

TOW LAW TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Tow law Town Council held on Tuesday 19th may 2009 in the Community Centre commencing at 6.30pm.

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

Also Present: PcsO Strong and G. F. Smith (Clerk)

Apologies: No apologies received.

075/09 Election of Chairman

Councillor Peter Graham was proposed and seconded. Members voted for Councillor Graham to be Chairman of Tow Law Town Council for 2009/10 year.

Councillor Graham in the Chair

076/09 Declaration of Office

The Chairman signed the declaration of Office form witnessed by the Clerk accepted by the Council members.

077/09 Declaration of Interest

Councillor Gale declared an interest in item 23 – proposed relocation of Office/Meeting Room. Councillor R. Grogan, P. Graham and L. Rowland declared an interest in agenda item 20e.

078/09 Election of Vice Chairman

Three candidates were proposed and seconded (Councillor Day, Grogan and Green), Members voted by a show of hands, each candidate received three votes each. The Chairman used his second vote and voted for Councillor Day. Therefore, Councillor Day be Vice Chairman of Tow Law Town Council for the 2009/10year.

079/09 Police Report

PcsO Strong circulated the Crime and Incident figures for April 2009, followed by a question and answer session.

080/09 Representation by Residents

No Residents present

081/09 Minutes of the meeting held on 21st April 2009

Agreed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

082/09 Matters \Arising

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012/09 N-Power Community Fund

Agenda Item no 25

022/09 Members Reports

e)Allotments – meeting of the Sub Committee

It was agreed for the Clerk to arrange a meeting as soon as possible.

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037/09 Clerk's Report

Millennium Green Trust

Millennium Green Area

The Clerk had met with Mrs Flynn and was informed that the Public meeting of the Trustees had taken place. The next stage was to contact Natural England and the Charity Commission. Clerk to continue monitoring the situation and report to the next appropriate Town Council Meeting.

056/09 Clerk's Report

b)CDALC – Power of Well Being

c)Training

agenda item no 24

d)Statement of Community Engagement

The Clerk reported that he was collating the report and hoped to report the document to the next meeting of the Town Council.

e)Joint Working with the Hill Top Villages – 22nd April 2009

The Clerk reported on the meeting held on 22nd April 2009

1)Agreement to produce a Protocol for Joint Working Arrangements.

2)That the Hilltop Communities would write to the Boundaries Committee to include them within the Tow Law Boundaries.

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f)DCC – Parish Paths Partnership Application 2009

A meeting had taken place with Elaine Field, DCC regarding maintenance of footpaths in the Tow Law Area (copy of map circulated at the meeting). Members agreed to the following:-

1)To obtain a quotation for repair/maintenance of footpath no 155 and to complete the application form to DCC for Funding the project.

2)To carry out a survey on footpath usage and for the Clerk to prepare a report for a future Town Council meeting.

3)For the Clerk/Assistant Clerk to discuss with Craig Best (Durham Wildlife trust) and Groundwork the possibility of a footpath from the Beehive Coke Ovens to Tow Law Fell, and to obtain a quotation for the provision of a footpath and to complete the Application form to DCC for Funding the project.

4)For the Clerk/Assistant Clerk to meet with the Officers of the Probation Service regarding restoration works at the Beehive Coke Ovens.

5)For Councillor Hail to attend a training session on “strimming” at a cost of £90 for the one day course.

i)Banks Developments – West Durham Liaison Committee

Councillor Gale updated members on a recent meeting of the Committee at which it was decided to allow organisations within Tow law to apply for Funding from the scheme through the Durham Foundation. He had also been elected to serve as Vice Chairman of the Committee.

057/09 Members Reports

Due to the motor car incident at the memorial the work on the Bayonet had been stopped until a structural Survey had been carried out on the statue and any remedial works (If any) had been carried out. Clerk to report to the next appropriate Town Council meeting.

059/09 Tow Law Community Centre

Agenda Item no 23

067/09 Planning Matters

c)Application 3/2009/0123 – Blackburn Farm, Inkerman

The Clerk informed members that the Planning Application is invalid, The enforcement Officer had visited the site (Owner not available) and informed the Contractor that no Planning permission had been granted and any work to the concrete base) entrance area should be stopped immediately until a new Planning Application was submitted and approved (or refused), work has continued on the site.

After much discussion it was agreed to note that the Planning Application was invalid.

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069/09 Area Action Partnership

Agenda item 20(c) Clerk’s report

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071/09 Clerk’s report

d)DCC – Non domestic rate bill for the Recreation Ground (wow gym) awaiting response from DCC.

e)The Boundary Committee for England – Electoral arrangements for Parish/Town Councils.

Members were reminded that individuals could also respond to the boundaries committee by 8th June 2009.

p)Beaufort Wind Ltd – N-Power Community Fund (time period)

Clerk awaiting response from the company (Katy Woodington). Since the meeting the Clerk has been informed that the agreement was signed in 2004 for a period of 20/25 years. The balance on the account as at 31st March 2009 was £1252.00.

072/09 Members report

a)(i) Big Lottery Peoples Millions

Councillor Rowland informed the meeting that the Funding Application had been completed and sent off on 15th may 2009.

a)(ii)County Durham Foundation – Wind Farm Grant Panel

Councillor Rowland informed the meeting that she had attended the first panel meeting.

Organisations were encouraged to apply for Funding (details from Durham Foundation). Councillor Grogan raised concerns on how the Funding was to be allocated, it was agreed for the Clerk to write to EDF (Tony Scorer) requesting clarification of the amount of Funding available and how it was to be allocated.

a)(iv)Litter Bins at the Millennium Green

The Clerk reported on a meeting with John Bevells, DCC at which he was informed that the litter bins/dog waste bins were emptied on a Wednesday each week. Other emptying was on a “goodwill basis” but this had not ceased. The members agreed for the Clerk to write a letter to the County Council asking for the service to be carried out pre-local government reorganisation.

