

West Rainton Parish Council

Minutes of meeting held on

Thursday 20 April 2017

at Arden House, West Rainton

Present: Councillors C Cochrane, I Clifford, I Haddick, P Lowrie, P Morson and A Wallage (Chair).

1 x Member of the Public.

In attendance: G Keedy, Project Officer.

As Parish Clerk was unable to attend due to a leave commitment, Parish Council resolved that G Keedy act as Parish Clerk for the purposes of administering the meeting.

NOTE: The meeting was not audio or video recorded.

1) Apologies

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillors M Gilbank (holiday commitment) and M Boettcher (illness). Parish Council resolved to approve these absences.

No apology had been received from Cllr A Swinburn and Parish Council resolved not to approve his absence.

2) Declarations of interest

It was agreed that declarations of interest would be dealt with as and when the need arose.

3) Public Participation

There were no issues raised by the member of the public attending.

4) Minutes

Parish Council resolved that the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held 16 March 2017 be approved as a correct record.

Parish Council resolved that the minutes of the Parish Council Extraordinary meeting held 30 March 2017 be approved as a correct record.

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5) Police Report

Acting Clerk reported that no report had been received.

Parish Council resolved that Cllr I Clifford raise the continued lack of provision of a Police report with his informal contact at Durham Constabulary.

6) Finance

Part A: For information:

1. Income:

Durham County Council – LCTSS 2017/18 - £28338.00

2. Expenditure

Expenditure previously approved by Parish Council due this month

	Payee	Purpose	Amount
1	M Ramshaw	Parish Clerk net salary - April 17	£337.63
2	G Keedy	Project Off. net salary - April 17	£372.36
3	Post Office	Combined HMRC liabilities - April 17	£177.40
4	D Lewins	Cemetery Gatekeeper Gratuity Payment - Apr 17	£80.00
5	CDALC	Training - Annual Returns and Reserves Training (Parish Clerk)	£27.00
6	Durham City Homes	Hire of Arden House - 1hr 30/3/17 £5.00 2hrs 16/3/17 £10.00 2hrs 8/3/17 £10.00 2hrs 16/2/17 £10.00 2 hrs 8/2/17 £10.00 2 hrs 19/1/17 £10.00 1hr 11/1/17 £5.00	£60.00
TOTAL			£1054.39

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6) Finance cont ...

Part B: Expenditure requiring approval

	Payee	Purpose	Amount	Budget Provision Y/N
7	Mr M Ramshaw	IJT Direct x 2 black toner cartridges for printer	£54.41	Y
8	Leamside Nurseries	Topsoil – Cemetery	£52.00	Y
9	Mr G Keedy	Project Officer re-imburement: Tesco - A4 pad £4.00, 2 x 5 packs A4 expandable files £2.50 each Right Click Fix – Laptop repair £30.00 Postage Costs - £1.27 12 x 2 nd Class Stamps £6.60	£46.87	Y
10	MaxRecycle	Waste Contract 1/4/17-31/3/18	£1463.52	Y
11	Jones Boyd (Durham) Limited	Payroll Services 1/4/17-30/6/17	£90.00	Y
TOTAL			£1706.80	Y

Part C: Bank Balances – For Information

Total Expenditure included above	£2761.19
Anticipated current a/c bank balance if all paid	£31118.74
Reserve Account Balance	£15031.16

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6) Finance cont ...

Acting Parish Clerk drew Member's attention to the following associated with expenditure:

Slightly higher salary costs which were attributable to implementation of the national pay award from 1 April 2017;

The requirement for "potholes" within cemetery grassed areas to be filled in and made safe;

Repairs to the Parish Council lap top - which had ceased to function with internet;
and

Inclusion of the invoice details from Max Recycle for 17-18 for waste removal – the contract having been the subject of discussion at the February 2017 meeting.

Parish Council resolved to:

1. Note income, expenditure and bank balances reported for information.
2. Approve expenditure listed in Part B.
3. Instruct the Parish Clerk to examine contract documentation and take steps necessary to terminate the contract with MaxRecycle ahead of 18-19, giving requisite notice to avoid any penalty payments and allow sufficient time for a competitive tendering exercise to be undertaken to maintain continuity of service.

7) Planning applications

Parish Council had no comments to make on planning applications notified by Durham County Council since the March 2017 meeting.

8) Parish Councillor vacancy

Acting Parish Clerk advised Members that no expressions of interest had been received for the casual vacancy by the extended deadline of 4 April 2017.

He further reported that after the March 2017 meeting, Susan Patterson was automatically disqualified from office under Section 85 of the Local Government Act 1972 due to non attendance at any Parish Council meetings for a period of six consecutive months (October 2016 - March 2017 inclusive) and without having any reasons for absence approved by the Council.

Parish Council resolved to note the position and requested that Parish Clerk formally notify Mrs Patterson by letter of her disqualification and the reasons, and to offer the Parish Council's thanks for her service.

