

# **West Rainton and Leamside Parish Council**

## **Minutes of Parish Council Meeting held on**

**Thursday 18 December 2014**

**Present:** Councillors E Bulmer, M Gilbank (Chairman), S Patterson, A Swinburn, A Wallage.

**Apologies:** Councillors I Clifford and R Swinney.  
County Councillors Hall and Guy.

**In attendance:** 3 x members of the public (MoP)

**Parish Clerk:** Graeme Keedy

NOTE: The meeting was not filmed or audio recorded.

### **1) Apologies**

Written apologies received from Cllr I Clifford (due to involvement in funeral arrangements) and Cllr R Swinney (due to a conflicting engagement) were approved by the Parish Council.

### **2) Declarations of interest**

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

### **3) Public Participation**

A MoP reported that there had been an accident involving a pedestrian during the recent A690 road works. A possible cause had been the lack of working street lighting and appropriate signage in the vicinity of the pedestrian crossing.

Cllr Gilbank undertook to raise with Officers at Durham County Council.

### **4) Historic minutes**

The Parish Clerk explained that he had identified that the minutes of several Parish Council meetings held between April - August 2014 did not appear to have been approved by the Parish Council, nor signed by the Chairman.

Parish Council were asked to consider and approve the minutes of the following meetings:

17 April 14; 15 May 14 (AGM); 19 June 14; 17 July 14; 24 July 14 and 15 August 14.

Signed:

Date:

#### **4) Historic minutes cont ...**

Cllr Wallage sought clarification re item 17 of the 17 April 2014 minutes. In response, Cllr Gilbank confirmed that the Parish Council had no liabilities to the Village Hall.

Cllrs Wallage and Bulmer queried the absence of minutes of the May 2014 Parish Council meeting which followed the AGM. After discussion, Parish Council collectively acknowledged that no minutes may have been taken. The Parish Clerk undertook to seek advice from the County Durham Association of Local Councils (CDALC) about a way forward on this aspect.

Cllr S Patterson proposed, seconded by Cllr A Swinburn that the minutes of the AGM held on 15 May 2014 be approved as a true record. This was agreed by Parish Council and the minutes were signed by the Chairman.

The minutes of the meetings held on 17 April 14; 19 June 14; 17 July 14; 24 July 14 and 15 August 14 were agreed by the Parish Council and signed by the Chairman.

#### **5) Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 20 November 2014 were approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

#### **6) Matters arising**

Cllr Wallage raised queries relating to the audio recording of the 20 November meeting; declarations of interest re Heritage Garden; and timescales for co-options to the Parish Council. In response to each point respectively, Cllr Gilbank referred Cllr Wallage to the minutes of 20 November meeting; agenda item 12; and advised of an anticipated February 2015 timescale for co-options.

The Parish Clerk advised that his reply to a recent FoI request had led to further correspondence from the requestor expressing dissatisfaction and advising that incorrect information had been provided. The Parish Clerk advised he would be reviewing this matter.

Cllr Gilbank informed Parish Council of work undertaken by a local resident which encroached on Village Green. Cllr Gilbank would contact the appropriate officer at Durham County Council to request a formal letter be sent to the resident. Following a request to him from Cllr Gilbank prior to the meeting, the Parish Clerk passed to the Chairman the formal Parish Council file containing records and correspondence relating to Village Green issues.

An offer from Cllr Wallage to work with the Chairman and Parish Clerk in developing the budget for 2015/ 2016 was accepted.

Signed:

Date:

## **7) Police report**

A written report provided by PCSO Madsen was circulated. This was noted by the Parish Council.

## **8) Neighbourhood Warden report**

The Parish Clerk advised that he had received a verbal report from Gary McCardle.

It was reported that incidents of fly tipping had occurred at: Finchale View, St. Mary's Church, The Meadows and Green Gables. Items had been cleared but no action had been able to be taken against perpetrators as they had not been identifiable.

Cllr Gilbank suggested the Parish Council should consider purchasing fixed cameras for use on a covert basis. Following a suggestion from the Parish Clerk, Cllr Gilbank undertook to seek initial advice on the legalities from PCSO Madsen.

