

**West Rainton Parish Council**  
**Minutes of Parish Council Meeting held at**  
**Arden House, West Rainton on**  
**Thursday 16 February 2017 at 19:30**

**Present:**

Councillors A Wallage (Chair), I Clifford, C Cochrane, M Gilbank, I Haddick, P Lowrie, P Morson.

County Councillor Bill Kellett

1 x Member of the Public

**In attendance:** Parish Clerk - Mark Ramshaw  
Project Officer - Graeme Keedy

NOTE: The meeting was audio recorded by Cllr Gilbank for his own personal use. Cllr Wallage advised that any recording is releasable under Freedom of Information. Cllr Gilbank acknowledged this.

**1) Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Boettcher and Cllr Swinburne (work commitments).

Parish Council resolved to approve these absences.

No apologies had been received from Cllr S Patterson.

This absence was noted as unapproved.

Parish Clerk reported that he had received an apology from Councillor Morson prior to the start of the January Meeting which had not been sighted prior to the Meeting due to his phone being on silent. Parish Council resolved to retrospectively approve this 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**

Members of the public were invited to raise any issues. The member of the public raised the issue of anti-social behaviour and this was coming from young people who aren't attending the Youth Club but rather those who are hanging around outside. He felt that a Police presence was required whilst the Youth Club is on.

Councillor Wallage informed that several concerns over anti-social behaviour had been raised by residents in the parish plan consultation exercise, In view of this, the Steering Group has invited the PCSO to attend the Parish Plan consultation drop- in session 20 February to discuss residents' concerns and potential actions to address.

Councillor Gilbank stated that the Keely who runs the Youth Club is becoming frustrated around the anti-social behaviour outside of the Youth Club. Councillor Gilbank stated that the behaviour centres around 2 particular young boys who have actually been banned from the Youth Centre. The Police have been made aware but have been unable to do anything at this stage.

Councillor Wallage reiterated that the drop in session on 20 February would provide an opportunity to discuss the current situation with the Police.

#### **4) Minutes**

Councillor Gilbank asked that his views on the content of the minutes be documented. Councillor Gilbank feels that he is victimised throughout the minutes, as there is recording of negative points but his positive input is not minuted.

Parish Council resolved that the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> February 2017 be approved as a correct record.

#### **5) Police Report**

Parish Clerk shared the Police Report with those present.

Councillor Gilbank queried the accuracy of the Report as two reported crimes were not recorded on the Report.

It was difficult to ascertain what period the Report covers so the Parish Clerk agreed to ask for a date range to be included on future Reports.

Parish Council resolved to note the report.

## 6) Finance Report

### Part A: For information:

- **Income:**  
Nil
- **Expenditure**

#### Expenditure previously approved by Parish Council due this month

	Payee	Purpose	Amount
1	M Ramshaw	Parish Clerk net salary – Feb 17	£334.53
2	G Keedy	Project Officer net salary – Feb 17	£368.48
3	Post Office	Combined HMRC liabilities - Feb 17	£175.80
4	D Lewins	Cemetery Gatekeeper Fee – Feb 17	£80.00
5	Durham City Homes	Hire of Arden House – Steering Group 7/12/16 (1 ½ hrs)	£7.50
6	Durham City Homes	Hire of Arden House – Parish Council 15/12/16 (2 hours)	£10.00
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>£976.31</b>

### Part B: Expenditure requiring approval

	Payee	Purpose	Amount	Budget Provision Y/N
7	Mr G Keedy – Project Officer	Prontaprint - 2 x A3 posters for cemetery, 8 x A4 meeting notices.  Wilko Sunderland – Cable Ties.	£23.12	Y
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>£23.12</b>	

## Part C: Bank Balances – For Information

Total Expenditure included above	<b>£999.43</b>
Anticipated current a/c bank balance if all paid	<b>£7296.68</b>
Reserve Account Balance	<b>£15028.48</b>

Parish Council resolved to:

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

## 7) Planning Applications

The Project Officer introduced this new standing Agenda item. The rationale being that Councillors are given an opportunity to formally discuss any of the Planning Applications that are circulated to them via email (via DCC) on a weekly basis. This will assist the Parish Council with evidence towards the application to achieve Foundation Status as it will demonstrate that the Parish Council is having sight of and considering planning applications.

## 8) Renewal of Trade Waste Contract

Parish Clerk informed the Parish Council that after some investigation it was discovered that the current contract with Max Recycle is in place until 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019. The Contract has a renewal clause in it that renews routinely every 3 years unless the appropriate notice is given. To end the Contract now would incur financial penalties.

County Councillor Kellett advised that two neighbouring Parish Councils had some similar issues around their waste contracts.

Councillor Wallage proposed that the Parish Clerk contact the two Parish Councils to ascertain what issues they had experienced and to continue with the current arrangements.

Councillor Gilbank stated that he did not support that proposal, and specifically requested that this be minuted, as it was a duty of the Parish Council to achieve Value for Money with its Contracts for Services. He proposed that we request Max Cycle to provide a copy of the contractual arrangements and consider terminating the agreement with the current contractor.

