

TOW LAW TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF TIC COUNCIL MEETING – 19<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2006 PRESENT :

**Councillor T.Batson (Chairman)**

**Councillors A.Blacker, J.Flynn, P.Graham, A.Green, E.A.Morris,  
G.C.Stevens & J.Stevens**

**District Councillor C.Hayton  
17 residents and 2 community street wardens**

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE :**

**Councillors J.Day, J.Gale, R.Grogan. E.Gwynette County Councillor T.Carroll**

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST :**

There were no declarations to report

**3. DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE :** Councillor G.C.Stevens duly signed his Declaration of Acceptance of Office which was countersigned by the Clerk as Proper Officer.

**4. ETHICAL STANDARDS DECLARATIONS :** Councillors A.Blacker and G.C.Stevens duly submitted their declarations.

**5. POLICE REPORT :** The Clerk advised the meeting that the Police had submitted apologies for their inability to attend the meeting due to operational commitments.

**6. REPRESENTATIONS BY RESIDENTS :**

The meeting received representations from members of the public who were in attendance. Concern was vociferously expressed at the growing incidence of anti-social behaviour in the community, with particular reference to the area of High Street around the former bank building.

Questioners wanted to know what steps were being taken to deal with the problem which had now reached unacceptable proportions, and criticised the perceived absence of either police officers or street wardens at the most vulnerable times of day. when the culprits appeared to be free to roam the streets without fear.

The Chairman appealed to residents to contact the Police whenever specific incidents occurred, but it was pointed out that this was not always successful, and that Police resources were very thinly spread.

Questions were asked as to why the young people involved did not take advantage of the facilities at the Community Centre, since it had the capacity to deal with additional use, but the point was made that there was a reluctance to take part in organised, supervised activities.



In the absence of the Police because of other duties, the Street Wardens addressed the meeting and advised that an operation in Tow Law was imminent, involving all of the agencies concerned together with the Anti-Social Behaviour Officer. Severe sanctions would be taken against those responsible for the nuisance.

Following further discussion, it was

**Agreed : a) That the constituency M.P. be invited to attend a public meeting to be convened at an early date to discuss the problem in detail with the various law enforcement agencies.**

**b) That the Clerk investigate the implications and practicalities of utilising the Council's power to fund or partially fund a community police officer.**

#### **7. MINUTES :**

**Agreed : That the Minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> July 2006 ( a copy of which had been sent previously to each member) be Approved and Signed as a correct record.**

**8. COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT :** County Councillor Carroll was not in attendance due to other commitments

#### **9. DISTRICT COUNCILLORS' REPORTS :**

a) Councillor C.Havton

Councillor Hayton explained that because of the Summer recess period the past month had been a quiet one.during which the District Council's administration had been re-organised. A welfare benefits campaign was to be set in motion designed to encourage more people to take up their entitlement. Publicity would be given in the October edition of the Tattler.

Neither Councillor Gale nor Councillor Grogan were in attendance.

**10. FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE :** Following the resignation of former Councillor Christine Rand, the Clerk invited the meeting to appoint a replacement member on the Committee, and accordingly, it was

**Agreed : That Councillor G.C.Stevens be appointed to serve on the Finance & General Purpose Committee.**

The Clerk further reported that it would be necessary to convene a meeting of the Committee to give preliminary consideration to the Precept for the 2007/2008 financial year, which would have to be determined at the November meeting of the Council.

**Agreed : That a meeting of the Finance & General Purposes Committee be held on Tuesday October 2006.**



**11. PROPOSED DROP-IN CENTRE – FORMER BANK BUILDING :** The Clerk reported having taken the opportunity before the meeting to seek a progress report from Cornerstone Cottage Ministries on this proposed project. He had been advised that a purchase offer had been submitted to the owner of the premises, but that no response was as yet forthcoming. The report was Noted.

**12. RESIDENTIAL CARE HOME – ATTLEE ESTATE :**

The Clerk reported that despite a number of efforts, no information had been forthcoming regarding a meeting which had been held on 29<sup>th</sup> July to consider a series of disturbances at this facility. Councillor Hay ton reported that there had been no further incidents. The report was Noted.

