

THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF WINGATE PARISH COUNCIL
HELD ON MONDAY, 12th APRIL 2021

Present: Councillors E Mason (Chair), S Williams, J Bradley, J Higgins, P Daly

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor P Mason.

The Chairman referred to the sad deaths of Councillor John Cairns and Prince Philip and paid his respect to both on behalf of the Parish Council.

2021/04/12/01

PUBLIC QUESTIONS

There were no representatives of the public present.

2021/04/12/02

THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING held on 14th December 2020 were agreed as a correct record.

2021/04/12/03

PROGRESS REPORT

(1) Community Interest Company/Nursery

The Clerk referred to his previous email update advising that the Community Interest Company had been successful in obtaining section 106 monies which would enable it to proceed with completing the refurbishment of the former park keepers cottage with a plan to open as a nursery in September. Thanks were given to County Councillor Higgins and Amanda Taylor Saunders for their hard work in supporting the funding application process.

The Clerk advised he had received a request from the nursery to use an additional part of the park woodland area as part of the nursery garden. He suggested that the land in question was purely woodland and would not detract from the remainder of the park. Following a question it was noted that an extension of the garden would not result in the felling of any trees.

Following general discussion it was **RESOLVED** that:

- (a) The information given be noted; and
- (b) The Clerk be authorised to agree an extension of the nursery garden.

(2) Park

The Clerk gave an update on activities at the park. It was noted that at some stage consideration would be needed to a new surface at the car park adjacent to the former park keepers cottage. The Clerk also suggested engaging with the CIC, the nursery and the Wingate fishing club regarding use of the park pond. It was noted that Blackhall Monks, a junior team which included children from Wingate was using the football pitches for training one night a week.

The Clerk further advised that the football changing rooms roof was becoming a target for vandalism. Significant damage had been caused to the roof. The security company responsible for CCTV monitoring had offered to install an additional dedicated camera directed at the roof at no additional cost. It was suggested that the impact of this needed to be monitored but potentially some additional fencing or security measures could be needed.

Following general discussion it was **RESOLVED** that the information given be noted and further progress be awaited.

(3) Market Crescent Allotment

The Clerk advised that a derelict allotment at Market Crescent was in the progress of being cleared with the intention of it being landscaped with posts installed as with other cleared allotment plots. He stated that palisade fencing would be needed to separate allotment boundaries although the extent of this was not known until the allotment was cleared.

RESOLVED the information given be noted and further progress be awaited.

(4) Ancient Hedge Rows

The Clerk referred to information he had circulated previously relating to ancient hedge rows and the limited detail Durham County Council could provide relating to hedge rows in Wingate. He suggested that any interest in maintaining ancient hedge rows would first need them to be identified and logged.

RESOLVED the information given be noted.

(5) Community Litter Pick

The Clerk referred to a previous meeting an agreement to undertake a community litter pick which was cancelled due to social distancing measures. The Clerk referred to initiatives in other communities and the potential to create a Wingate Wombles group aimed at encouraging those who live in the village to pick litter around the places they live. The Clerk stated there had been big reductions in litter in Easington Village and in parts of Peterlee. He said the Parish Council could potentially make available litter pickers and rubbish bags.

County Councillor Higgins stated the County Council still had equipment available for community use although there were restrictions due to Covid. The Vice Chair, Councillor Williams offered to take the lead in investing gating further a Wingate Wombles group and the potential to launch it.

RESOLVED the information given be noted and further progress be awaited.

(6) Section 106 Monies

The Clerk stated there had been very little response to the consultation undertaken in the potential use of section 106 monies for recreational purposes. He suggested a further meeting be held with Durham County Council and Believe Housing to look at more specific proposals and areas of the village which could realistically be used for recreational purposes and this which were likely to be kept as open spaces or which may be ear market for development purposes.

RESOLVED the information given be noted and further progress be awaited.

2021/04/12/04

POLICE MATTERS

While there was no Police presence the Clerk presented a summary of a crime report covering the period from 3 March to 3 April 2021 which included incidents summarised as follows:

- 21 reports of anti-social behaviour- nuisance
- 10 reports of anti-social behaviour- environmental
- 2 report of ant-social behaviour- personal
- 1 theft from a vehicle
- 1 thefts of a vehicle
- 3 vehicle damage
- 3 burglaries
- 8 criminal damages

Within the crime figures the Clerk referred to a major incident involving an arson at Taylor Grove. He stated that he had been in daily contact with County Councillor Higgins regarding the incident who had been receiving daily updates from the Police. The Clerk stated after speaking directly with the Police and the MP a joint meeting had been held with the Police, the MP, the Acting Crime Commissioner and representatives of Durham County Council. The Police advised that certain activities were ongoing which could not be disclosed. Members of the public were encouraged to report crimes and other issues which could be used as intelligence. These could be done anomalously and the Police had confirmed its commitment to dealing with local issues. The importance of reporting crimes was highlighted as the Police had confirmed there was nothing in the Wingate crime figures which suggested anything out of the ordinary compared together neighbouring villages or those across the County. It was noted that the Police had installed CCTV in one hot spot area on the front street and there was a potential for more to be installed.

