

# West Rainton Parish Council

**Minutes of meeting held on**

**Thursday 18 October 2018**

**At Arden House, West Rainton**

**Present:** Councillors M Boettcher, I Diggory, M Gilbank, I Haddick, G Storey, A Wallage (Chairman)

**In attendance:** M Ramshaw, Parish Clerk and G Keedy, Project Officer. County Councillor B Kellett  
1 member of the public

NOTE: The meeting was not audio or video recorded.

## **1) Apologies**

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillors P Lowrie (family commitments) and P Morson (work 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**

No issues were raised.

## **4) Minutes**

**Parish Council resolved** that the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup> September 2018 be approved as a correct record.

Cllr Gilbank informed the meeting that he wished to defer the item on the provision of a defibrillator to the next Parish Council meeting.

## 5) FINANCE REPORT

### Part A: For information:

- **Income:**  
 £75.00 RGR Memorials Ltd re: memorial fee (MA)  
 £150.00 McGeever re: Interment of JLA cremated remains  
 £250.00 West Rainton and Leamside Partnership return of unspent Grant

- **Expenditure**  
**Expenditure previously approved by Parish Council due this month**

	<b>Payee</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Amount</b>
1	M Ramshaw	Parish Clerk net salary – October 2018	£384.52
2	G Keedy	Project Officer net salary – October 2018	£378.36
3	HM Revenue and Customs Only	Combined HMRC liabilities - October 2018	£190.80
4	D Lewins	Cemetery Gatekeeper Gratuity Payment – October 2018	£80.00
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>£1033.68</b>

### Part B: Expenditure requiring approval

	<b>Payee</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Budget Provision Y/N</b>
5	Durham City Homes	Arden House Room Hire 2 hrs 20/9/18	£10.00	Y
6	Jones Boyd (Durham) Ltd.	Payroll maintenance – 1/10/18 to 31/12/18	£90.00	Y
7	Smith of Derby	Service Visit – Church Clock	£246.00	Y

		27/9/18		
8	G Keedy	Project Officer re- imbursement Stamps 2 <sup>nd</sup> x 12 £6.96 A-Z divider £6.00 Ring binder x 2 and Punch Pockets £2.40	£15.36	Y
9	Project Officer re- imbursement –	memorial plaque (incl. delivery) – Cornish Stone, Newquay	£113.95	Y
10	A Baker	HeritageGarden Maintenance	£249.50	Y
11	Durham County Council	Demolition Application	£150	Y
12	M Ramshaw	Re-imbursement Remembrance Day Wreath (Royal Legion)	£17.00	Y
TOTAL			<b>£891.81</b>	

### Part C: Bank Balances – For Information

Total Expenditure included above	<b>£1925.49</b>
Anticipated current a/c bank balance if all paid	<b>£22784.37</b>
Reserve Account Balance	<b>£15038.22</b>

### Parish Council resolved to:

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

## **6) Budget 2018/19 – Q2 Position Statement**

The Parish Clerk referred members to the previously circulated position statement. There were no queries on the information and the budget is in a good position and spending remains on target. **Parish Council resolved** to note the position statement.

## **7) Planning Applications**

Cllr Wallage informed the meeting that she had been approached by a resident of the Parish who was questioning why wagons were coming through the village. Cllr Wallage spoke to the Senior Strategic Planning Officer from Durham County Council who advised that conditions relating to the restoration of the landfill Site at Marks Quarry had been relaxed so that incoming wagons could travel through the village but this should ease once the soil transportation stops. Cllr Wallage expressed her concerns that planning conditions are being agreed but then being relaxed with no consultation at local level. **Parish Council resolved** to approve that Cllrs Wallage and Haddick correspond with Durham County Council expressing the Parish Council's concerns.

Cllr Gilbank questioned the soil that is being used and what checks it has with regards to being contaminated. County Councillor Kellett informed that Durham County Council has monitoring officers who are checking on works regularly.

Cllr Wallage raised that there is a minor discrepancy relating to a planning application and site plan regarding the creation of a garden at Rose Cottage. **Parish Council resolved** that Cllr Wallage contact DCC Planning to inform them of the discrepancy.

## **8) Jubilee Hall**

Cllr Wallage informed the meeting that Durham Sparks are unable to support the Parish Council on a free of charge basis as they are funded for working with Community or Voluntary Groups. Cllr Wallage informed the meeting that a meeting with the Community Association has been delayed due to the holiday commitments of the secretary.

