

West Rainton Parish Council

DRAFT Minutes of Parish Council meeting held at

St. Mary's Church Meeting Room, West Rainton

Thursday 19 November 2015

Present:

Councillor Wallage (Chair) and Councillors Bulmer, Lowrie and Patterson.
Also 3 members of the public.

In attendance:

County Councillors Hall, and Kellett – Durham County Council.
Barrie Alderson – Outdoor Sport and Leisure Officer (Durham County Council).
Parish Clerk - Graeme Keedy
Parish Clerk (Designate) – Kate Cuthbert

1) Introduction of Parish Clerk

Graeme advised that a new Parish Clerk had been appointed (Kate Cuthbert) to undertake the role with effect from 1 November, 2015. Graeme would continue to be employed by the Parish until March 2016, undertaking the role of Project Officer and also to assist the new Clerk in her role.

2) Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Haddick (long standing family commitment) and Cllr Clifford (unwell). The apologies for absence were approved.

An apology for absence had been received from Cllr Morson (no reason given). The apology for absence was unapproved.

No apologies for absence had been received from Cllr Gilbank or Cllr Swinburn. These absences were unapproved.

Councillor Wallage reported that she had received an email from Cllr Graham tendering his resignation.

3) Declarations of interest

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

4) Audio Recordings of Meetings

Councillor Wallage advised that whilst audio recordings had been taken from the last few months meetings on her personal ipad to assist with the minutes,, due to not being able to export the files there was no means of retaining the recordings as official council records. Consequently a record of the recordings have been deleted once minutes have been approved. It was therefore not her intention to record future

meetings. Members of the public or individual councillors could of course continue to make recordings for their own purposes, if they wished to do so. After discussion, council resolved it would still like to pursue a method to make official recordings .The Clerk agreed to research the cost of buying professional equipment.

5) Public Participation

An issue was raised by a resident in relation to the current bus service from Jubilee Hall to South Shields.

A further issue was raised regarding damage to windows at a property on the council estate. Councillor Patterson agreed to forward details to Councillor Kellett.

6) Minutes

Parish Council RESOLVED that the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 15 October 2015 be approved as a correct record.

DCC Councillor David Hall advised that a decision in relation to the Opencast Appeal was anticipated in January 2016.

7) Review of Play Provision

Councillor Hall was in attendance to provide an update on the Play Provision Review by DCC. Barrie Alderson provided a further update on the implications for West Rainton, which following approval of DCC play strategy in July 2015. This had identified a minimum core service offer of a single site settlement with a type 'B' play area. West Rainton had a type B and a Type C.

A discussion ensued in relation to the lifespan and maintenance of equipment, with the identified sites' equipment being deemed to be in good repair. The Parish Council acknowledged that whilst annual checks were not a legal requirement, detailed inspections would need to be undertaken on a regular basis. DCC agreed to provide the necessary training and work with Parish Councils taking responsibility for play areas. Currently the Parish Council provided their own public liability insurance.

A number of consultation events had taken place with Parish Councils where the benefits of a transfer and the resultant offer from DCC had been discussed, either leasing whole, or part of the site.

Councillor Wallage commented that Zoe Dewdney-Parsons (Play Scheme Group) had submitted an application for grant funding and at the present time, the site was not owned or funded by the Parish Council. It was therefore important to see what transpired from this application first as DCC would need to be consulted on this as landowners and current providers. The information contained within the cabinet report would also be useful to inform further discussions, as DCC had in this report , committed to maintaining both play areas, not just the minimum core offer.. Barrie Alderson agreed to forward details of other options to the Clerk, for circulation to Parish Councillors. The Clerk agreed to circulate the links to the DCC Cabinet report.

8) Cemetery update

The Parish Clerk advised that Leamside Nurseries had undertaken the final grass-cut of the season.

Graeme reported that he had met with a specialist company the previous month and proposals were awaited in relation to capacity, environmental improvements and record keeping, which would help inform future plans.

9) Parish Clerk Update

An approach had been made by Nobles who wished to arrange a fun fair on the school avenue playground site between 13-17th April 2016. As the land was owned by DCC, permission would need to be granted for a further event.

Graeme advised that following a request from a resident, discussions were on-going to see if there was a possibility of adding further names to the war memorial as at present, there was no further capacity. In addition, Cllr Patterson advised there was an incorrect name which also needed to be rectified. Cllr Patterson agreed to contact the family and ask them to confirm in writing to the Parish Clerk what amendment was required.

10) Website Update

The Chairman reported that the website was now "live" and thanked Councillor Clifford for establishing this.

Any comments or suggestions for additions to the site were welcomed.

11) Heritage Garden

Councillor Bulmer provided the following update:

Of the £3400.00 allocated funding, £3363.17 expenditure had been approved. As the spend for erecting the fence was no longer required, there was a grant underspend of £568.78 plus £100.00 provision for a Tree.