Parish Council resolved that the current arrangements continue whilst the Parish Clerk investigates problems encountered by the two other Parishes and attempts to clarify the current contractual arrangements without recourse to the contractor.

Councillor Gilbank asked if the Parish Clerk would investigate getting a lock put on the bins as a result of members of the public using the bins for rubbish not related to the Cemetery. Parish Council resolved that the Parish Clerk investigate putting locks on the bins.

### **9) Renewal of Parish Council Insurance**

Parish Clerk reported that he had approached 3 companies for Insurance Quotations. These were WPS, Zurich and the current insurer Came and Company. Zurich and WPS both were unable to give a competitive quotation based on the renewal price from Came and Company.

A small saving was offered if the Parish Council signed up to a 3 year deal with Came and Company against a one year renewal.

Project Officer advised that the War Memorial is now a 'listed' structure. A rebuilding cost quotation needed to be obtained for the purposes of ensuring adequate insurance cover.

Parish Council resolved to: renew the current insurance with Came and Company for a 3 year period at a cost of £368.47 per annum.

### **10) Heritage Garden Annual Maintenance**

The Parish Clerk reported that A Baker's 12 month contract for maintenance was nearing an end. A detailed quotation to extend the contract has been received and was shared with Parish Council. The price remained the same as the previous Year.

Parish Council resolved to extend the current Contract for a further 12 months at a cost of £1578.51.

### **11) Heritage Garden Grant**

Councillor Wallage asked Parish Council to consider spending some of the Heritage Garden underspend on two planters at a cost of £79.00.

Councillor Gilbank asked whether further planters could be purchased for the front of the Heritage Garden fencing.

Parish Council resolved to approve Councillor Wallage's request to purchase a further two planters and for Councillor Gilbank to seek a quotations for further planters along the front fence.

## **12) Parish Councillor Vacancy**

Project Officer explained to Parish Council that there was an advert for the vacancy which ended 10<sup>th</sup> February 2017. There were no applicants.

With full elections in May, Project Officer undertook to contact DCC Electoral Services to establish if this had any bearing on extending the date for receipt of expressions of interest for the casual vacancy to be filled by co-option.

Parish Council resolved to advertise the vacancy again with a further extended deadline, subject to advice received from DCC.

## **13) Cemetery Update: Project Officer to update on current issues.**

Project Officer presented a report on cemetery developments.

A memorial mason had suggested the approach to the stress testing of headstones was inadequate and the training of the identified person to carry out the task was not sufficient. In response to the representation, Project Officer had shared the Parish Council's proposed approach with the Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management and they confirmed the approach being adopted was sound.

Parish Council resolved to continue with the agreed approach detailed in the Project Officer's report.

The Cemetery Maintenance Contract is currently being re-tendered with Durham County Council's support. Project Officer informed Parish Council that the bid information was ready to go out to prospective contractors. It is envisaged that a recommendation from DCC for appointing a contractor (based upon price assessment) would be brought to the March Meeting of the Parish Council for consideration.

Parish Council resolved to note the update and approve the approach outlined.

An email had been received from a member of the public that some saplings were encroaching close to their property adjacent to the Cemetery. Project Officer met with the member of the public and the issue centred on 3 saplings.

Project Officer informed Parish Council that there are no tree preservation orders within the Cemetery. Councillor Clifford offered to take the trees down and treat the base to kill off the roots.

Parish Council resolved for this action to be carried out by Councillor Clifford at no cost to the Parish Council.

## **14) Parish Plan**

Councillor Wallage informed Parish Council that there is to be a Public Consultation Drop in Session at Jubilee Hall on 20<sup>th</sup> February between 15:30 and 18:30. The purpose of the session was to feedback on what the community said in response to questions asked through the 3 surveys undertaken and discuss potential actions

required for inclusion in the plan. All councillors were asked to raise awareness and encouraged to attend.

**15) General correspondence**

NALC Email 8/2/17 – Parish Polls Parish Council noted contents.

Co Durham Association of Local Councils:

Annual Returns and Reserves Training – 15<sup>th</sup> March 2017

Parish Council resolved that Parish Clerk attend the Training at a cost of £27.00.

Email received from Councillor Boettcher 16<sup>th</sup> February 2017:

An email received from Councillor Boettcher was circulated regarding traffic issues around the School.

Parish Council felt the issues highlighted had already been addressed and the appropriate measures as outlined in the Village Newsletter were being put in place.

Parish Council noted the contents of Councillor Boettcher’s email but did not agree to ask for further assistance from the County Council. Parish Clerk to inform Councillor Boettcher.

**16) To agree date and time of next meeting:**

Councillor Haddick asked if meetings could be moved back to 19:00 as Arden House no longer appeared to be in regular use prior to 19:30.

Date of next Parish Meeting; Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> March 2017 at Arden House – 19:30.

Parish Clerk agreed to check on availability of Arden House at 19:00 for future Meetings.

MR  
10<sup>th</sup> March 2017