

# West Rainton & Leamside Parish Council

## Minutes of meeting held on

At 19:00 on Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> March 2021

(Remote Meeting Via Zoom Technology –

Permissible under Sec 78 of the Corona Virus Act 2020)

**Present:** Councillors M Boettcher, I Diggory, I Haddick (Chairperson), B Kellett, M Gilbank & A Wallage

**In attendance:**

M Ramshaw, Parish Clerk

NOTE The meeting was not audio or video recorded.

### 1) Apologies

No apologies had been received prior to the meeting.

Cllr Lowrie and Cllr Morson were not in attendance and had not submitted any apologies.

**Parish Council resolved** to not 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 members of the public were present.

### 4) Minutes

**Parish Council resolved** to approve the previously circulated amended minutes from the Parish Council meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> February 2021.

### 5) Finance Report

PART

A: FOR INFORMATION

1. INCOME Nil

2. EXPENDITURE

A) Expenditure previously agreed by Parish Council due this month

ITEM	PAYEE	PURPOSE	AMOUNT (£)	CHEQUE NO.
1	M Ramshaw	Parish Clerk Net Salary - March	398.70	303145

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2	HM Revenue and Customs Only 465PD00171320	HMRC Liability- March	99.60	303146
3	Special Branch Tree Services	Cemetery Grounds Maintenance February 2021	308.40	303147
<b>TOTAL</b>			£806.70	

**B) Expenditure requiring approval**

ITEM	PAYEE	PURPOSE	AMOUNT (£)	BUDGET PROVISION	CHEQUE NO.
4	Durham County Council	Christmas Tree & Light Installation	10958.48	Y	303148
5	M Ramshaw	Reimbursement Zoom subscription 14/3/21-13/4/21	14.39		303149
6	SLCC	Membership Renewal	112.00	Y	303150
<b>TOTAL</b>			£11,084.87		

**Total Expenditure A + B**      £11,891.57

**Parish Council resolved to:**

1. Note expenditure information.
2. Approve expenditure listed in Part B.

**6) Planning Applications**

Cllr Haddick referred members to the one planning application that had been submitted to DCC within the West Rainton & Leamside Parish area. Parish Council had no comments on the proposal.

**7) Annual Review of Cemetery Fees and Charges**

The Parish Clerk referred members to the previously circulated report. **Parish Council resolved** to approve the recommendation and increase fees by 2% from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021.

**8) Cemetery Gates**

Cllr Haddick advised members that there continues to be some difficulties for people accessing the cemetery due to the gates. The gates are heavy and difficult to open for some people. He went on to say that the gates are often left open. Cllr Wallage felt that professional advice was needed on servicing/maintenance and or other options to make access easier. Cllr Gilbank advised that a local blacksmith who had worked on the gates in the past was from the Durham area. The Parish Clerk was asked to contact some blacksmiths/ironmongers with a view to obtaining quotations to rectify the problem.

**9) Proposed Diversion of Footpath no.18 – Funding Application**

Cllr Haddick advised that he had been approached by Cllr Hall, regarding the potential sponsoring of a project to divert this footpath. This would require Parish Council to approve the submission of a grant funding bid to the AAP. However, this is now not necessary, as an

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alternative way of progressing this has been established which did not now require Parish Council input.

### **10) Correspondence from WR&L Green Group**

Cllr Wallage referred members to the previously circulated correspondence from the Green Group. Cllr Wallage reminded members that the Green Group was the lead organisation on an agreed action in the Parish Plan, relating to consideration of ways of reducing herbicide spraying in the village.

The correspondence centred on the proposed flagstones under the planters, tree stumps throughout the village and the plans for the newly planted trees.

Cllr Haddick advised that Parish Council had previously agreed to the laying of flagstones underneath all planters, however the contractor approached to price and do the work was unable to commit. Martin Briscoe from DCC had been asked for a price to do the work but this had not yet been received.

Cllr Gilbank queried whether any of the planters were on registered Village Green as this would be illegal. Cllr Wallage advised that there were currently two of the old wooden barrels on the green on South Street, but that these are not being retained. They were only planted up with winter bedding as there were some spare plants. There are no other planters on Village Green.

Cllr Haddick advised that the trees in front of the cemetery were being replaced by DCC as the original ones had died. There was some discussion around using bark around the foot of the trees to negate the need for the spraying of herbicides. Cllr Haddick suggested that DCC be asked to put bark down when they replaced the dead trees.

