

**Tow Law Town Council**

Minutes of a meeting of Tow Law Town Council held Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> July 2008 in the Community Centre commencing at 6.30pm.

**Present Councillors:** P. Graham (Chairman), T. Batson, A. Blacker, L. Brown, J. Day, J. Gale, A. Green, H. Hail, L. Rowland, G. Stevens and L. Taylor.

**Also Present:** PC Blair, PC Slater (Durham Police), Robert Plews (Resident), Rachael Wearmouth (Northern Echo), Mrs D. Pearson (Tow Law Community Partnership) and G. F. Smith (Town Clerk).

**Apologies:** Councillor R. Grogan and County Councillor Jopling.

**087/08 Declaration of Interest**

Councillor Batson declared an Interest in Agenda Item 7 minute 076/08 ref 17c proposed play trail at the Millennium School

**088/08 Police Report**

PC Blair updated the meeting with Crime and Incident figures for June 2008 (copy attached to the minutes), followed by a question and answer session.

**089/08 Representation by Residents**

Mr Plews raised concerns with the Police. PC Blair would deal with the request.

**090/08 Update from the Community Partnership**

Mrs Pearson updated the meeting on the ongoing work at the Partnership (copy of the report attached to the minutes). Mrs Pearson left the meeting.

**091/08 Minutes of the meeting held 17<sup>th</sup> June 2008**

Agreed as a true record and signed by the Chairman

**092/08 Matters Arising**

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**127/07 Tow Law Football Club**

The Clerk was still awaiting response from the SLCC. The Clerk would chase up and report to the next Town Council meeting.

**010/08 Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee held 9<sup>th</sup> January 2008**

e) Clerk's additional hours

The Clerk reported that he worked an additional 12 hours on the final preparations of the Portfolio. Members agreed to pay the additional hours.

f) Councillors Surgeries

Agenda Item No. 10

**Signed by the Chairman.....Page 1**

**043/08 Report of the Finance & General Purposes Committee held 12<sup>th</sup> March 2008**

e) Town Council News

The Clerk reported that he had been interviewed by a number of pupils from the Millennium Primary School and the article will appear in the next edition of the School Newspaper, There will be a page for the Town Council News.

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**AGM 11/08 Cheque Authorisation**

Clerk making the necessary arrangements with the Co-operative Bank PLC.

**AGM/23/08 Clerk’s Report**

1.Damage to seat at Ironworks Road

The Clerk was still awaiting an estimate for repairs. The Clerk would chase this up and report to the next Town Council meeting.

**AGM 23/08 Clerk’s Report**

a) Complaints about the Station Public House

The Clerk had no further update. Councillor Stevens reported that WVDC Officers were still investigating the complaints.

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H) Durham Miners Heritage Group – request for donation

Members agreed to donate £100 towards the project, which would visit the two local primary schools (under Powers of section 137 Local Government Act 1972).

J) County Durham and Cleveland County Training Partnership – Chairmanship training.

Further training sessions will be scheduled for later in the year on a mid-week evening at a local venue. Clerk to report to the next appropriate Town Council meeting.

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**076/08 Report of the Finance & General Purposes Committee held on 16<sup>th</sup> June 2008**

Item 13 – Review of the effectiveness of the Internal Auditor

Members agreed the recommendations of the Finance & General Purposes Committee.

Item 14 – Key Issues from the Audit

Members agreed the recommendations of the Finance & General Purposes Committee.

Item 15 – Review of Risk Assessment

Members agreed the recommendations of the Finance & General Purposes Committee.

Item 16 – Annual Audit 2007/2008

Agenda Item No 14

Item 17 (b) Pensioner’s Christmas Party

Members agreed the recommendations of the Finance & General Purposes Committee, awaiting the date of the party from the Community Association.

Item 17 (c) Proposed Play Trail at Millennium School

Item to be referred to the Finance & General Purposes Committee for further details including checking the criteria of the “Ringed Fenced” funding for play areas and possible Insurance problems (Public Liability).

**Item**

Item 17 (D) Joint Working (Town Council, Community Partnership and Community Association)

Members agreed for Councillors Gale and Green to work on this Project with the Clerk and bring a report to the next appropriate Town Council meeting.

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**079/08 Councillors Surgery**

Agenda Item No 10

**083/08 Clerk's report**

A) CDALC – Nominations for Executive Committee Members

Members Agreed to nominate:-

Councillor Batson for Vice-President and Councillor Graham for the Executive Committee (Wear Valley Area).

