

Tow Law Town Council

Minutes of a meeting of Tow Law Town Council held on Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> April 2022 commencing at 6.30pm, in the Community Centre, Tow Law.

PRESENT Councillors; P. Stokes, M. Craggs, M. Dyer, E. Mather and F. Nicol.

ALSO PRESENT; County Councillor R. Manchester, Mr S. Ragg, (CDALC), Mr D. Willock (Candidate) and G F. Smith (Clerk).

081/22 Apologies

Councillors C. Batson, T. Batson, P. Eastwood and J. Fowler.

082/22 To interview a candidate for the Councillor vacancy

Mr D. Willock, 13 Park Terrace, Tow Law DL13 4NQ attended the meeting and was interviewed for the Councillor vacancy.

Following a number of questions asked by the Chairman, Mr Willock was asked to leave the room whilst the Council consider the position. Mr Willock returned to the meeting and the Council decided to offer him the vacant position, which he accepted.

The Clerk and Mr Willock completed the Acceptance of Office Form, Mr Willock took his seat in the Council Chamber.

The Clerk left Mr Willock to complete a Declaration of Interest form for him to complete (which he handed to the Clerk at the end of the meeting) and handed him the booklet "Good Councillors Guide 2018" for his reference.

083/22 Presentation by Mr S. Ragg (CDALC) on Councillor Training

Mr Ragg explained that he could provide training on Councillor Training and Chairmanship Training at 250.00 per session to the Town Councillors at Tow Law Community Centre on a face to face basis.

Other training was available on request (topics more specific could be provided).

Members agreed to accept the offer of the session on Councillor Training and for the Clerk to co-ordinate with all Councillors a convenient time and date.

Mr Ragg left the meeting.

Signed.....Chairman

084/22 Declaration of Interest

Councillor Stokes declared an interest in agenda item No. 11 Tow Law Community Association.

Councillor Craggs and Nicol declared an interest in agenda item No. 11 Tow Law Community Association and agenda item No. 12 Tow Law Food Bank.

Councillor Willock declared an interest in agenda item No. 12 Tow Law Food Bank.

Councillor Mather declared an interest in agenda item No. 7 Community Fund Tow Law Glass Group.

085/22 Minutes of the ordinary meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> March 2022

The minutes were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

086/22 Action List

Members agreed to update the list.

087/22 Community Fund

The Clerk read out an application for funding from Tow Law Glass Group for £250.00 for four “stained glass panels” to celebrate the Queens Jubilee for June 2022. The panels are intended to fill the central section of the large window in Tow Law Community Centre meeting room.

The Chair proposed and the Vice Chair seconded that £250.00 be donated from the Community Fund towards this project.

088/22 Joint report by the Chairman and Vice Chair

- Discussion on draft letter to My Space Housing.
- Transport Group (AAP meeting).
- Ecological Appraisal (Agenda item No. 10).

089/22 Allotments

The Clerk reported that he was not making progress with Northumbrian Water, Members agreed for the Clerk to contact NWA at Director level.

Signed.....Chairman

090/22 Land rear of High Street, Tow Law

Copies of the Appraisal Report had been sent to all Councillors prior to the meeting.

The Chair had met with a representative of Abtech Consulting Ltd on site and discussed the findings. The Chair circulated a report for work to be carried out on site within the next twelve months, Members agreed that the report for the programme of Works to commence (when appropriate).

091/22 Tow Law Community Association

The Chair updated the meeting on ongoing works (central heating).

092/22 Tow Law Food Bank

Councillor Nicol updated the meeting on the increasing numbers of people attending the Food Bank.

093/22 Police/PACT/ Speed watch reports – No updates.

094/22 AGAR return for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022

The Clerk reported that he was preparing the return and following the guidance for completing the forms, he was hopeful to report to the May Town Council meeting.

095/22 Relevant documentation for the Internal Auditor

The Clerk reported that he was handing over the necessary documents to the Internal Auditor at their meeting on Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> April 2022.