Parish Council resolved to approve the use of barking chippings around the 12 newly planted trees and to liaise with DCC on this

Parish Council then considered the tree stumps that the Green Group had asked about removing to lessen the spraying around them.

Members concluded that Parish Council could only make decisions on the location of stumps in areas for which they had some responsibility for i.e. the open cemetery and areas of registered village green on South Street/North Street.

Parish Council resolved to obtain quotes for the removal of stumps on South Street/North Street and to consider removal of those in the cemetery at a future date. In the interim, spraying could be regulated by the council's ground maintenance contractor.

Any other tree stump removal proposed by the Green Group would need approval from the land owner. Parish Council did not consider the removal of stumps outside the doctors surgery was necessary as it was thought these were primarily shrubs that had been cut right back to try and tidy up the area.

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Parish Council resolved that the Parish Clerk write to the Green Group advising that Parish Council will seek a quote for removal of any tree stumps on Village Green and advise that they write to the appropriate land owners regarding the removal of any other tree stumps.

### **11) Dog Fouling**

Cllr Haddick informed members that the problem of dog fouling and people not picking up appears to be increasing across the village in all areas.

Cllr Kellett advised if additional bins that were required he could support this, but advised that DCC had certain criteria that needed to be met before they would consider installing more. Cllr Wallage referred members to the information circulated prior to the meeting. In speaking to DCC, in order to get more warden patrols around the village more evidence was required from DCC to trigger these. The evidence required comes from the number of reports they receive from residents to help identify hotspots.

Cllr Wallage felt that a parish council campaign may be useful especially as there may be some confusion around using the general black waste bins which can be used for bagged dog waste too.

Parish Council agreed it was important to demonstrate to residents that the council was aware of the problem and is taking steps to try and help address the problem. **Parish Council resolved to approve** the bag it and bin it campaign using the posters previously circulated.

Cllr Gilbank queried whether a covert camera could be installed in areas where there are problems. Cllr Haddick advised that there were lots of conditions attached to the installation of cameras and they would need to be put up by DCC as Parish Council are unable to do this. Cllr Wallage suggested that the PC should be encouraging dog owners to pick up every time, not just when they are being watched.

Cllr Wallage advised that if additional bins are required these would need to be installed with DCCs agreement as they would be responsible for the emptying and maintenance of them. It was noted that the map circulated with proposed locations of existing and proposed new dog bins did not cover the whole parish or the location of existing black general waste bins. Consideration of the need for more bins was therefore deferred.

After some further discussion **Parish Council resolved to delegate** authority to the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Parish Clerk to finalise the campaign narrative and posters with a view to publishing an article in the Village News, Village Partnership Facebook page and Parish Council Website and to get posters/stickers printed for display throughout the Village.

### **12) Complaints Policy and Procedure**

**Parish Council resolved to approve** the previously circulated policy with no comments.

### **13) West Rainton & Leamside Village Partnership**

Cllr Wallage referred members to the previously circulated feedback.

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She advised that the defibrillator was being installed 12<sup>th</sup> April outside the Jubilee Hall and that a CCTV camera was being installed above it for security.  
A smallchurch blessing service is being considered for the Miners Banner once COVID restrictions are lifted and a community celebration launch and picnic event (similar to the Big Lunch) is being planned for July.

The next edition of the Village News has an editorial deadline for articles on 25<sup>th</sup> April. Cllr Kellett advised members of the link2link transport service for people who live more than 600m or 10 minutes' walk away from a bus stop. It was noted that this has previously been promoted on the Parish Councils website and in Village news but perhaps regular reminders to residents of the service may be helpful.

**14) Smaller Councils Forum**

Cllr Boettcher advised that there was nothing to share.

**15) Annual Parish Meeting**

Due to the current pandemic situation, no in-person meetings can be held although legislation is due to expire on 6<sup>th</sup> May 2021 which allows for remote meetings. The Parish Clerk advised of the potential difficulties in holding an in person meeting given the current restrictions which include availability of Covid compliant safe venues and restrictions on numbers.

**Parish Council resolved** to agree to hold a virtual Annual Parish Meeting via Zoom on 4<sup>th</sup> May at 18:30.

**16) General Correspondence**

No general correspondence to table.

**17) Date and Time of Next Meeting**

Parish Council noted the next Parish Meeting to be held 15<sup>th</sup> April 2021 at 19:00. The Meeting will be held with due regard to Government guidance regarding the Covid 19 pandemic.

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