for an allotment.

**RESOLVED** the applications 2/2023 and 3/2023 be accepted onto the waiting list for an allotment.

##### (b) Stable Block 18

The Clerk reported that following the last meeting a letter was issued to the tenant of stable block 18 advising that the tenancy would be terminated if the fencing work required on the plot was not complete by the end of April.

Members were advised that no work had been undertaken on the plot.

**RESLVED** that the tenant of stable block 18 be advised that the tenancy was terminated with immediate effect.

##### (c) Allocation – Allotment 23

The Clerk reported that the tenant of plot 19 had requested a transfer to plot 23. Members were advised that both plots were communal and there were no other applicants on the waiting list that wished to be considered for a communal plot.

**RESOLVED** that the tenant of plot 19 be allocated plot 23.

##### (2) Internal Audit 2022/2023

The Clerk reported the receipt of the internal audit report for 2022/2023 undertaken by Mr G Fletcher.

## Wheatley Hill Parish Council – 15 May 2023

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

**RESOLVED** that the internal audit report for 2022/2023 be accepted.

### (3) Annual Governance and Accountability Return for the Year Ending 31 March 2023

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 2023, be approved and signed by the Chair.

### (4) Summer Hanging Baskets

The Clerk reported that following the last meeting quotations were sought from Horns Garden Centre and Green Lane Nurseries to supply and fill 13 hanging baskets.

Members were advised that Green Lane Nurseries were not interested, and Horns had quoted approximately £30 per basket.

**RESOLVED** that the quotation from Horns be accepted.

### (5) Fencing at Watson Close

The Clerk reported that the proposed fencing scheme at Watson Close would be fully funded by the 3 County Councillors. At this stage, no contribution from the Parish Council was required.

**RESOLVED** that the information given, be noted.

### (6) Cemetery Display

The Clerk reported that the display of the Ukrainian flag had been replaced with a tribute to King Charles III for the Coronation.

The Chair suggested that the Parish Council consider erecting a flagpole near the war memorial in the Cemetery.

**RESOLVED** that the purchase of a flagpole be investigated.

### (7) Greenhills Centre – List of Charges

The Clerk reported that at a Special Meeting of the Parish Council held on 2 May 2023 Members asked for a list of room hire charges at the Greenhills Centre. Details of the current hire charges, provided by Wheatley Hill Community Association (WHCA) were outlined to Members. WHCA had advised that the Board were in the process of reviewing

## Wheatley Hill Parish Council – 15 May 2023

the charges.

**RESOLVED** that the information given, be noted.

### (8) Emergency Planning Leaflet

The Clerk reported that the Parish Council had previously accepted a quotation from Famous Flyers to deliver the Emergency Planning leaflet. Numerous attempts had been made to contact Famous Flyers to arrange delivery of the leaflet, but the Parish Council had been unable to make contact.

The Parish Council had previously received a quotation from A Telford to deliver the 1,400 leaflets at a cost of 30p per leaflet giving a total of £420.

**RESOLVED** that the quotation from A Telford in the sum of £420 be accepted.

## 15 MEMBER ISSUES

### (1) Potholes

Members reported potholes in the footpath at The Avenue and East View.

**RESOLVED** that the potholes be reported to Durham County Council.

## 16 PAYMENTS

The following schedule of payments was circulated together with figures for all income and expenditure as at 31 May 2023.

PAYMENT	PAYABLE TO	DETAIL	COST	VAT	TOTAL
Direct Debit	British Gas	Gas - Heritage Centre	159.65	7.58	167.23
Direct Debit	e-on Next	Electric - Heritage Centre	58.39	2.92	61.31
Internet Banking	Carrs Billington	New Ride on Mower	8,670.00	1,734.00	10,404.00
Internet Banking	Horns Garden Centre	Cemetery Supplies	132.32	26.46	158.78
Internet Banking	CDS Security & Fire	Security System New Part	64.12	12.82	76.94
Internet Banking	Durham County Council	Website Hosting and Support	673.74	134.75	808.49
Internet Banking	JAC's Accountancy Limited	Payroll Services - P11D	11.00	2.20	13.20
Internet Banking	J Thompson	Reimbursements	26.08	0.42	26.50
Internet Banking	J Davies	Reimbursements	237.90	45.13	283.03
Internet Banking	Durham County Council	Machine Repairs	636.72	127.34	764.06
Internet Banking	HMRC	P11D Payment	320.29		320.29
Internet Banking	G Fletcher	Internal Audit	260.00		260.00
Internet Banking	J Thompson	Telephone Allowance	25.00		25.00
Internet Banking	Wheatley Hill Banner Group	Section 137 Donation	600.00		600.00
Internet Banking	R Charlton	Gravedigging Services	80.00		80.00
Internet Banking	A Telford	Leaflet Distribution	420.00		420.00
Internet Banking	Councillors M Goyns & L Stewart	Attendance Allowance	434.56		434.56
Internet Banking	Payroll	Wages - May 2023	5,513.61		5,513.61

**Wheatley Hill Parish Council – 15 May 2023**

Internet Banking	HMRC/DCC		PAYE/Pension - May 2023		3,150.57		3,150.57
Internet Banking	JAC's Accountancy Limited		Payroll Services - P60		3.30	0.66	3.96
Internet Banking	JAC's Accountancy Limited		Payroll Services - May 2023		50.00	10.00	60.00
Direct Debit	British Telecom		Telephone/Internet		17.08	3.41	20.49
Invoice 72	Co-Op Bank		Service and Commission Charges		16.90		16.90
					<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>21,561.23</b>	<b>2,107.69</b>
							<b>23,668.92</b>

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

**17 RISK MANAGEMENT**

The Clerk advised that there was nothing to report.

..... Signed

..... Dated