## **9) Implementation of National Pay Award**

The Parish Clerk outlined the content of the briefing note which had been circulated in advance and explained that the pay award was binding.

Parish Council agreed to implement the pay award.

## **10) Finance**

### **Income and expenditure since 20 November 2014 meeting**

#### **Money in:**

Funeral Services Ltd	£200.00
Hardy's Funeral Service	£200.00

#### **Expenditure agreed on 20 November under item 21 correspondence:**

A Simpson, Accounting and Financial Services (internal audit fee)	£150.00
West Rainton and Leamside CA (hire of Jubilee Hall - 20 Nov 14)	£10.00
D Kelly (donation to Christmas lunch)	£250.00
West Rainton Primary School (donation to pantomime trip)	£250.00
Clerks and Councils Direct (magazine subscription renewal x 9)	£108.00

**Co-op Bank current account balance @ 17 December 2014:** £14360.93

Signed:

Date:

## 10) Finance cont...

### Cheque payments for expenditure for Parish Council approval:

Parish Clerk salary (24/11/14 - 31/12/14) includes non consolidated payment	£434.60
Post Office (for HMRC)	£108.66
Parish Clerk reimbursement:	
6 x first class stamps	£3.72
Postage for M Collins FoI (1)	£2.03
Postage for M Collins FoI (2)	£2.03
Postage for letter to Co-op Bank	£1.72
Postage for agenda and papers to Cllr V Gibson	£0.93
Cost of printer paper - Currys PC World	£6.28
	<b>Total: £16.71</b>
County Durham Association of Local Councils - training 10 Nov 14	£54.00
Northumbrian Water - Water supply to cemetery (01/09/14 - 30/11/14)	£39.55
Durham County Council (Recharge for 16 Oct 14 By-election)	£3265.27
D Lewins - December payment	£80.00
Ferndale Services (Cemetery grass cut - 4 Nov)	£95.00
Information Commissioner's Office (Data Protection Registration 2015)	£35.00
Total cheques: 9	<b>Total costs: £4128.79</b>

### Anticipated current account balance after above approved expenditure: £10232.14

Co-op Bank deposit account balance @ 17 December 2014: £15009.60

The Parish Clerk sought approval to pay all itemised expenditure. This was agreed by the Parish Council. The financial report was approved by the Parish Council.

## 11) Co-op Bank account

The Parish Clerk reported that since the 20 November meeting, Cllrs Bulmer and Clifford had decided not to proceed with becoming authorised signatories to the account.

The Parish Council agreed that Cllrs A Swinburn and A Wallage be added to the list of authorised signatories and they were asked to discuss with the Parish Clerk the completion of Co-op Bank documentation at close of the meeting.

The Parish Clerk added that it was also necessary to remove from the list the names of those signatories who were no longer elected members.

These were: S Percival; J Moreland; N Richardson; W Halford and K Horan.

Parish Council agreed the list of names to be removed and requested the Parish Clerk to notify the Co-op Bank accordingly.

Signed:

Date:

## **12) Heritage Garden**

The Parish Clerk reminded the Parish Council that Cllrs Gilbank and Patterson had declared an interest at the 20 November meeting.

The Chairman temporarily adjourned the meeting to speak in private with Cllrs Patterson and Swinburn. The three members left the room at this point.

Upon return and reconvening, Cllr Gilbank advised the Parish Clerk that neither himself nor Cllrs Patterson or Swinburn had an interest and asked that his previous declaration of interest and that of Cllr Patterson, both made at the 20 November 2014 meeting be revoked.

Parish Clerk advised that as the minutes of the 20 November 2014 meeting had been approved and signed he could not agree to this request.

Cllr Gilbank then advised that he would continue to declare an interest in this matter. Cllr Patterson advised that she would adopt Cllr Gilbank's stance and also declared an interest.

Cllr Swinburn confirmed that he had no interest to declare.

Cllr Gilbank volunteered that his declaration of interest related to restrictions placed upon him by a settlement agreement which he considered prevented his engagement with this agenda item, and he specifically highlighted any Freedom of Information requests relevant to the Heritage Garden.

