

TOW LAW TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of **Tow Law Town Council** held on Tuesday **20th October 2009** in the Community Centre commencing at 6.30pm

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

Also Present: County Councillor J. Bailey, D. Leatherdale (Wear Valley Mercury)
PC Dave Turner (Durham Police) and G F Smith (Clerk)

Apologies: Councillor L. Brown, County Councillor P. Jopling

153/09 Declaration of Interest

Councillor **Gale** declared an interest in item no. **19 (3 w and 3x)** Clerk's report
Councillor **Graham, Grogan** and **Rowland** declared an interest in item no. **19 (3v)** Clerk's report
Councillor **Gale** declared an interest in item no. **24** confidential item

154/09 Police Report

PC Turner presented the report to the meeting followed by a question and answer session. A discussion took place about the proposed Community Speed Watch Scheme (equipment cost £1000) and a contribution (£300 approx) from the Town Council. County Councillor Bailey would take this item to the next meeting of the AAP Board and report to the next Town Council meeting.

155/09 County Councillor's Report

Councillor Bailey reported on the following:

- a) Meeting with the Leader of the County Council on 22nd October 2009 at 9.30 am in County Hall to discuss membership issues of the AAP (Chairman & Clerk were unable to attend). Councillor Bailey would arrange another convenient meeting date.
- b) Boundary Committee Report
- c) Winter Maintenance Scheme

156/09 Representation by Residents

There were no residents present

157/09 Minutes of the meeting held on 15th September 2009

Agreed as a true record and signed by the Chairman

158/09 Matters arising

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138/09 Flooding problems at Tow Law

Agenda item no. 19 (3bb)

139/09 Police Report

Pact Meeting representative from the Town Council. Members agreed to nominate Councillors **Batson** and **Green** to attend the Pact Meetings and to **report** back to the Town Council. No further progress with the Traffic problems at Campbell/Station Street area. County Councillor Bailey to discuss with County Council Officers regarding painting of road markings (Town Council would be prepared to purchase the paint).

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121/09 Police Report

PCSO Strong had met with the Clerk regarding the Traffic Survey results, he would ask the appropriate Officer to re-look at the results and report to the next appropriate Town Council meeting.

022/09 Members Reports

e) Allotments – meeting of sub committee

The outstanding item was discussed at the Special Town Council meeting held on 24th September 2009.

037/09 Clerk's Report

Millennium Green Area

Agenda item no. 23

056/09 Clerk's Report

d) Statement of Community Engagement

Clerk to produce a report to the next appropriate Town Council meeting. Clerk to complete his Portfolio for this part of this CiLCA Qualification. Clerk to contact Steve Ragg (CDALC) regarding the training for the two Councillors (Day & Grogan) for the Power of Well Being, Clerk to report to the next appropriate Town Council meeting.

f) DCC – Parish Paths Partnership Applications 2009

Clerk to report to the next Town Council meeting.

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072/09 Members Reports

a) (iv) Litter Bins at Millennium Green

No further update from DCC, it was agreed to remove this item from further reports

a) (v) Thornley Road Cemetery

No further update from DCC, it was agreed to remove this item from further reports

093/09 Members Reports

Job Centre Plus

The Clerk had spoken to the manager of the Crook office and she has agreed to look into using the Community Centre at Tow Law for future events instead of using facilities at Stanhope.

115/09 proposed move to premises in High Street

Meeting with the Community Association

A meeting has been arranged for 19th November 2009

116/09 Allotments Sites

Agenda item no. 8

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127/09 Resignation of Councillor Hail

The Clerk has spoken to Officers of DCC (Crook Office) and agreed that the vacancy would be advertised in November/December following the completion of the work to the new Register of Electors.

128/09 Planning Matters

a) 3/2009/0123 – Blackfield Farm

The Application had been approved under Officer delegated decision. Members requested the Clerk to obtain a copy of the approved document and to inform them when the details have been received.

134/09 Clerk's Report

d) DCC – Beat the Credit Crunch programme

No further information has been received from the County Council. Members agreed for the Clerk to contact the Officers at the County Council and report to the next Town Council meeting.

146/09 Area Action Partnership

Agenda item no. 15

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147/09 Millennium Green Trust

Agenda item no. 16

148/09 Trex Gymnasium

Agenda item no. 17

149/09 Chairman's Report

Joint meeting with Greater Willington Town Council

150/09 Clerk's Report

a) Bottle Bank at Baring Court

Awaiting response from County Council

c) Youth Offending Service

Clerk to arrange a meeting with the Service Manager

d) CDALC – New Mapping Opportunities

Clerk to check with DCC regarding the use of their licence for this service. Clerk to report to the next Town Council meeting.

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151/09 Members Reports

Clerk to discuss with each Councillor and report to the next Town Council meeting.

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159/09 Minutes of a Special meeting held on 24th September 2009

Agreed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

160/09 Matters Arising

1) Electoral review of County Durham by the Boundary Committee

The Chairman reported on the meeting with Local Councils in the Esh and Esh Winning areas and the agreement to support the idea of Three / Member Ward (Esh, Esh Winning and Tow Law). The other Local Councils supported the idea of Tow Law extending their boundaries to include the Hill Top Villages.