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**083/08 Clerk's Report**

E) DCC – Primary Strategy for Change

Members agreed to receive the document

G) WVDC – Neighbourhood Arrangements – 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2008 Members were updated by the Clerk

H) County Durham Unitary Authority / WVDC – Local Area Arrangements 9<sup>th</sup> July 2008

Members were updated by Councillor Gale and Green

I) Banks Developments – Turf Cutting Ceremony – 11<sup>th</sup> July 2008

Members were updated by Councillors Day and Gale.

K) Department for Communities and Local Government – Town/Parish Electors

Members agreed for the Clerk to write to the County Durham Association of Local Councils with the response “That Tow Law Town Council are in favour of the next Parish Electors being deferred until 2013.

There should be no election in 2009 (which could take place on the same date as European Parliamentary Elections) as there would be no genuine local appetite for such elections”.

M) Mencap – Application for Funding

Clerk had requested Financial details, which had not yet been received. Clerk to report to the next Town Council Meeting.

**084/08 Quality Town Council**

Agenda Item No 21

**085/08 Members Reports**

A) Unitary Council Portfolio Holder (Town & Parish Councils) – request to meet with Town Council Clerk had sent a letter to Councillor Brian Stevens, No response received.

B) North Road / Inkerman Road

Clerk had sent a letter to the District Council's Planning Officer  
No response received.

**093/08 County Councillors' Report**

No Report

**094/08 District Councillor's Report**

Councillor Gale Reported:-

- a) Partnership Arrangements
- b) Meting of Wind farm Committee, Hedley Hope
- c) Funding Arrangements from wind Farm (County Durham Foundation)

Members agreed to refer this matter to the Finance and General Purposes Committee.

Councillor Grogan (reported by the Clerk):-

- a) District Council/Unitary Authority joint working – No report
- b) Recreation Ground – work to re-commence next week (after tender opening)
- c) Co-operative New Store – talks ongoing regarding the back road, proposed shop area 2/3 Co-op 1/3 Iceland
- d) Bull ring – Confirmation is awaited from Teesdale District Council on Planning Application from a farmer at Barnard Castle who wishes to purchase the Bull Ring for farm produce shop
- e) Wind Farm – Funding due July 2009 (to be confirmed)
- f) Sunnyside Wind Farm – Talks ongoing with EDF regarding 106 section monies.
- g) Eco Village – Bank's developments still in talks with Local Planning Officer regarding type/number of houses.

Councillor Hayton – No report.

**095/08 Councillor's Surgery – 11<sup>th</sup> July 2008**

Councillor Brown reported that Councillor Gale and herself attended the session but no resident turned up at the Surgery.

Members agreed to continue with the Surgeries, reduce the time to one hour, look at other venues (Baring Court etc) and advertise the sessions in the Local Newspaper (Northern Echo).

**096/08 Report of the Internal Auditor for 2007/08**

Members agreed to accept the recommendations with the report of the internal Auditor, the Clerk to make the necessary arrangements and to report progress to an appropriate Town Council meeting.

**097/08 Asset Register**

Members agreed to accept the report of the Clerk and the register to be placed in the Council's Files. Total amount of £6922.00 be shown on the Annual Return for 2007/08.

**098/08 Statement of Accounts as at 30<sup>th</sup> June 2008**

Members agreed to accept the report of the Clerk showing a balance of £24,828.12 as at 30<sup>th</sup> June 2008.

**099/08 Annual Return for year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2008**

(Previous Minutes 076/08(16))

Members agreed for the Chairman and Clerk to sign:-

- a) Statement of Accounts (section 1)
- b) Annual Governance Statement (section 2)

They also agreed to accept the Annual Internal Audit Report (section 4), also confirmed that the notice of appointment of date for the exercise of electors rights had been displayed on the Council's notice boards for appropriate time(23<sup>rd</sup> June – 6<sup>th</sup> July 2008)

**Item**

**100/08 August Recess –**

Members agreed to the Delegation of Powers during August recess (as Standing Orders 78a) and for the Clerk to report any appropriate action to the next Town Council meeting in September 2008.

**101/08 baths Bus 2008**

Members agreed to accept the quotation from Rayners Coaches for the supply of one coach to/from Crook at £90 per journey and one coach to/from North Shields at £180 (return). Clerk to make the necessary arrangements.