Some of this underspend was to be used for solar lighting and Christmas Tree lights, and it was also hoped to add some paving to the front access to allow for easier wheelchair access. This change of grant usage had been agreed with the funding provider.

The Clerk to the Parish Council had purchased tree lights at a cost of £62.00, leaving a balance of £607.00.

The Parish Council considered the costs and it was noted that the costs of a living tree (6.5' – 7.40') would be approximately £149.50 plus potential haulage, VAT and transplant costs. An additional option was to purchase a cut tree from a local supplier, which would need to be safely positioned and secured in the raised grass area.

The Parish Council RESOLVED to obtain a cut tree from a local supplier at a cost of up to £150.00 including installation. The proposal of a carol service was also welcomed therefore Councillor Wallage agreed to contact Pittington Brass Band to see if they would be available. Options for refreshments at the event were also discussed but were considered unlikely due to the short time available to make suitable arrangements..

12) Community Chest Funding

Councillor Wallage advised that she had submitted a grant submission on behalf of the parish council for £20,000 for the development of a capital investment fund to support the council's grant and donation policy.

Having reflected on the limited discussion at the last meeting, due to time restrictions, and in consideration of the council support to lead on the development of a village plan, Councillor Wallage had also submitted a second application.

The reasons for this were detailed below:

- Cemetery improvements - the full extent of these or the cost had yet to be determined, but it was expected that the cost would greatly exceed existing annual maintenance provision;
- The Parish Council still did not have clarity over assets they owned and potential maintenance costs;
- The Parish Council still had yet to carry out any structured consultation to inform priorities over the longer term. Having made some enquiries about the development of a village plan, it was evident that to do this properly it would be a bigger exercise than first envisaged and would require much more than a residents survey.

A grant application for £30,000 had been submitted to assist in the development of a village plan (£5,000) and a planned maintenance programme (£25,000)

The grant application was submitted to meet the closing date of 14 November.

The Parish Council RESOLVED:

- to retrospectively approve the second application and its submission; and
- Yvonne Probert, from Community Action Group be invited to attend the January meeting to brief members on the development of a village plan

13) Finance

Money in since 15 October 2015 meeting:

Co-op current account balance as at 13 November 2015: £19,889.99

Expenditure requiring approval since 15 October 2015 meeting:

Parish Clerk (G Keedy) net salary - Nov 2015 (G Keedy) - £533.50

Parish Clerk (designate) net salary – Nov 2015 (K Cuthbert) - £343.20
Post Office (HMRC liabilities - combined employees) - £219.20

Parish Clerk (G Keedy) reimbursement:

Postage costs:

24 x 2nd class stamps; 6 x 1st class stamps - £16.74

2nd class large (Rol forms to DCC) - £0.74

1st Class, signed for – cemetery plans to CDS - £2.05

Large format photocopying - cemetery plans (Prontaprint, Sunderland) - £9.00

Transport costs to Prontaprint Sunderland (Go North East) - £3.60

Tradewinds Europe Ltd - Christmas Lights for Heritage Garden - £53.96

IJT Direct (4 x replacement toner cartridges for LaserJet Pro 200 MFP) - £106.83

Asda – 16 x AA Duracell batteries (for Heritage Garden Xmas lights) - £10.00

Total Parish Clerk (G Keedy) reimbursement: £202.92

Other expenditure:

Leamside Nurseries (grass cutting 15 October) - £156.00

Leamside Nurseries (final grass cut 28 October plus perimeter tree pruning) -
£312.00

David Lewins (November payment) - £80.00

St. Mary's Church – room hire for 17/9, 13/10, 15/10 and 19/11 @ £15.00 each -
£60.00

1st Rainton Gate Brownies – donation agreed at 15 October 15 meeting - £250.00

Anthony Baker - £105.00

Total other Expenditure: £963.00

Total Expenditure: £2,261.82

**Anticipated current account balance after above approved expenditure:
£17,628.17**

Co-op deposit account balance @ 13 November 2015: £15,019.03

The Parish Clerk sought approval to pay all itemised expenditure.

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

14) General Correspondence

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

Andrew Brown Gardening & Landscaping – **Noted**

Local Resident – Football Parking – Cllr Kellett to pursue problem of locked gates and access to car park with relevant officer at DCC. Clerk to advise resident

Durham City Homes "Grab-a-Grant" – **Clerk to circulate electronically.**

Durham City Homes Update – **Durham Cathedral – Noted**

Notification of Tax Base (DCC) - **Noted**

15) Police Report

No report had been received.

16) To agree date and time of next meeting

Thursday 17 December 2015, 7.00pm at St. Mary's Church meeting room.

The meeting closed at 21.20 hrs.