Members agreed to: -

- a) Support the idea of three 1 Member Wards for Esh, Esh Winning and Tow Law.
- b) For the Clerk to contact the Hill Top Villages to arrange a joint meeting.
- c) To arrange for a petition etc to be available for residents of Tow Law to sign to support the idea of a one Member Ward for Tow Law (Greens Newsagency to be used for the petition sheets).

2) Premises Licence for Club X, 5/6 High Street, Tow Law,

The Clerk confirmed that a letter of concerns had been sent to the Licensing Authority. A Meeting of the Licensing Committee had taken place but the Clerk had received no further correspondence.

3) Allotments

Clerk to prepare a report for the next Town Council meeting.

161/09 Audit for the Year Ended 31st March 2009

Members noted the following: -

- A) That the Notice for the conclusion of Audit had been placed on the Council's Notice Boards for 14 days as from 2nd October 2009.
- B) That the Accounts had been completed and were in accordance with the Audit Commission's requirements subject to one matter.
- C) External Auditor's Report – one comment “The Council failed to approve their accounts by the Statutory deadline of the 30th June as quoted in the Accounts and Audit (amended) (England) Regulations 2006.

The Members agreed: -

- D) To accept the report subject to the Clerk writing to the Auditors regarding the documents stating two dates which conflict with each other (30th June and 17th July) and asking for clarification.

162/09 Policies

A) Town Council Funding – Grant Policy

Draft Policy document circulated prior to the meeting.

Members agreed to remove item 5 what will not normally be funded? B) The activities of religious organisations.

Subject to the above amendment Members agreed to the Policy document.

C) N-Power Community Fund – Grant Policy

Draft Policy document circulated prior meeting.

Members agreed to remove item 5 what will not be normally funded? B) The Activities of Religious Organisations

Subject to the above amendment Members agreed to the Policy document.

163/09 Statement of Accounts as at 30th September 2009

Members agreed the following: -

- a) To accept the report and noted the balance of £18669.77
- b) For the Clerk to obtain quotations for a Laptop and projector for use by the Clerk and Assistant Clerk and also at Councils meetings for planning applications and maps of the area.

Clerk to report to the next Town Council meeting.

164/09 Accounts for Payments

That approval is given for the payment of vouchers 31 – 36 in the sum of £2,791.43.

165/09 Area Action Partnership

The last meeting of the AAP Board was held in the Community Centre, Tow Law on 22nd September 2009.

The next meeting is the **12th November 2009** venue to be confirmed.

The next meeting of the Community Sub Group is scheduled for 21st October 2009 (Councillor Grogan to attend)

166/09 Millennium green Trust

Awaiting the report from the Council's Legal Adviser. The Chairman would be calling a Special meeting to discuss this matter. The meeting would also discuss the report of the Council's Auditor on the Partnership.

167/09 Trex Gymnasium

The Clerk reported that the payment for Business rates (£348.72) was still outstanding from the Trex Committee (Councillor Grogan to arrange to collect cheque and pass it on to the Clerk). The Clerk reported on his visit (with Councillor Rowland) to the gymnasium to obtain documents (insurance and policies) for a recent funding application form the Assistant Clerk was completing on behalf of the organisation. A number of issues were raised by the Clerk which can be resolved by the Committee Members and he also stated that the gym was very busy on the night of his visit. He did feel that the gym could do with more volunteers to help with supervising of the centre.

Whilst he was there a number of young people were attending a football session on the Multi Users Games Area (MUGA).

168/09 Chairman's Report

Item discussed in minute 160/09 (1) – Electoral Review of County Durham

169/09 Clerk's Report

The following correspondence had been received:-

1. Item for discussion

a) Application for funding (N-Power Community Fund) from St Philips & St James Parish Church (Norman Deacon). Contribution of up to £250 towards the cost of Christmas tree and flower festival to be held in December 2009. Estimated cost of the event is £600.

Decision – Members agreed to donate £250.00

b) Application for funding (N-Power Community Fund) from the Buzzy Bees Gardening Club, Blessed John Duckett RC School (Mrs Sharon McQuiggin). Contribution of up to £250 towards the cost of purchasing wood for a greenhouse and raised beds at the school.

Decision – Members agreed to donate £250.00

c) Application for funding (N-Power Community Fund) from Mr David Craggs, 40 Campbell Street, Tow Law. Contribution up to £125 towards the cost of expenses to represent England at the World Amateur Snooker Championships in India.

Decision – Members agreed to donate £125.00

d) The Boundary Committee of England (Jessica Metheringham) – Parish boundaries and Electoral Divisions in County Durham.