Cllr Storey suggested that the Working Group meet during w/c 22 October to start preparations for future meetings.

Durham Community Action could also offer support to the Parish Council at a charge of £250.00 per day.

County Councillor Kellett offered his support and asked if he could be involved in any future meetings.

## **9) West Rainton Cemetery Maintenance Contract**

The Parish Clerk advised that the current contract expires 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019 and that the contract is unable to be extended further. Parish Council were advised that a fee of £500.00 would be required to renew a Service Level Agreement

with Durham County Council and any subsequent tender exercises would incur additional costs.

The Parish Clerk advised that it would be possible to obtain three quotations from suitably approved contractors identified by DCC for the contract and that Parish Council could utilise the current specification and contractual terms and conditions. **Parish Council resolved to approve** the Parish Clerk to obtain quotations and report them to a future meeting for approval.

### **10) Councillor Resignation / Notification of Vacancy**

Cllr Wallage advised members that she was in receipt of a letter of resignation from Cllr Fisher dated 21<sup>st</sup> September 2018. Electoral Services at DCC had been notified, appropriate notices had been displayed regarding the vacancy and there had been no signatures submitted to Electoral Services regarding any call for an election. As a result of this **Parish Council resolved to approve** the co-option process to fill the vacancy, with a deadline for applicants of 12 noon on 30<sup>th</sup> November 2018. Information to be displayed on notice boards, the Parish website and the Village News.

### **11) Community Governance Review**

The Project Officer informed the meeting that the consultation process concludes on 24 October. The key driver for the review was to reduce the number of Parish Councillors from 11 to 9. Durham County Council's draft recommendations were to support the change however the reduction would not come in force until 2021. **Parish Council resolved to approve** that the Project Officer make representations to Durham County Council to query whether if approved, the reduction in parish councillors could be effective immediately.

### **12) Parish Plan Update**

Cllr Wallage referred to the report that had been circulated with the agenda.

Cllr Wallage referred members to her report regarding outstanding actions relating to litter and dog waste. **Parish Council resolved to approve** the purchase of 6 general waste bins from Durham County Council as detailed in the report.

Cllr Wallage then referred to discussions held with DCC regarding agreed actions to reduce the extensive use of herbicides spraying and improving the area of village green known as the "Rec". During these discussions, DCC had made the suggestion that the large boulders on the "REC" and the 2 small green areas outside the adjacent shops could be removed as they were considered an eyesore and served no useful purpose. The background and outcome of these

discussions had been reported to Parish Council in previous updates on the Parish Plan.

The report reminded members that it had been the intention to carry out a survey of all boulders, in consultation with interested parties, before making any recommendations as to which could be removed. However, DCC have now removed the boulders outside the Cost Cutter and the Big Chef. They have advised that they intend to remove the boulders from the "Rec" as part of a number of planned actions to improve this area. The report advised that before proceeding with these plans, DCC wishes to ensure that the Parish Council is supportive of their actions and proposals for further improvements.

Cllr Gilbank informed the meeting that he was advised by an officer from Durham County Council that Cllr Wallage had instructed DCC to remove the boulders and in so doing she had breached the member Code of Conduct by bringing the council in to disrepute. He advised he would be submitting a complaint to DCC Standards.

He advised that the boulders were in place for safety reasons and that it would be in everyone's best interests to keep them in situ.

Cllr Wallage was clear that she had not given any instructions to Durham County Council to remove the boulders. The boulders are owned by Durham County Council and are situated on Durham County Council land. Action taken to remove boulders at this time was solely down to Durham County Council.

Cllr Gilbank raised his voice and began questioning references in the report to the involvement of residents and demanded to know which residents and where this action had been minuted.

Cllr Haddick proposed a formal warning be issued to Cllr Gilbank due to his behaviour. This was seconded by Cllr Boettcher.

Cllr Boettcher expressed her view that the behaviour of Cllr Gilbank was unacceptable and she asked that it did not continue.

Cllr Haddick proposed that if Cllr Gilbank continued in the same manner, that he be removed from the meeting. This was seconded by Cllr Storey.

Cllr Wallage asked members to focus on the report and consider whether it wished to support DCC action in removing boulders from the "REC", and adjacent business properties, as part of proposals to improve these green spaces.

**Parish Council resolved to agree** that they were in agreement with the removal of the boulders.

This decision was unanimous, with the exception of Cllr Gilbank. In response to this corporate decision, Cllr Gilbank voiced his outrage and requested that it be minuted that he was not in agreement due to the potential safety issues that he considered removal could cause.

Cllr Wallage advised that there are still a lot of outstanding parish plan actions that need to be revisited.

### **13) AAP Parish Councils Meeting**

Cllr Wallage attended the meeting which was chaired by Craig Morgan. The group has been set up for a nominated Parish Council Rep from the group to feed back into the AAP. The purpose of the group was outlined and included informing Parish Councils of funding streams available and how to access them as well as providing an opportunity for support to Parish Councils and their Clerks.

### **14) Field House Open Cast Community Liaison Committee**

Cllr Wallage referred members to the previously circulated minutes of the last committee meeting and gave a verbal update provided by Cllr Morson. There had been 3 protestors on site in August and to date 20000 tonnes of coal have been extracted. There are reports of dust issues however generally the works are reported to be going well. Draft application form being prepared for applications to the Community Fund. Priority to be given to projects/activities which support those most effected by the mining.

Cllr Wallage suspended standing orders to allow County Councillor Kellett to speak. He informed the meeting that he had been on site. He advised there are now large tarmacked and graveled areas and he felt it would be difficult for the site to return to agriculture land. Cllr Kellett has approached the Planning Dept. regarding the noise coming from the site. There have been 3 properties that have been covered in dust. There is also some deep water on the site and there are life buoys in these areas. Only soft coal has been mined so far.

Standing orders were reinstated and Cllr Wallage advised that Community Groups and the Parish Council should be considering potential projects for community funding. This had been raised at the Village Partnership the previous night and it was agreed that now extraction was in full progress it would be an opportune time to remind residents how to raise any concerns.

Cllr Gilbank queried the noise restrictions on the site as he had noted noise at 18:45. Cllr Wallage advised that agreed times of operation are 7.00 am to 7 pm Monday to Friday and 8.00 am to 12 noon Saturday so this could be expected. There are noise monitors around the perimeter of the site.

### **15) WestRainton & LeamsideVillage Partnership**

Cllr Wallage fed back from the WR&LVP meeting. The village show had been reported as a success. Annabel Burns has asked for any volunteers to assist at Remembrance Day events.

An update from the Dementia Steering Group was tabled.

The Dementia Group have applied for funding to make Arden House dementia friendly and the VP has been supporting the breakfast club with grant funding applications.

Each community group, and the parish council, are to be allocated, in turn, a 4 page dedicated space in future editions of Village News to help promote their activities. Parish Council has been allocated the autumn edition next year. This will provide an opportunity to raise the profile of the Parish Council.

### **16) Crime Statistics**

Crime statistics had been circulated prior to the meeting. Cllr Haddick advised the meeting that he had liaised with Sgt. Hall and the Inspector regarding the anti-social behaviour in the village and in particular PCSO not being present in the village at appropriate times. Cllr Haddick informed the meeting that this will be made a priority.

Cllr Gilbank informed the meeting that he had attended the 'Meet the Detectives' event. There was a lot of free information and gadgets available for residents. Cllr Gilbank asked if it was something that the Parish Council could support. It was felt that it could be something the Dementia Friendly Steering Group could pick up.

Cllr Gilbank to pass Cllr Wallage the details and Cllr Wallage will raise it at the Village Partnership meeting.

### **17) General Correspondence**

There were no items of general correspondence to raise.

### **18) Date and Time of Next Meeting**

**Parish Council resolved** to approve that the next Meeting of the Parish Council be held on Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> November 2018 at 7.00pm at Arden House, West Rainton.



## **CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS:**

Parish Council resolved to exclude the press and public from the following item in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 (Section 2)

### **19) Village Green Encroachment**

After discussion, **Parish Council resolved** to agree that the Parish Clerk follow-up the approach for legal advice.

### **20) Cemetery: Demolition of Brick Building**

Cllr Haddick advised that a bid for S106 monies had been successful and these would be used for the demolition and a notice board for the cemetery. **Parish Council resolved** to approve the lowest bid of £4234 +VAT for the demolition works and asbestos removal - received from Ken Thomas Site Clearance Ltd. This represented best financial value from the three quotations received.

**Parish Council resolved** to liaise with cemetery neighbours re the works.