The Parish Clerk advised that the settlement agreement could not discharge an elected member of their obligation to comply with the requirements of Freedom of Information legislation. He added that officers at Durham County Council had previously confirmed his understanding of the position.

Cllr Gilbank disputed this interpretation.

The meeting became inquorate at this stage for the purposes of discussing the specific proposal for expenditure.

Cllr Gilbank suspended standing orders to facilitate public contribution.

A MoP suggested that subject to a formal application being made and meeting the required criteria, Community Chest funding may be available to provide financial assistance to aid improvements to the Heritage Garden.

Parish Council agreed to delegate to Cllrs Bulmer and Wallage responsibility for drawing up a Community Chest funding application to meet the 31 December 2014 deadline.

Signed:

Date:

### **13) Donation requests**

Parish Council considered three donation requests which had been deferred from previous meetings:

- a) Mid Durham Youth project for £1000.00 – after discussion it was agreed to proceed to a vote by show of hands.

Cllr Gilbank proposed and Cllr Bulmer seconded a vote “to support the request for a £1000.00 grant to West Rainton Youth Group”.

Voting outcome: 3 in favour, 2 against.

The Parish Clerk advised the Parish Council for information that the cheque payment would be payable to West Rainton and Leamside Partnership as they oversaw banking arrangements for the youth group.

- b) West Rainton Primary School for £250.00.

After discussion, Cllr Patterson proposed a vote by show of hands “to agree to a donation of £250.00 to West Rainton Primary School”.

There was no seconder and the vote did not proceed.

- c) West Rainton Green Group for £250.00. Parish Council agreed to further defer this request.

### **14) Parish Council website**

The Parish Clerk explained that following agreement at the November meeting he had arranged website training at Durham County Hall to be held on 17 December.

For the training to be immediately purposeful, Parish Clerk was asked by DCC to bring with him proposed content for the website. However, as no content had been made available to him or supplied to Durham County Council as had previously been indicated, the Parish Clerk agreed with DCC to postpone the training session until content had been developed.

After discussion, it was agreed that Cllrs Wallage, Bulmer and Swinburn would look at developing content. The Parish Clerk undertook to signpost Councillors to the websites of other Parish and Town Councils.

### **15) Local Council Award Scheme**

Councillor Wallage introduced this item which had been publicised in the current edition of Durham News.

Signed:

Date:

## **15) Local Council Award Scheme cont...**

Councillor Wallage encouraged the Parish Council to work towards achievement of the appropriate level of the Award to demonstrate to the local community the Council's commitment and aspirations. She added that development of the website would be critical in supporting this initiative.

Parish Council agreed in principle to support work towards achievement of the Award.

## **16) General correspondence**

The Parish Council agreed the following in relation to correspondence received.

Post Office:

Confirmation of relocation of Post Office to Costcutter from 2 March 2015 **Noted**

Durham County Council:

Funding for bus shelters in West Rainton.

**Parish Council resolved not to make a financial contribution. Clerk to notify DCC accordingly.**

Land ownership query - play area at School Avenue / The Crescent.

**Noted – further information awaited from DCC.**

County Durham Association of Local Councils:

Durham Association News December 14 edition. **Noted**

Durham County Council Chairman's Medal. **Noted - no nominations to be made.**

It's Your Neighbourhood - Community Grant Scheme.

**Parish Clerk asked to pass details to "Green Group"**

The Durham Ask. **Noted**

Parish Polls. **Parish Clerk asked to circulate to Elected Members.**

Invite to meet with Police and Crime Commissioner.

**Parish Clerk to pass to West Rainton and Leamside Partnership.**

DCC Budget Consultation.

**Parish Clerk requested to circulate to Elected Members.**

Buckingham Palace Garden Parties 2015. **Noted**

Signed:

Date:

## **16) General correspondence cont...**

Co-op Bank: Confirmation of receipt of Registration form and request for missing bank statements. **Noted**

M Wright (Durham City Cycling Forum) re West Rainton feasibility report.

**Parish Clerk to research and respond.**

## **17) Date and time of next meeting**

Thursday 15 January 2015 at 7.00pm at Jubilee Hall, West Rainton

The meeting closed at 22.00.

Signed:

Date: