

West Rainton and Leamside Parish Council

Minutes of Parish Council meeting held on

Thursday 16 April 2015

Present: Councillors E Bulmer, I Clifford, M Gilbank (Chair), S Patterson, A Wallage.

5 x Members of the public (MoP)

In attendance: Parish Clerk - Graeme Keedy

NOTE: The meeting was not filmed or audio recorded.

1) Apologies for absence

Written apologies received from Cllr R Swinney and Cllr A Swinburn were approved by the Parish Council.

No apologies had been received from Cllr V Gibson or Cllr A Sowerby. Their absences were unapproved.

2) Declarations of interest

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

3) Public participation

2 x MoP expressed their ongoing concerns about the appeal being submitted against the refusal of the open cast proposal and sought Parish Council support.

Reasons for objections included pollution, increased traffic and water quality issues.

Cllr Gilbank referred to a meeting to take place on 29 April at County Hall and it was agreed that Councillor Wallage would attend. Parish Clerk would forward any background information he had to Cllr Wallage.

Cllr Gilbank agreed to email to elected members a new policy document issued by the Planning Inspectorate.

Representatives of the Pittington Action Group would provide contact details to Cllr Gilbank for forwarding to the village newsletter editor.

4) Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 19 March 2015 were approved as a correct record by the Parish Council.

Signed

Date

5) Matters Arising

The Parish Clerk provided an update on the following topics:

Noble's Funfairs – Clerk gave a verbal summary of advice he had received from Durham County Council (DCC). After discussion, Parish Council resolved that the Clerk contact Noble's Funfairs to advise of requirements for shut down by 22.00 hours each day, negotiate a daily fee of up to £100.00 and advise them of the process to be followed with Durham County Council. It was also agreed that the Clerk would confirm the proposed dates with elected members and circulate the email correspondence he had had with the County Council.

Fly tipping Cameras – Clerk advised he had been referred to D Risely at DCC and his response was awaited.

West Rainton and Leamside Community Association – there had been no further contact.

Keeley Fingleton – There was no progress with the mining heritage sculpture as a further grant was awaited. The representative of the Green Group present at the meeting undertook to check if a £500.00 grant had been made.

Co-options to Parish Council – the Parish Clerk reminded Parish Council that this task had previously been delegated to a panel of councillors who would take their recommendations to full Council. An editorial item in the forthcoming village newsletter would again highlight the vacancies and the closing date for initial expressions of interest had been set for 16 May.

Street furniture and assets – the Parish Clerk had made enquiries with DCC about ownership in the parish area and their response was awaited. Parish Council resolved that work to maintain benches should be put out to tender and the Clerk should follow this up.

Web training – the Parish Clerk reported that he had attended web site development training at County Hall and that he had been advised by the trainer that around a further 20 hours work would be necessary prior to the site being 'live'.

6) Police Report

The Parish Clerk distributed for information the report he had received from Ian Madsen. This was noted. Parish Council resolved that the Parish Clerk contact Inspector D Coxon at Durham Constabulary to request speed checks at Pit House Lane in response to reports of motorists regularly exceeding the 40mph limit.

7) Neighbourhood Warden report

No localised report had been received. It was agreed that the Parish Clerk would circulate the web link to the neighbourhood reports available on the DCC website. Cllr Gilbank agreed to provide the Clerk with the contact details of the Neighbourhood Warden Team Manager.

Signed

Date

8) Heritage Garden

Cllr Bulmer provided a comprehensive update on work to date and next steps. She added that Mr Baker had provided some materials at no cost to the Parish Council.

Cllr Bulmer was asked by Parish Council to pass on their formal thanks to Mr Baker for the work he had carried out to date.

Parish Council also thanked Mr T Mason for his help with the Heritage Garden works. Cllr Wallage reported that the project was on target and within budget. She outlined practical difficulties in purchasing sundry items and proposed that the Parish Clerk be given a sum of petty cash to overcome such issues.

Various options were discussed around practical financial solutions including the need to support local businesses during the project and to investigate the possibility of opening trade accounts with them wherever practicable.

Parish Council resolved to approve the items of expenditure outlined in part one of the report tabled to support this agenda item.

Cllr Wallage introduced the second part of the report relating to ongoing maintenance costs and highlighted the following recommendations for Parish Council consideration:

Extracts -

1. The Parish Council is asked to include provision within its annual budget for the ongoing maintenance as set out above.
2. Approve the continued engagement of Mr Baker to carry out all maintenance requirements for this financial year.

Parish Council resolved to approve recommendation 1.

In respect of recommendation 2, the Parish Clerk advised that in line with the Parish Council's Financial Regulations, quotations should be obtained for this work.

After full discussion, due to the importance of the project and continued cost effectiveness, Parish Council resolved to approve recommendation 2.

9) Village Green

Parish Clerk advised that enquiries with DCC were continuing. In the meantime, Parish Council agreed that the Clerk send holding responses to the two written enquiries he had received.

Signed

Date

10) Environmental Issues

Cllr Gilbank reported that a dead Eucalyptus tree required replacing. Cllrs Wallage and Bulmer were asked to seek prices from suppliers.

Cllr Gilbank put forward a suggestion for discussion that the Parish Council offer to take ownership of the site known as the "Old Pit".

He explained that the successor company to Biffa were reinstating the site for local amenity use.

Parish Council resolved not to take this forward at this time but may reconsider at a future date.

Cllr Gilbank reported that grass cutting in the village by DCC had been delayed but would commence shortly.

Parish Council resolved that a new tender document inviting bids for grass cutting in West Rainton Cemetery be published. Cllr Gilbank also reported that arrangements for the maintenance of cemetery benches be reviewed and that memorial headstones required testing for stability. It was agreed that the Parish Clerk would identify a specialist company for the latter.

11) Finance

Income and expenditure since 19 March 2015 meeting

Money in:

Durham County Council –	
Community Chest Award	£3400.00
Precept 2015/2016	£28190.00

Co-op current account balance @16 April 2015: £36576.52

Cheque payments for expenditure for Parish Council approval:

Parish Clerk net salary:	£343.20
Post Office (HMRC liability on Clerk's salary)	£85.80

Parish Clerk reimbursement:

Postage costs – Parish Council papers to Cllr V Gibson	£1.26
6 x 1 st class stamps	£3.78
12 x 2 nd class stamps	£6.48
Travel costs – fares to/ from County Hall on 24/3/15 – 3 x meetings	£7.70

Sub-total Parish Clerk reimbursement: £19.22

Durham County Council (inv. 300865383): website training for Parish Clerk £50.00

County Durham Association of Local Councils (inv. CTP 151/15):
Annual Returns and Data Transparency Training for Clerk £27.00

D Lewin's April payment £80.00

West Rainton & Leamside CA (inv. 03/15 AP2):
Room Hire for 19 March meeting £35.00

Cheques: 7 £640.22

Signed _____ Date _____

11) Finance cont ...

Heritage Garden project expenditure (incurred or advance from ring-fenced award):

Parish Clerk reimbursement – Wilko.com (Cuprinol products for Heritage Garden incl. delivery charge)	£55.85
Mr A Baker (labour costs)	£210.00
Mr A Baker (for paint brushes)	
£7.37Durham Timber Products (fencing panels) (Note – approved at 19 March meeting, but cheque now required)	£111.90
Maxwell’s DIY (masonry paint)	£24.99
Arbor Timber (fencing)	£306.95
Total cheques Heritage Garden: 6	£717.06
Combined total cheques: 13	£1357.28
Anticipated current account balance after above approved expenditure:	£35219.24
Co-op deposit account balance @16 April 2015:	£15014.25

The Parish Clerk sought approval to pay all itemised expenditure.

Parish Council resolved to agree payment of all expenditure and approved the financial report.

12) Citizens Advice County Durham

Statistics provided by Citizens Advice were considered.

These had been requested by the Parish Clerk in the light of a request for increased funding by Citizens Advice.

Parish Council resolved that the Parish Clerk would draft a letter outlining alternative options for continued provision of the service.

13) Grant application policy and process

Parish Council resolved that Cllr’s Gilbank, Wallage and the Clerk should meet to further develop and report back.

14) General Correspondence

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

County Durham Association of Local Councils:

Welfare Assistance **Noted**

County Durham Plan **Noted**

Easter bin collections and major road works **Noted**

Your region, Your council, Your future regional event **Circulate to members**

Signed

Date

14) General correspondence cont ...

Smaller Local Council forum **Copy to Chairman**
NALC Star Councils Awards **Noted**
NALC conferences – London **Circulate to members**
NALC newsletter **Noted**

BDO (external auditors) – Notice of annual review of accounts **Noted and resolved that Internal Auditor be engaged.**

Information Commissioner's Office – notification of complaints **Noted and Clerk to respond.**

15) Annual Parish Meeting

Parish Council resolved that the Annual Parish Council meeting would be held on Thursday 28 May 2015. Parish Clerk to check the availability of Arden House.

16) Date and time of next meeting including AGM

Thursday 21 May 2015 at 7.00pm. Parish Clerk to check the availability of St. Mary's Church meeting room.

17) Exempt business:

Resolved: That under Section 100 (A) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Schedule 12 A of the said Act.

18) Contact from Durham Constabulary

The Parish Clerk advised that he had been approached by Durham Constabulary to supply information. A discussion took place about the nature of information which could be released.

Parish Council resolved that the Parish Clerk should co-operate fully with Durham Constabulary.

The meeting closed at 21.55 hrs

Signed

Date