Decision – Members agreed for the Clerk to write to DCC to change the External Boundaries of Tow Law Town Council to include the Hill Top Villages through a Community Governance review for elections to take place in 2013. Also for the Clerk/Assistant Clerk to prepare a response to the Boundary Commission on an Electoral division for Tow Law with the Villages of Stanley and Sunnyside showing also the links to the villages (re: transport, schools, churches, doctors, youth groups etc).

e) CDALC – Charter arrangements with Durham County Council and Town /Parish Councils. Response to document by 7th November 2009.

Copy of document with the Clerk.

Decision – Members agreed to use the Charter when they discuss with the County Council the development of Services.

f)Enterprise PLC/CE Electric UK – Tree works at Tow Law

Decision – Members agreed for the Clerk to write to the County Council and Enterprise PLC regarding the community value of trees in the town, compensation for loss of trees in the area and that the Town Council be part of the discussion when a number of trees are replanted.

g) Valuation Office Agency –Assessment of the rateable value at the Tow Law Recreation facility (Trex gymnasium)

Decision – That the Clerk passes the details onto the Trex Gymnasium Committee.

h)DCC – City of Culture 2013 – endorsement of bid

Decision – That the Council endorse the Bid of Durham City for the City of Culture 2013.

i)Tow Law Community Association – Request for donation/advertising space in the 2010 Calendar.

Decision – That the Council donate £50

j)Cleaner Air Solution Uk Ltd – Grant Scheme from Low Carbon Building Programme.

Decision – That the contents of the document be noted and filed.

k) DCC (Copy letter) re: Millennium Green Trust (response to a letter from Mrs C A Railton, 11 Ironworks Road, Tow Law).

Decision – Members noted their concerns.

l) CDALC – AGM Saturday 31st October 2009 at 10.30am in the Council Chambers, **County Hall, Durham**

Decision – That the Council be represented by Councillor Batson, Day and Graham.

m) Girlguiding uk (South Durham Trefoil Guild) Planting of flower bed in the town.

Decision – Members raised no objection, details to be sent to DCC.

2.Items for Information:-

- n) DCC – Annual report for Overview and Scrutiny 2008/09
- o) CDALC – Durham Association Newsletter; September 2009; Issue No. 27
- p) CDALC – Annual report 2008/09
- q) NALC – Annual report and accounts 2008/09
- r) Campaign to Protect Rural England Newsletter; Autumn 2009
- s) Durham Rural Community Council Magazine; Autumn/Winter 2009
- t) War Memorials Trust bulletin; August 2009; Issue No. 42
- u) LINK County Durham Newsletter; September 2009; Issue No.4

3.The following correspondence had been received:-

v) Application for funding – N-Power Community Fund from Tow Law Millennium Primary School for a £250.00 contribution towards the cost of producing **a pantomime** (£632.50).

Decision – Members agreed to donate **£250.00**

w)Application for funding – N-Power Community Fund for Tow Law Community Association for a £250 contribution towards the cost of a professional **energy audit (£875)** under the Community Sustainability Energy Programme

Decision – Members agreed to donate **£250.00**

x) Application for funding – N-Power Community Fund for Tow Law Community Association for a £250 contribution towards the youth development programme to support the **dance group**.

Decision - Members agreed to donate **£250.00**. Clerk to produce a statement on balances on the N-Power Community Fund for the next Town Council meeting.

y) copy of correspondence regarding funding for the Millennium Green (letters from Mrs C A Railton, 11 Ironworks Road, Rt Hon Hillary Armstrong MP, DCC Corporate Director Neighbourhood Services).

Decision – Members noted the comments/concerns.

z) Copy of correspondence regarding Tow Law Memorial (letters from G Symons, Atlee Estate, Rt Hon. Hillary Armstrong MP).

Decision – Councillor Blacker to discuss the matter of the bayonet with the supplier (Murray Memorials) with the hope that this can be in place before Remembrance Sunday (8th November).

aa)DCC Environment and Sustainable Communities Scrutiny Committee – Review of Winter Maintenance Strategy and Service dated September 2009.

bb) Mrs P Telford, 4 Northside Court, Tow Law – flooding problems.

cc) DCC – Arts development small grants scheme.

dd) DCC The County Durham Plan – preparation of a new Local Development Framework. Consultation period 9th October to 27th November 2009.

Copy of documents with the Clerk.

Signed by the Chairman.....Page 7

170/09 Members reports

Councillor Blacker – raised concerns on the height of the BMX track in Tow Law
(Health & Safety Issue).

171/09 Date of Next Meeting

Next meeting of the Tow Law Town Council will be Tuesday 17th November 2009 in the
Community Centre commencing at 6.30pm.

**THAT PURSUANT 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 LISTE DBELOW ON THE GROUNDS
THAT IF THEY ARE PRESENT DURING DISCUSSION OF THSES ITEMS THERE
COULD BE DISCLOSURE OF THEM OF EXEMPT INFORMATION AS DEFINED IN
SECTION 100.**

Confidential Items.

172/09 New Rates of Pay for Local Council Employees from 1st April 2009

173/09 Inspection Report and Valuation of Land in Tow Law

174/09 Alleged Incident at the Community Centre

Meeting Finished at **8.15pm**

Signed by the Chairman.....Page 8