

# West Rainton & Leamside Parish Council

## Minutes of meeting held on

At 19:00 on Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> April 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, P Lowrie, P Morson (from 19:06) & 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 Gilbank and Cllr Morson were not in attendance and had not submitted any apologies.

**Parish Council resolved** to not approve these absences.

Parish Clerk note: Cllr Morson was in attendance from 19:06 and therefore not absent.

**2) Declarations of interest**

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

**3) Remote Meeting Policy**

The Parish Clerk referred members to the Draft Virtual Meeting Procedure which had been circulated. Whilst a decision on the future of remote/virtual meetings was expected soon it was felt that the procedure sets out what happens on a virtual meeting as well as covering some 'etiquette'. **Parish Council resolved** to approve the procedure.

**4) Public Participation**

No members of the public were present.

**5) Minutes**

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

Signature.....

Date.....

## 6) Finance Report

### PART

A: FOR INFORMATION

1. INCOME Precept / LCTRS 2021/22 £38,513.00

Additional LCTRS Grant £81.48

### 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 - April 2021	398.70	303151
2	HM Revenue and Customs Only 465PD00171320	HMRC Liability - April 2021	99.60	303152
3	Special Branch Tree Services	Cemetery Maintenance	339.24	303153
4	Special Branch Tree Services	Maintenance of overhanging trees (Cemetery)	720.00	303154
<b>TOTAL</b>			1557.54	

#### B) Expenditure requiring approval

ITEM	PAYEE	PURPOSE	AMOUNT (£)	BUDGET PROVISION	CHEQUE NO.
5	M Ramshaw	Reimbursement - Zoom Subscription 14/4-13/5/21	14.39	y	303155
6	G Coates	Heritage Garden maintenance (7 hours)	70.00	y	303156
7	Jones Boyd (Durham) Ltd.	Payroll Maintenance 1/4-30/6/21	90.00	y	303157
<b>TOTAL</b>			174.39		

**Total Expenditure A + B** 1731.93

### Parish Council resolved to:

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

## 7) 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.

### **8) Proposed relocation of the Russell Foster Football Centre**

Cllr Haddick advised members that the development is still at the pre-planning stage with a planning application likely to be submitted at the end of April 2021. The proposal is a substantial development for the area which will impact on footfall, noise, traffic, parking etc. Cllr Wallage felt that Parish Councillors should be prepared to consider the application and all supporting information posted on the planning portal once notification of its submission was circulated to help prepare a formal response based on residents' concerns.

### **9) Parish Councillor Vacancies**

The Parish Clerk advised there had been no expressions of interest for the long standing vacancies. This has now be overtaken by the elections: Only 3 nominees were received by DCC for the 9 places available and consequently there was no need for an election to be held. The 3 nominees duly elected as Parish Councillors, uncontested, are existing Parish Councillors Maureen Boettcher, Ian Haddick and Avril Wallage. The six vacancies will be advertised and filled through the Parish Council's co-option process after the elected councillors formerly take up office at the May Parish Council meeting.

### **10) 2020/21 Budget – Q4 Bank Reconciliation**

The Parish Clerk referred members to the Q4 bank reconciliation. This piece of work shows that income and outgoings balance with the bank balance at the time of the bank reconciliation. Parish Council noted the bank reconciliation.

### **11) Budget Position - Q4 2020/21**

The Parish Clerk referred members to the previously circulated document which outlines the budget position for the end of Q4. Overall the Parish Council is in a strong financial position. There were no questions on the budget position. Parish Council noted the budget position.

### **12) Risk Management Strategy**

#### **a) Annual Review of Risk Management Strategy**

The Parish Clerk referred members to the previously circulated document. Whilst the Strategy was mostly the same as previous years, it was felt that the Annual Risk Assessment should be separated away from the strategy to allow Parish Council to monitor and review risks on a more regular basis.

Cllr Diggory made a number of comments about the strategy and methodology set out in the documentation and thought it was overkill.

**Parish Council resolved** to note the updated strategy.

#### **b) Consideration of Annual Risk Assessment 2020/21**

The Parish Clerk advised members that the document had been reviewed and risk around Covid19 had been included.

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Date.....

