

West Rainton & Leamside Parish Council

**Draft Minutes of meeting held on
At 19:00 on Thursday 16 January 2020
At Arden House, West Rainton**

Present: Councillors I Diggory, I Haddick, B Kellett, P Lowrie & A Wallage
(Chairperson)

In attendance:

M Ramshaw, Parish Clerk
4 Members of the Public

NOTE The meeting was not audio or video recorded.

1) Apologies

Apologies had been received from Cllrs M Gilbank & G Storey (work commitments), Cllr P Morson (holiday) and Cllr M Boettcher (family commitments).

Parish Council resolved to approve these absences.

2) Declarations of interest

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

3) Public Participation

A member of the public reported a broken window in the bus shelter near the Italian Farmhouse. Councillor Wallage advised there was a further two broken in the Village and that these had been reported. Cllr Wallage agreed to follow up.

A member of the public approached the Parish Council and asked for permission to install a kerb set on a grave in the new lawned area of the cemetery. Parish Council advised that this was not permitted as the Parish Council had previously made the decision to not allow kerb sets in the new area. This was due to Health and Safety and maintenance difficulties. The member of public accepted this decision.

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Another member of the public raised an issue around a planning application for the Old Chapel in Hall Lane. She advised that it was a listed building and that the application lacks any detail on how the development will be in keeping with the current building. The member of the public advised that she had objected to both applications and asked the Parish Council to review the applications.

The Chair advised this would be considered under the Planning Application item on the agenda.

4) Minutes

Parish Council resolved that the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 21st November 2019 be approved as a correct record.

5) Finance Report

Part A: For information:

1. **Income:** 2018/19 VAT CLAIM - £2843.28
Ian Wood Memorials (Headstone Fee) - £75.00

2. **Expenditure**

Expenditure previously approved by Parish Council due this month

	Payee	Purpose	Amount (£)
1	M Ramshaw	Parish Clerk net salary – January 2020	387.86
2	HM Revenue and Customs Only	Combined HMRC liabilities - January 2020	97.00
3	Jones Boyd (Durham) Ltd	Payroll maintenance 1/1-31/3/20	90.00
4	Special Branch Tree Services	Grounds Maintenance Contract – December 2019	308.40
5	Believe Housing	Arden House room hire – 7/11 1 hr, 21/11 2hrs, 5/12 1hr & 19/12 2hrs	30.00
TOTAL			£ 913.26

Part B: Expenditure requiring approval

	Payee	Purpose	Amount (£)	Budget Provision Y/N
6	The Gilpin Press	A3 Laminated Posters - Xmas	33.20	Y
7	WR&L Community Association	Provision of refreshments for Carols around Xmas tree &	195.08	Y

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		hire of Jubilee Hall (2 ½ hrs)		
8	Information Commissioner	Annual Data Protection Fee	40.00	Y
9	AB Smart Gardens	3 x invoices – Erection & disposal Xmas tree £80, HG Winter bedding plants £129.50 & Winter Bedding Plants 8 Planters £280	489.50	Y
10	Leamside Nurseries	Christmas Tree	150.00	Y
TOTAL			£ 679.50	

Part C: Bank Balances – For Information

Total Expenditure included above	£ 1592.76
Anticipated current a/c bank balance if all paid	£ 25343.69
Reserve Account Balance	£ 15102.37

Part D – Additional Expenditure

In addition to the expenditure outlined in the finance report a further two invoices had been received and queried from AB Smart Gardens. The queries were resolved after the finance report was produced and Parish Council were asked to approve the additional two invoices for a total of £700.00 for general maintenance and tidying and the provision of the bedding plant and barrel flower tub planting.

Parish Council resolved to:

1. Note income, expenditure and bank balances reported for information.
2. Approve expenditure listed in Part B and D

6) Budget Position Q 3 2019/20

The quarter three budget report had been circulated. The additional income from grants was highlighted as well as a budget virement of £3000 identified for the Parish Plan to the Planting Plan. Parish Council were advised that the overall forecast budget outturn is generally as planned. There were no questions relating to the information presented.

7) Quarter 3 Bank Reconciliation

As with previous quarters bank reconciliations, Cllr Diggory reviewed the information with the Parish Clerk at the end of the meeting.

8) Durham Area Youth

Parish Council considered a request for funding from DAY for 2020/21 that had been circulated together with supporting information in advance of the meeting.

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Racheal Roberts and Emily Burns were in attendance to support the application and clarify any questions.

Cllr Wallage queried whether there were any audited accounts yet. She was advised that the deadline for submission to the Charity Commission is 31/1/2020. Cllr Wallage went on to ask about Plans moving forward as DAY appears to be growing at a fast pace.

Rachael advised that the Board was increasing from 4 members to 10 members and that they acknowledge different skill sets are required including HR, Communications, leadership etc. DAY are meeting in February to start the development of a forward Plan. This should be complete somewhere from Easter to the summer.

It was noted that the funding request was for an additional staff member, venue hire and delivery resources. It was clarified that the additional member of staff was for a Monday night at West Rainton Youth Group and these hours will be delivered by extending the hours of existing DAY staff.

Cllr Wallage queried proposals for school holiday activities in 2020/21. Rachael advised that a funding request had been submitted to Durham AAP to cover the 5 villages. Rachael advised that there was a residential activity taking place in Bishop Auckland at the February Half Term for children from West Rainton, supported by the Parish Council's remaining funding from 2019/20.

Parish Council resolved to approve the application subject to the proviso that DAY complete a grant application form to formalise the application and that the audited accounts are provided once complete. A copy of the forward plan was also requested once complete.

9) Grant Applications 2020/21

Three grant applications had been received. A summary of the applications circulated in advance of the meeting was considered. **Parish Council resolved** to approve all 3 applications totalling £814.

10) Heritage Garden Maintenance Contract

A quotation had been received from the current contractor AB Smart Gardens for the 2020 contract. The price is £100 more than the previous year at £1578.51. Parish Council expressed their happiness with the quality of the work and **resolved to approve** the quotation for another year.

11) Cemetery Maintenance

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Parish Council considered a report from the Parish Clerk circulated in advance of the meeting.

a) **Contract 2020/21**

It was noted that the current grounds maintenance contract with Special Branch Tree Services allows for a 12 month extension. Parish Council expressed their satisfaction with the work that has been carried out in the last year. It was noted that the contractor had confirmed his willingness to extend the contract at the same price as 2019/20. **Parish Council resolved to approve** the 12 month extension.

b) **Improvement Scheme**

It was noted that two further areas for improvement by the Clerk had been identified. The first related to the area of land adjacent to the new compound that was overgrown and uneven and the second related to the way new graves are managed.

Parish Council resolved to:

1) approve a quotation from Special Branch Tree Services of £1000 plus VAT to clear the area of land, make good and grass.

2) approve that the grounds maintenance contractor should be allocated responsibility for topping up of new graves with top soil as and when required and then, when settled, for turving. The addition cost of this quoted by the Special Tree Branches of £40 per grave was approved.

Cllr Haddick asked whether existing graves could also be topped up and turfed where appropriate. **Parish Council resolved to approve** this approach.

12) Precept 2020/21

Parish Council considered a precept report and a proposed draft budget for 2020/21 circulated in advance of the meeting. It was noted that the draft budget had been prepared on the assumption of no increase in precept and that it included provision for on-going improvements to the Cemetery and other expected budget pressures.

After some discussion, **Parish Council resolved to approve** a 2% increase to the precept as an inflationary uplift for unknown budget pressures.

13) West Rainton and Leamside Parish Council Asset Register 2019/20

The Asset Register was presented and **Parish Council resolved to approve** it.

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14) Planning Applications

Linden House - Change of Use. Parish Council have commented on the retrospective planning application and a decision is pending.

Cllr Haddick advised that he had looked at the application regarding the Old Chapel. 2 resident objections had been logged.

He advised there have been similar applications whereby the Parish Council hadn't objected. He acknowledged it is a listed building.

Cllr Kellett advised that any planning processes related to listed buildings are very rigorous.

Cllr Diggory commented that he would expect DCC to follow the process for a listed building planning application and could the Parish Council write to DCC to ensure that the appropriate processes are followed and that the appropriate due care and attention is given to the application. **Parish Council resolved that a letter be submitted to DCC to this effect.**

15) Co-option – Parish Councillor Vacancies

No applications had been received for the 2 Parish Councillor vacancies. **Parish Council resolved to approve** a further advert for the vacancies to close 6th March 2020.

16) St Marys Church Clock

The Parish Council considered information provided by the PCC regarding the need for repairs to the clock face. It was noted that the PCC had now obtained 2 quotes. The lower quote of £4,550 plus VAT was supported by the PCC and Parish Council noted the intention of the PCC to submit a bid to Hargreaves Community Funding Committee based on this quote. **The Parish Council resolved to support this bid.**

17) Jubilee Hall

Cllr Wallage updated the meeting. A grant application has now been considered and supported for the survey and valuation costs although a decision has not been confirmed at this stage.

18) Parish Planting Plan Update

Cllr Wallage advised that she was still awaiting a quote from AB Smart Gardens for the price to plant the new planters.

Bulbs and trees have now been planted. Some concerns had been raised by DCC Highways regarding the location of some of the trees but this has now been addressed. Cllr Wallage advised that if the planters are purchased there may be an issue around their handling and temporary storage due to size and weight.

Cllr Wallage advised that Anthony Baker had suggested he could put flag stones down to stand the new planters on. His awaited quote will include a price for this work.

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19) Field House Open Cast Community Liaison Committee

Cllr Wallage advised that Cllr Morson had given her a brief update just prior to the meeting. A dust monitor has now been installed at the Garage.

Cllr Kellett advised that some responses to issues raised have been unsatisfactory but are still being pursued.

Cllr Haddick advised that the footpath along the side of the site was impassable due to water. Cllr Kellett advised that this had been reported and a solution was in hand.

20) West Rainton & Leamside Village Partnership

Cllr Wallage advised that funding had been secured from Hargreaves towards the cost of a replica miners banner to commemorate coal pits in the village. Cllr Kellett advised he has also supported the project through his available members funding. Support is needed to create a Banner Group to take ownership of the banner. There is a community consultation meeting at 7pm 22nd January in Arden House with the artist who is to design the banner and local ex miners/families are being encouraged to attend.

21) General Correspondence

No general correspondence for discussion.

22) Date and Time of Next Meeting

19:00 20th February at Arden House.

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