**13. PROPOSED FOOTPATH LINK – INKERMAN ROAD :**

The Chairman reported that the County Council had declined to accede to a suggestion that this footpath be laid on the south side of Inkerman Road, so as to provide a proper link to the Bee Hive Coke Ovens. Following discussion, it was

**Agreed : To seek residents' views on their preferred option, and to investigate possible funding to allow both sides of the road to be surfaced.**

**14. TOW LAW RECREATION CENTRE :**

The meeting considered as Appendix 3 the report of the Clerk on meetings which had been held with consultants to discuss the various options which were available for the regeneration of the recreation area. Options and costings had been considered, and it was

**Agreed : a) That there was a need to proceed as quickly as possible in order to provide much needed recreational facilities for the young people of the community.**

**b) That the re-surfacing of the multi-games area was an urgent necessity, together with the need to acquire gymnastic equipment for use in the centre, to take advantage of the success of the WOW facility which had been in use over the Summer period.**

**15. PUBLIC SEATING :**

The Clerk advised that negotiations were ongoing with the County Highways Department to determine the exact locations of the four new seats which it had been agreed to purchase. The report was Noted..

**16. BATHS BUS 2006 :**

The meeting considered as Appendix 1 the report by the Clerk on the method which **had** been used to facilitate the trip to the Wet 'n Wild Water Park. Because of the complicated ticketing arrangements at the Park, it had been agreed that a detailed invoice would be provided after the trip, and that those who had attended would be required to pay a portion of the entry fee, £250 having been earmarked from the Community Fund for this purpose. In the event, the sum of f 150 remained to be recovered over the 50 persons who attended, and in the circumstances, it was

**Agreed : That this amount be paid by the Council.**



**17. SPEED VISOR TRAFFIC SPEED INDICATOR :**

The meeting considered as Appendix 2 the response of the Police to an enquiry as to the costs of acquiring, siting and maintaining two of these indicators. Because of the prohibitive costs involved, it was

**Agreed : That the correspondence be Received**

**18. COUNTY DURHAM ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS — EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

The Chairman and the Clerk reported that because of the Summer recess, they had responded to a request for nominations to the Association's Executive Committee for the Annual Meeting in October by moving re-election of the incumbent members.

**Agreed : That the action of the Chairman and the Clerk in this matter be Approved and Endorsed.**

**19. DEVELOPMENT OF TOW LAW COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP :** Councillor Flynn and the Clerk reported on the efforts which were being made to establish a joint working relationship between the Town Council and the Partnership. which would facilitate progress on matters of mutual interest such as the regeneration of the recreation area. David Craggs, formerly head of the 2D Wear Valley Community Network would oversee the implementation of this initiative.

**20. PLANNING MATTERS :** The Clerk reported receipt of the following new applications :

- a) Proposed detached dwelling house on land adjacent to Northside Court for Mr.I.Robson.
- b) Proposed garage on land rear of Campbell Street for Mr.S.Redman
- c) Proposed single storey side extension at 37 Wolsingham Road for Mr.&Mrs. Caulfield.

Concern was expressed at the size of the proposed house at (a) above, to which a number of objections had been made, and it was

**Agreed : a) That applications (b) and (c) be Noted without comment.**

**b) That concern be expressed to the planning authority at the extent of application (a) relative to other properties on this development**

The Clerk further reported that during the Summer recess, the following applications had been discussed with the Chairman\_ and that no comment had been offered to the planning authority :

- a) Proposed 6x 3 storey dwellings on land at Campbell Street
- b) Proposed garage at 15 Station Street

**Agreed : That the action of the Chairman and the Clerk in these matters be Noted and Endorsed.**

**21. ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT :**

**Agreed : That Approval be given to the payment of Invoices Nos. 017 to 026 in the sum of £3959.54 as itemised on the meeting Agenda**

**22. N.A.L.C. — "LOCAL GOVERNMENT REVIEW :**

The Clerk reported that an invitation had been received to continue the subscription to N.A.L.C.'s in-house magazine. 10 copies were currently received on a monthly basis.

**Agreed : That an order be place for 6 copies of the magazine, to be circulated amongst members as appropriate.**

**23. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT :**

The Chairman had no report to present

**24. CLERK'S REPORT :**

The Clerk reported a number of issues as follows :

- a) Co-operative Bank — New Community Direct Plus Account
- b) Proposed renewal of oak tubs for floral displays
- c) Blessed John Duckett/Millennium Primary Schools — Community Fund Application.

**Agreed : That these matters be delegated to the Finance & General Purposes Committee for consideration and report.**


**25. MEMBERS' REPORTS :**

Councillor Flynn reported on the Wear Valley Community Network's Neighbourhood Renewal Fund Locality Arrangements. This initiative allowed local communities to be represented at the meetings. Following discussion, and in view of the need to submit details of representation at an early date, it was

**Agreed : That Councillors A.Blacker and G.C.Stevens be appointed to represent the Town Council at the relevant meetings.**

**26. DATE OF NEXT MEETING :**

It was Noted that the next scheduled meeting of the Council would be held on Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> October 2006 at 6 p.m.

Signed .....  ..... Chairman

**17<sup>h</sup> October 2006**