Cllr Diggory commented that he felt there were some inconsistencies in the risk assessment rankings. He advised that he has experience in the field and was happy to send some comments through to the Parish Clerk.

**Parish Council resolved** to note the risk assessment for 2020/21

### **13) Policy for dealing with vexatious, persistent and abusive contact and complaints**

The Parish Clerk referred members to the previously circulated policy. This was the approved policy from 2016 which has been updated and the Parish Clerk advised that there was a particular addition around the process of reporting such a complaint to Parish Council and how that should be dealt with. **Parish Council resolved** to approve the Policy.

### **14) Appointment of Internal Auditor**

The Parish Clerk informed members that Parish Council needed to appoint an internal auditor. The Parish Clerk advised that Annette Simpson from A S Accounting Services was available to do the audit as she had done in previous years. Parish Council resolved to agree the appointment of A S Accounting Services to carry out the internal Audit.

### **15) Village Planters – Parish Council to consider:**

#### **a) Quotation and update on base for planters**

The Parish Clerk advised that two quotations had been received for the installation of flag stone bases and the levelling of planters. The initial quote from Durham County Council was £8503.00. A further quotation was received via DCC from one of their contractors which was £4050.00. A third quote was not available, After consideration of the timescales and the advantage of procuring the work via DCC, **Parish Council resolved** to approve the lower quote.

#### **b) Quotation for summer bedding plants**

The Parish Clerk advised that Leamside Nursery had been approached for prices of summer bedding plants for the planters, the village signs and the Heritage Garden. Leamside offer the option of temporary local storage of plants which is useful while the planting takes place. Prices were either £1.50 or £2.00 a tray depending on type of plant.

The Parish Clerk advised that following consultation with the Chair, an order had been placed for 250 trays of mixed plants as this needed to be submitted asap to ensure the availability of sufficient supply when planting is due to be carried out.

**Parish Council resolved** to approve this action.

### **16) Cemetery – Parish Council to consider request for grave surround installation**

The Parish Clerk advised members that a request had been made to install a small wooden fence around a baby's grave in the children's burial area (top left hand corner of the cemetery). This request was not in accordance with the council's grave adornment policy. **Parish Council resolved** to approve the installation of the fence subject to the owner being advised that the Parish Council would not accept any liability for any damage to the fence, which may arise from grass cutting and strimming, and that should it be considered that the fence becomes a health & safety risk, the position would be need to be reviewed

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

No meeting has taken place. Next meeting is the AGM.

### **18) Smaller Councils Forum**

No meeting has taken place. Next meeting is 18<sup>th</sup> May 2021.

### **19) General Correspondence**

The Parish Clerk advised there were four items to mention.

- A member of the public raised a number of environmental concerns regarding the area in and around the GP Surgery, including the state of a footpath and parking of vehicles off-road. The information has been passed to County Councillor Hall as he has had previous involvement with some of the issues. In response, Cllr Hall has shared the concerns with the appropriate officers at DCC asking them to look into the issues. He has asked the PC to monitor the area and to let him know if things haven't improved in 3 months. Members questioned whether this timescale was appropriate and Cllr Kellett advised he would pick the issues up also.
- Licensing Sub Committee Response – The Parish Clerk referred to the documentation previously circulated relating to the decision of the DCC Licensing Sub Committee regarding the application for a new license for the Three Horse Shoes. It was noted that it transpired that the application for the new license was only a minor deviation from the existing one. Cllr Wallage outlined the process which led to the application being considered by the Licensing Sub Committee, which she attended on behalf of the Parish Council after Councillors raised some concerns. It was unfortunate that the Parish Council's comments on the application could not be submitted earlier in the consultation period. Had this been the case, more information regarding the application could have been shared and any remaining concerns discussed with the applicant and licensing officers rather than the council's response having to be dealt with as a formal objection to the application.
- A member of the public has donated a sign for the Heritage Garden which is now on display.
- The Big Lunch event has been cancelled again due to the pandemic and the grant will therefore not be required.

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

Parish Council noted the next Parish Meeting to be held 13<sup>th</sup> May 2021 at 19:00. The Meeting will be held with due regard to Government guidance regarding the Covid 19 pandemic.

Signature.....

Date.....