A Member referred to a Wingate Making a Difference which had been established via Facebook. In part the group intended to bring parts of the community together to look at addressing anti-social behaviour. It was noted that a number of neighbourhood watch groups had been established. It was also noted that a neighbouring village was preparing a letter to the Police relating to a need for communities to work together and collaborate.

Following general discussion it was **RESOLVED** the information given be noted and further progress be awaited.

2021/04/12/05

CHRISTMAS DECORATIONS

The Clerk referred to a previous meeting and a suggestion to consider additional Christmas decorations in the Wellfield Road and Durham Road areas. The Clerk stated that for indicative purposes he had obtained costs based on an additional 20 light columns which would need commando boxes which decorations would be plugged in to. The columns would also need to be tested to ensure they passed a risk assessment.

The Clerk advised that an additional 20 column decorations would equate to approximately £13k in addition to the approximate £10k of funding for decorations on the front street area. He stated that in addition to a Christmas tree this would equate to approximately £25k and 15% of the Parish Council's annual budget being spent on celebrating Christmas which covered only a 4 week period in the year. It was also noted that an additional 20 light column decorations would not cover all of Wellfield Road and Durham Road.

Following general discussion it was **RESOLVED** that further consideration be given to Christmas decorations at the next meeting of the Parish Council.

2021/04/12/06

FRONT STREET MEMORIAL AREA- DAMAGED FENCE

The Clerk referred to a damaged wooden fence around the front street war memorial area. It was noted that informal social media consultation undertaken by Councillor Bradley had highlighted that most respondents wished for a replacement fence. The Clerk stated that a quote for a like for like replacement wooden fencing was approximately £2220. He stated that a metal fence would need designing and it would cost significantly more including in terms of ongoing maintenance.

Following general discussion it was **RESOLVED** the Clerk be authorised to proceed with the installation of a replacement wooden fence.

2021/04/12/07

FRONT STREET REGENERATION PROJECT

The Clerk referred to items attached with the agenda relating to a proposed regeneration project for the front street area which the Parish Council were being consulted on. County Councillor Higgins advised that the works had been agreed and were to progress.

Following general discussion it was **RESOLVED** the information given be noted and further progress be awaited.

2021/04/12/07

PLANNING APPLICATIONS

There were no planning applications to consider.

2021/04/12/08

CORROSPENCE

There were no items of correspondence to consider.

2021/04/12/09

PAYMENTS AND FINANCIAL MATTERS

(a) Authorisation of Payments

RESOLVED that authorisation be given for the following payments:

UK Fuels- Petrol

Cheque No. 405609 £5.29

LITE- Xmas Decorations

Cheque No. 405610 £2655

Npower- Xmas Tree Lights

Cheque No.405611 £81.97

Park Keeper- Xmas Gift

Cheque No.405612 £25

Asst Park Keeper- Xmas Gift

Cheque No. 405613 £25

Park Keeper – Refund for Keys Cut

Cheque No. 405614 £12

Npower- Pit Wheel

Cheque No. 405615 £44.96

Glass Fibre Flag Pole— Flag Pole

Cheque No. 405616 £1016.94

Clerk- January Office Allowance

Cheque No. 405617 £50

BT- Broadband at Park	
Cheque No. 405618	£102.24
Clerk- February Office Allowance	
Cheque No. 405619	£50
Npower- Pit Wheel	
Cheque No. 405620	£46.19
Mazars LLP- Audit 19/20	
Cheque No. 405621	£480
BT- Broadband at Park	
Cheque No. 405622	£122.24
TSL- Line Marker & Fertilizer	
Cheque No. 405623	£228
TSL- Machine Hire	
Cheque No. 405624	£204
Steadfast Security- Annual CCTV Remote Monitoring	
Cheque No. 405625	£2028
Andrew Newton Ltd- Allotment Clearance	
Cheque No. 405626	£120
PAR Petroleum- Petrol	
Cheque No. 405627	£171.87
Clerk- March Office Allowance	
Cheque No. 405628	£50
Steadfast Security- Annual CCTV Annual; Mtce	
Cheque No. 405629	£816