096/22 Section 106 Allocation of Funding

County Councillor Manchester had requested a quotation for the ditches, fencing and drain access to the entrance of Millennium Green. The Chair to make the necessary arrangements with the contractor and forward details onto Councillor Manchester to complete the Section 106 Application Form and submit to the relevant officer at DCC.

Signed.....Chairman

097/22 Facebook

Members agreed to the following:-

- Produce a Newsletter to all residents asking them on feedback to the idea of a facebook page for Tow Law Town Council.
- For a sub-committee /Working Party to be set-up to oversee the initial set-up and first publication.
- To apply “The Seven Principles of Public Life” as circulated at the meeting including selfishness, Integrity, Objectivity, Accountability, Openness, Honesty and Leadership.

098/22 County Councillors Report

County Councillor Manchester reported on the following:-

- County Council officer walkabout in Tow Law on 14<sup>th</sup> April 2022.

099/22 Representation by Residents – None

100/22 Bank Account (online Banking)

Councillor T. Batson and the Clerk had visited the Chester-le-Street Branch of the Co-operative Bank Plc and obtained the required information and paperwork to complete the application.

101/22 Planning Matters

A) Planning Application

DM/22/00336/FPA application by Mr L. Szymczak for alterations to windows and single storey rear extension at 26 Wolsingham Road, Tow Law.

Decision – No objections

B) Neighbourhood Planning

Extension of Grant Finding for Neighbourhood Plan Groups for the next financial year (until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023). Applications to be submitted when the next round of grants become available. Members agreed to make application for grant at the appropriate time.

102/22 Accounts for Payment

Vouchers 01 to 05 amounting to £2490.81 to be paid.

Signed.....Chairman

103/22 CCTV in Tow Law

The Clerk reported on the grant received from the Three Towns AAP (£21495.00) and conditions of Grant clauses.

Clerk to provide further details at the next Town Council meeting.

104/22 Tow Law Millennium Green

Councillor Stokes reported on the following:-

- He would obtain quotations for cleaning the ditches and repairs to the decking.

County Councillor Manchester reported on the following:-

- Estimate for repairing the gates at the play area(copy to be sent to the Clerk)
- Site checks by DCC to be discussed at the next Town Council Meeting.

105/22 Beehive Coke Ovens

Still outstanding;-

- Roots from Gorse (specialist required)
- Repairs to Information Board (contact details received from DCC Print Section)

106/22 Play Areas in Tow Law

Update fro County Councillor Manchester.

107/22 Platinum Jubilee Event

One school had already ordered the medals for their pupils.

Unable to obtain pupil numbers.

No further updates.

Signed.....Chairman

## 108/22 Clerk's Report

The Clerk reported on the following:-

- Income Report for the Year Ended 31<sup>st</sup> March '022 (£44230.69), Members agreed to receive the report.
- BACS admittance DCC Precept (£43417.48), Members agreed to receive the report.
- BACS remittance Ventient Energy (£4373.28), Members agreed to receive the report.
- Letter from NALC Smaller Councils Committee.  
Details received on what the committee has been considering, any comments? Members agreed to receive the report.
- Letter from DCC regarding Decline of Natural Habitats and Species in County Durham. Action Plan to improve habitats and wildlife in County Durham. Members agreed to use the initiative agreed in this meeting for the Car Park Area and works to commence this year for improving habitats and wildlife in Tow Law.

109/22 Members Reports – None

110/22 Date of next meeting

Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> May 2022 in the Community Centre, Meeting of Electors commencing at 6.30pm, followed by the Annual General Meeting, followed by the monthly ordinary meeting.

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111/22 Clerk's Pay Award 2021/22

The Council has been informed by NALC and CDALC of a pay award for the Clerk from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021 for 1.75% increase.

Members agreed to pay the Clerk this award.

The calculation was 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022 12 months @ £1355.75 per month increase of 1.75% = £23.73 x 12 months = £284.76 less tax. Back pay for April 2022 £23.73 less tax.

Total £308.49.

Pay as from 1<sup>st</sup> May 2022 £1379.51 per month.

The meeting finished at 8.55pm

Signed .....Chairman