**102/08 Planning Matters**

a) Application 3/2008/0411 – Land between 34 and 35 Coronation Avenue. Members agreed to raise concerns on the size of the proposed development on the site. Clerk to write to the Planning Officer at WVDC.

b) Application 3/2008/0427 – 17 High Street. Members agreed to raise no objections to this application.

**103/08 Accounts for payments**

That approval to be given for payment of voucher numbers 21 to 31 in the sum of £2545.67.

**104/08 Chairman's Report**

a) attended launch of Tow Law Business Directory on 12<sup>th</sup> July 2008. b) Councillor's Portfolio – working with the Police (including CCTV) Members agreed that Councillor Hail would hold this Portfolio

**105/08 Clerk's Report**

1. Application for N-Power Community Fund

A) Members agreed to donate £250.00 towards the costs of the Funday activities on 20<sup>th</sup> July 2008 to the Tow Law Community Association.

B) Members agreed to donate £250.00 towards the purchase of craft materials, toys, a summer trip and Christmas activities to the Tow Law Parent Toddler group.

2. Correspondence received from:-

a) CDALC – The boundary Commission's review of County Durham; meeting on Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> July 2008 at County Hall, Durham 12.30pm

Members agreed for Councillor Gale and Graham to attend.

b) CDALC – Local Government Review Consultations – Public Meeting 14<sup>th</sup> July to 4<sup>th</sup> September 2008.

Clerk to copy details to all Council Members. Councillors to make their own booking arrangements.

c) Wear Valley Community Network – Letter of Thanks, briefing and confirmation of the inclusion on the Network's mailing list.

d) NALCA – Media release; update on the quality Parish/town council scheme

e) Durham RCC Newsletter (filed in Clerk's office)

f) Durham Association Newsletter (filed in Clerk's office)

**Item**

- g)2D Summer Magazine (filed in Clerk's office)
- h)LCR (filed in Clerk's Office)
- i)Clerks & Council's direct (filed in Clerk's office)
- J)CDALC – Local Governance Reviews –revised Governance Arrangements for Wear Valley Parish/Town Councils. Meeting on Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> July 2008 at the Civic Centre, Crook 6pm.  
Members agreed for Councillor Gale and Graham to attend.
- k)DCC – Post Office closure meetings (Consett 24<sup>th</sup> July; Durham 26<sup>th</sup> July and Peterlee 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2008.
- l)DCC Community & Stakeholders events during July, August and September 2008  
Clerk to copy details to all Council Members. Councillors to make their own booking arrangements.
- m)WVDC (Local Strategic Partnership Manager) request for copy of response to the Durham County Sustainable Communities Strategy.
- n) Department for Communities and Local Government – Publication of the North East of England Plan (CD filed in Clerk's office).

**106/08 Quality Town Council Status**

The Clerk reported confirmation of the Tow Law Town Council being awarded Quality Town Council Status on 30<sup>th</sup> June 2008 (ID Number QC-06-08-00597). The Certificate will be issued by the County Durham Association of Local Councils (Steve Ragg) once the Chairman of the panel has signed the document.

The Quality Council Logo can now be included on the Council's Letterheads, Compliments Slips, Website etc. Clerk to make the necessary arrangements. The Chairman thanked everyone who worked on the portfolio and it was agreed to arrange some publicity in the Local Newspaper.

**107/08 Members Reports**

Councillor Stevens – Complaints from residents in Railway Street/High Street regarding the disposal of commercial waste (shop/Public House) into residential waste containers.

Clerk to write to the Environmental Health Officer at Wear Valley District Council.

**CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS**

**108/08 Clerk's Hours of Work**

Following the Council obtaining Quality Town Council Status Members agreed to increase the Clerk's hours of work to 18 hours a week. This would increase the number of hours that the Clerk is available to the residents of Tow Law.

Members agreed to increase the hours from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2008 as follows:-  
Office hours (16 hours)

**Signed by the Chairman.....page 6**

**Item**

Monday 1pm – 4.30pm  
Tuesday 1pm – 4.30pm  
Wednesday 2pm – 4.30pm  
Thursday 1pm – 4.30pm  
Friday 1pm - 4.00pm

**Other hours (2 hours)**

To deal with correspondence received at home, preparing and typing up report/minutes at home and attending Council Meeting outside normal office hours.

**109/08 Clerk's Salary**

Following the Council obtaining Quality Town Council Status Members agreed to review the Clerk's Salary.

Members agreed to refer this matter to the Finance and General Purposes Committee to agree the profile scoring and recommend a new salary scale.

**The Meeting finished at 8.10pm.**

**Signed by the Chairman.....page 7**