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072/09 Members reports

a)(v)Thornley Road Cemetery

meeting to be arranged, Clerk to report to the next Town Council meeting.

083/09 County Councillors Reports

No report

084/09 Cheque Authorisation

It was agreed that the Councillors should be authorised to sign cheques on behalf of the Town Council.

085/09 Appoint Committee Membership

It was agreed to appoint the following Committees and Membership:-

a)Finance & General Purposes Committee

Councillors Blacker, Brown, Green, Rowland, Stevens plus Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Council.

b)Allotment Sub Committee

Councillors Batson, Blacker, Hail, Rowland, Taylor plus Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Council.

c)Allotment Joint Working Party

Councillors Hail, Stevens plus Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Council.

d)Community Partnership Committee

Councillors Gale, Green, Rowland plus Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Council.

e)Hilltop Community Sub Committee

Councillors Grogan, Green, Hail plus Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Council.

086/09 Representative to outside bodies

It was agreed to appoint the following Councillors to be representatives on the following:-

a)Tow law Community Association Councillor Brown & Gale

b)County Durham Association of Local Councils Councillors Batson and Graham

c)Police Community Liaison Committee Councillors Batson, Hail and other Councillors as and when appropriate.

d) Police & Communities together meeting (PACT) Councillors Batson, Hail and other Councillors as and when appropriate.

e)West Durham Wind Farm Community (Banks Development) Councillor Gale

f)EDF Wind Farm Grant Panel (Durham Foundation) Councillor Rowland

087/09 Unaudited Statement of Accounts for the year ended 31st march 2009

Members agreed to receive the report and noted that the balance as at 31st March 2009 was £18,349.77.

088/09 Review the Councils Standing Orders

Members agreed the following changes:-

Liaison with County and District Councillors **should read** Liaison with County Councillor

Item 70) **remove** "and to the district Councillor or Councillors for the district ward".

Item 71) **remove** "or district" and "or to the district Councillor for the ward as the case may be".

Item 74 **add** which was approved by the Town Council meeting on 18th September 2007.

089/09 Review Financial Regulations

Members noted that there were no changes.

090/09 Accounts for payments

That approval be given for the payment of vouchers 529 in the sum of £2917.62.

091/09 Chairman Report

No report

092/09 Clerk's Report

a)DCC- Highway maintenance scheme, High Street, Tow Law. Work commencing 11th May 2009.

That the Clerk writes to the County Council regarding the legality of the traffic light system and to report to the next Town Council meeting.

b)DCC – Registered Traders scheme; the clerk to copy the table of useful contact numbers to all Councillors and to place the posters on the Council's notice boards.

c)DCC- Area Action Partnership launch event; summary report. The clerk to copy the documents to all Councillors.

d)CDALC – Well Being training sessions; confirmation of 80% criteria completed.

e)Tow Law Millennium Primary School – travel planning working party; notice of meeting 1st June 2009 at 1.15pm in the school hall. Members are encouraged to attend the meeting which is to discuss the future of the crossing patrol service. Members requested that the Clerk write to the two local County Councillors asking for they attendance and support at the meeting. Members noted that a letter had already been sent to the Member of Parliament.

For information

f) DCC – proposed changes to bus services commencing 31st may 2009 for Weardale service number 84 (Crook and surrounding areas).

g)Equality and Human Rights Commission – Public sector duties

h) Clerks & Councils direct; May 2009; issue no 63

093/09 Members Reports

Councillor Blacker – appointment with Job Centre plus Stanhope. Members asked the Clerk to write to Job Centre Plus asking if they would be willing to use a local venue (ie Tow Law Community Centre). To host appointments for the residents of Tow Law.

094/09 Date of next meeting

The next meeting of Tow Law Town Council is Tuesday 16th June 2009 commencing at 6.30pm

THAT PURSUAT TO SECTION 100A OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 THAT THE PUBLIC BE EXCLUDED FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE MEETING DURING CONSIDERATION OF THE ITEMS LISTED BELOW ON THE GROUNDS THAT IF THEY ARE PRESENT DURING DISCUSSION OF THOSE ITEMS THERE COULD BE DISCLOURE OF THEM OF EXEMPT INFORMATION AS DEFINED IN SECTION 100.

Confidential items

095/09 Possible relocation of Council Office/ meeting room

Under “Best Value” and “Value for money” members considered option regarding continuing renting facilities at the Community Centre or purchasing a property in High Street. Following a discussion on this matters members agreed:-

- 1)For the Clerk to contact Steve rag (CDALC) for the procedure for obtaining a loan from the Public Works Loan Boards to borrow sufficient funds to purchase and renovate a residential home into an office/meeting room for the Town Council.
- 2)For the Clerk to produce a Financial Statement which would show the reason for/against applying for a loan etc.
- 3)Item to be placed on the agenda for the next Town Council meeting

096/09 Councillor Training – Power of Well Being

Two Councillors (Day & Grogan) have been unable to attend the training session on the Power of Well Being. The County Association will be holding another training session (date, venue & time have yet to be finalist). The two Councillors were asked to make every effect to attend these sessions; this would take the Town Council up to 100% complete. Clerk to make the necessary arrangements and inform the Councillors when the date has been finalised

097/09 N – Power Community Fund

Members agreed to extend the Boundaries of the funding received from N-Power (6 Wind Farms) To surrounding areas to be able to apply for funding up to the present level of £250 per organisation/per event/per financial year. Subject to agreement by the Town Council. It was also agreed for the Clerk to inform the adjoining Communities of this change in Funding regulations.

The Meeting finished at 8.35pm