Horns Garden Centre- Misc Supplies	
Cheque No. 405630	£76.74
Horns Garden Centre- Misc Supplies	
Cheque No. 405631	£25
J Hart- Xmas Decorations Etc	
Cheque No. 405632	£240.00
Npower- Pit Wheel	
Cheque No. 405633	£41.42
UK Fuels- Petrol	
Cheque No. 405634	£5.21
E.ON Next- Xmas Lights	
Cheque No. 405635	£45.93
TSL- Lawn Sand	
Cheque No. 405636	£79.20
TSL- Fertilizer Etc	
Cheque No. 405637	£146.40
MKM- Misc items	
Cheque No.405638	£32.92
Durham CC- Machine Repairs	
Cheque No. 405639	£141.60
BT- Broadband	
Cheque No. 405640	£72.24
Citizens Advice- Outreach Service	
Cheque No. 405641	£3782

Clerk- Line Rental & Calls	
Cheque No. 405642	£45.00
Park Keeper- Line Rental & Calls	
Cheque No. 405643	£45.00
Park Keeper- PPE Refund	
Cheque No. 405644	£10.99
Clerk- Postage Refund	
Cheque No. 405645	£31.68
Horns Garden Centre- Misc Supplies	
Cheque No. 405647	£27.53
Npower- Pit Wheel	
Cheque No. 405648	£44.50
Clerk- April Office Allowance	
Cheque No. 405649	£50.00
E.On Next- Xmas Lights	
Cheque No. 405650	£18.53

2021/04/12/10

REPORTS

(a) **The Clerk**

There were no reports from the Clerk.

(b) **Members**

(1) Woodmans Cottage Allotment Site

Following a query raised on behalf of a tenant it was noted that the transfer of land from Durham County Council was still awaited.

RESOLVED the information given be noted and further progress be awaited.

(2) Playscheme

RESOLVED that a playscheme be arranged for 2021 subject to further government guidance.

(3) Community Centre

RESOLVED the Clerk be authorised to make a grant payment of £16k towards information given be noted and the Clerk liaise with the Park Keeper.

(4) Wingate Youth Forum

A Member stated that there was going to be an attempt to resurrect the Wingate Youth Forum. Volunteers had put themselves forward to help which was linked to a new group in the village, Wingate Making a Difference. The Clerk gave a summary of activities of the previous Forum.

RESOLVED the information given be noted and further progress be awaited.

(5) Park Football Fields

RESOLVED the Clerk investigate the potential for another team to use the park football facilities.

(6) Front Street- Parking on Paths

A Member raised issues regarding cars parking on paths. It was noted this was a Police matter although not directly an offence unless pedestrian access was prevented although this was difficult to prove. Residents needed to report it as it was happening.

RESOLVED the information given be noted and residents be encouraged to report parking issues to the Police.

(7) Railway Crossing Gate

RESOLVED the Clerk arrange for the former railway crossing gates to be cleaned.

(7) County Councillor

RESOLVED it be noted that the County Councillor would be invited to future meetings.

(8) Social Media

A Member stated that he was against having a social media/facebook page for the Parish Council. The Clerks stated any considered of social media needed to be by way of an agenda item.

RESOLVED the information given be noted.

(9) Councillors Higgins and Hogg

Retiring Parish Councillors Higgins and Hogg were thanked for their service. Councillor Higgins was wished luck in relation to the May County Council

elections.

(c) County Councillor

County Councillor Higgins gave a comprehensive update on ongoing activities. Amanda Taylor Saunders was thanked for her work in supporting the CIC in its bid for section 106 monies.

It was noted that bollards were to be installed on parts of the front street to help deal with parking issues. Phase 4 of the works at the former pit heaps were noted as being finished with Believe Housing making a contribution. Phase 3 was about to start. Funding for other measures at the park aimed at limited off road bike access was noted as having been approved.

Resurfacing works on the front street was noted as being due to commence at the end of May.

It was noted that speeding at Wellfield Road had been raised with the Police and there were also concerns about speeding at Dodds Terrace and Walton Terrace.

Following general discussion County Councillor Higgins was thanked for his report and it was **RESOLVED** the information given be noted.

2020/04/12/11

SCHEDULE OF ONGOING MATTERS

RESOLVED that the schedule of ongoing matters be noted.

CERTIFIED TRUE RECORD

CHAIRMAN

DATE