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9) Elections - Notice of uncontested Election

Acting Parish Clerk reported that formal notice had been received from Durham County Council on 5 April that West Rainton Parish Council elections would be uncontested.

Whilst the Council would be quorate in term of numbers elected (7), there would be 4 x vacancies short of overall composition.

Information for local councils in this position had been received from County Durham Association of Local Councils.

Parish Council resolved that more information be brought to the May 2017 meeting for discussion and consideration relating to next steps and associated process.

10) Appointment of Internal Auditor

Acting Parish Clerk advised that Parish Council was required to appoint an Internal Auditor.

He advised Parish Council that for financial years 14/15 and 15/16 this work had been undertaken by Annette Simpson Accounting and Financial Services who had provided significant assistance and expertise.

Parish Council resolved to re-appoint Annette Simpson Accounting and Financial Services as internal auditor for 2016/2017 at an indicative cost of £140.00.

11) Field House Surface Mine

A report replicating an email from Hargreaves to the Parish Council had been previously circulated to Members.

This requested Parish Council to nominate a representative to attend an initial meeting of the Community Liaison Committee on 26 April 2017.

The Committee was being established as part of a legal agreement imposed when the planning approval was granted.

After discussion, Parish Council resolved that Cllr I Clifford would be the Parish Council's representative with a substitute being nominated if and when required.

Parish Clerk to notify Hargreaves accordingly of the decision and to supply Cllr Clifford with further details.

Parish Council further resolved that Cllr A Wallage continue as its' representative at meetings of the "Stop the Opencast in Pittington and West Rainton" (STOPWR) campaign group.

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12) Citizens Advice Bureau (West Rainton Outreach Service)

A report to accompany this item produced by Parish Clerk had previously been circulated.

This outlined a request from Durham CAB for a contribution of £1440.00 to secure continuation of the twice monthly Outreach Service in West Rainton for 2017-18; and included service usage figures for 2016-2017.

This item was discussed in depth and led to a prevailing view that the service was under-used and did not represent good value for money.

Alternative access arrangements to CAB services were considered and it was noted that a "face to face" contact facility continued in Durham, and telephone and online assistance was also available.

Parish Council resolved not to provide the financial contribution requested by Durham CAB for 2017-2018.

Parish Clerk was asked to advise CAB of its' decision accordingly, and additionally as a matter of courtesy, the Chairman of West Rainton and Leamside CA.

It was further resolved that should the Outreach Service be discontinued by CAB, an editorial item be included in the Parish Councils' contribution to a future edition of Village News highlighting alternative access to CAB services.

13) Cemetery update

A verbal update was provided by G Keedy. He advised that a cemetery plan had now been provided to Sherburn Outdoor Services and memorial headstone stress testing was expected to be undertaken very shortly.

Grass cutting had commenced satisfactorily as part of the new contract with Leamside Nurseries.

A request had been received from the Cemetery gatekeeper for alternative cover arrangements to be considered for a period of forthcoming absence. This was the first known occasion of a request of this nature.

After discussion, Cllr Wallage volunteered to undertake this role. Parish Council resolved to accept her kind offer of assistance.

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14) Parish Plan

Cllr Wallage reported that Durham Community Action (DCA) had prepared a draft plan for the Steering Group.

At around 300 pages (including all appendices), this "long" version would be the formal reference document to be held by Parish Council. An abridged version would be provided by DCA and it was intended that this be tabled as an agenda item for discussion at the May 2017 meeting of Parish Council.

It was also proposed that the Parish Plan be formally presented to the wider community at the Annual Parish Meeting to be held on 25 May.

Parish Council resolved to note progress and next steps.

15) General correspondence

Parish Council resolved to take the following actions in relation to correspondence received:

12/4/17 NALC Devolution Toolkit (via email 12/4/17) **Noted**

11/4/17 NALC Newsletter (via email 12/4/17) **Noted**

10/4/17 Star Councils Awards Entry Information (via email 10/4/17) **Noted**

3/4/17 Chief Executive's Bulletin 12. 31 March 2017 (via Email 12/4/17) **Noted**

From: EGGER UK via letter

Re Ryehill Farm Woodland Management Plan - Consultation Information

Parish Clerk to seek additional information from Egger and request attendance at Annual Parish Meeting. Clerk to copy Egger correspondence to County Councillors Hall and Kellett and to the Green Group for information.

16) Date and time of next meeting

Following guidance received from County Durham Association of Local Councils, Acting Parish Clerk reported that the next meeting will be the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council. (This meeting has previously been referred to as the Annual General Meeting).

This is a statutory meeting which has specific requirements, but can also include routine Parish Council business.

Parish Council resolved that the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council be held on Thursday 18 May 2017 at 7.00pm at Arden House, West Rainton.

The meeting concluded at 21.00hrs.

GK 02 05 17

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Signed:

Date: