

TOW LAW TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Tow Law Town Council held on Tuesday 16th January 2024, commencing at 6.30pm in the Community Centre, Tow Law.

PRESENT: Councillors F. Nicol (Chair), M. Craggs, K. Duffy, P. Eastwood, J. Fowler, J. Gale, E. Mather, P. Stokes and D. Willock.

ALSO PRESENT: County Councillor R. Manchester, G. F. Smith (Clerk).

001/24 APOLOGIES

Apologies received from Councillors C. Batson, T. Bland, and M. Dyer.

002/24 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Councillor Stokes declared an interest in agenda item no. 10 Tow Law Community Association.

Councillors Craggs and Nicol declared an interest in agenda items no.10 Tow Law Community Association and agenda item no. 11 Tow Law Food Bank.

Councillor Craggs also declared an interest in agenda item no.8 Allotments.

Councillor D. Willock declared an interest in agenda items no. 8 Allotments, No. 11 Tow Law Food Bank and agenda item No. 19 – Road Safety.

003/24 MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY MEETING HELD ON 21st November 2023

The minutes were agreed and signed by the Chair.

004/24 SETTING THE PRECEPT 2024/2025

Members agreed to receive the report sent by the Clerk prior to the meeting. Membersreed to increase the Precept for 2024/2025 by 2.5%.

Therefore the agreed figures were as follows:-

Precept required for 2024/2025 £46792.50

Tax Base for 2024/2025 534.1

Band D Charge £87.61

LCTRS Grant payable by DCC £82.00

Signed.....Chair

Total Precept and Grant £46874.50

Councillors Fowler and Willock did not vote.

The Chair and Clerk signed the application form for Durham County Council

005/24 ACTION LIST

The Action List was circulated to all Councillors prior to the meeting, they were agreed.

006/24 COMMUNITY FUND – No Application.

007/24 JOINT REPORT BY THE CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR

- High Hill House – Ongoing problems.
- Members agreed for the Chair to write to the local MP regarding the delays in carrying out the repairs/damp problems to properties in Tow Law (Coronation Avenue and Weardale Crescent) and the number of empty properties.

008/24 ALLOTMENTS

Allotment Tenancy Agreements

The Clerk had obtained legal advice from a local solicitor (Mr Shuttleworth, Hodgson and Angus, Stanhope). That the agreement could be sent to all allotment holders for signature

009/24 LAND REAR OF HIGH STREET, TOW LAW

Fillings to the potholes (was still outstanding), but the contractor would carry out the work as soon as possible.

010/24 TOW LAW COMMUNITY CENTRE

Councillor Stokes updated the meeting that the Centre was still very busy. Front door was repaired. .

011/24 TOW LAW FOOD BANK

Councillor Nicol updated the meeting that the Food Bank was still very busy.

012/24 POLICE /PACT/SPEEDWATCH - No reports.

013/24 FACEBOOK – No update.

014/24 COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

County Councillor R. Manchester reported on the following:-

- School Crossing Patrol (vacancy).

Signed.....Chair

015/24 REPRESENTATION BY RESIDENTS – None received.

016/23 BANK ACCOUNT (on-line banking) – Application form completed and sent to Co-op Bank awaiting response.

017/24 PLANNING MATTERS – None received.

018/24 ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT

Accounts 69 to 71 (December) ; value £2980.38 and 72 to 76 (January); value £7043.36 approved for payment.

019/24 ROAD SAFETY- COUNCILLOR WILLOCK

Councillor Willock updated the meeting, the following were still outstanding:-

- Police survey to be completed.
- Agreement has been reached on repainting the road with a sign “dangerous corner”.

020/24 CCTV IN TOW LAW – Clerk was still awaiting response from Durham Police.

021/24 TOW LAW MILLENNIUM GREEN

Declaration of Trust Document, Clerk had checked with a local Solicitor (Ian Shuttleworth, Hodgson & Angus of Stanhope) regarding legal status and required to contact Jenny Flynn (outstanding Trustee) and report to the next Town Council meeting in February 2024.

Charity Commission Document

The Clerk had submitted a request for charitable status to the Commission and was awaiting a response, to be discussed at the next Town Council meeting in February 2024.

Barclay’s Bank Account

The Clerk was awaiting details from the Charity Commission regarding registration status, and will contact the Bank. To be discussed at the next Town Council meeting in February 2024.

Inspections of Play Area

The Clerk was awaiting a response from DCC. County Councillor Manchester would chase this up and let the Clerk know details.

022/24 BEEHIVE COKE OVENS

Councillor Gale would update the next meeting, National Lottery Grant for Heritage form to complete, report to the next Town Council meeting (February 2024). Councillor Stokes asked for an update on the cutting back of the Gorse etc, Clerk to contact Batsons.

Signed.....Chair

023/24 COMMUNITY OWNERSHIP FUND - Outstanding

Awaiting details of the next round of bids (consider The Mart site and/or Millennium Green Site).

024/24 FUNDING OPPERTUNITIES – None this month.

025/24 CHRISTMAS ACTIVITIES

The” Switch on lights” ceremony had taken place on Friday 1st December 2023.

026/24 THE SKILL MILL – COUNTY DURHAM YOUTH JUSTICE SERVICE

The Clerk to contact the supervisor to obtain the costs for clearing the ditches on Millennium Green.

027/24 D DAY 80 6th JUNE 2024

Councillor Willock provided an update report, Members agreed to light the beacon at 9.15pm on 6th June 2024, further updates nearer the event.

028/24 CLERK’S REPORT

The Clerk had sent all Councillors a copy of his report prior to the meeting:-

- The Expenditure Report 1st April to 31st December 2023 totalling £62143.31
- Expenditure Report (Detailed) figures to be used when setting the Estimates for the year 2024/2025 at the next Town Council meeting (20th February 2024).

029/24 MEMBERS REPORTS

Councillor Stokes:-

- He will be attending a zoom meeting “Managing of Green Spaces” by DCC and Durham University on 21st February 2024.

Councillor Eastwood:-

- Path rear of Attlee Estate (very muddy).

030/24 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday 20th February 2024 in the Community Centre, commencing at 6.30pm.

The meeting finished at 7.30pm

Signed.....Chair