

## NORTH LODGE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of North Lodge Parish Council held at Park View School, Lombard Drive, Chester-le-Street on Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> July 2015.

PRESENT: Chairman: Cllr. D. Snaith  
Councillors: Mrs. M. Caygill, Mrs. E. Forrester, Mrs. M. May,  
Mrs. C. Walton, D. Hall, C. Noble-Nesbitt,  
J. Waugh.

County Councillor: P. May.

Clerk: Mr. D. Murrell.

A Resident.

The meeting commenced at 6.30pm with the Chairman welcoming everyone.

### **Item 1. 15/84 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for Absence were received from Councillor Dr. D. Hartley.

### **Item 2. 15/85 Declarations of Interest**

Cllr. Mrs. Caygill declared an interest as a Governor of Park View School.

### **Item 3. 15/86 Report of the County Councillor**

The Chairman invited the County Councillor to give his report which included the matters contained in his written report attached (Appendix 1).

Re seating, the Clerk will remind the County Council that the former seat at Northlands bus shelter is to be installed at Low Flatts play area.

The Chairman thanked the County Councillor for his report.

### **Item 4. 15/87 Adoption of Minutes of Meeting**

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> June 2015, draft copies of which had been previously circulated, were adopted as a true and accurate record of the Meeting and were duly signed by the Chairman.

### **Item 5. 15/88 Chairman's Report**

a) Re Minute 15/70. Re inconsiderate parking at school leaving time, an email had been received from the Headteacher, Park View School, setting out his concerns. This was discussed by Councillors. The Clerk is to reply to the Headteacher acknowledging his comments and asking that he write to parents/guardians to seek their co-operation in parking with consideration for the safety of others.

b) Re Minute 15/72 section c). Re emergency vehicle sirens, Cllr. Mrs. Caygill advised that two residents had taken this up with the MP.

c) Re Minute 15/73 section b). County Cllr. May confirmed that he will be inviting the Neighbourhood Wardens to a Parish Council meeting and will be pursuing an outstanding request for new dog waste/general waste bins for Picktree Lodge.

d) Re Minute 15/73 section c). Re the complaint from a resident of County Council trees overgrowing into his property, Cllr. Mrs. Caygill advised that the County Council's policy was to take no action in such matters. However, another resident had very kindly cut back the trees.

The Chairman advised that he would have internet access and voicemail at his property by early August.

### **Item 6. 15/89 Portfolio Holders' Reports**

The Chairman invited Cllr. Mrs. Walton to give her report.

#### **a) Horticulture**

Cllr. Mrs. Walton began by thanking Cllr. Mrs. May for all her hard work during the previous weeks. Their report included the matters contained in the written report attached (Appendix 2). Re stolen plants at Northlands bus shelter, the Clerk will advise the Police.

The Chairman thanked Cllr. Mrs. Walton and Cllr. Mrs. May for their report and invited Cllr. Noble-Nesbitt to give his report.

#### **b) Highways and Website**

Cllr. Noble-Nesbitt's report included the following matters.

- a) The County Council intended, at some point soon, to change the website password.
- b) The Newsletter was now ready for delivery and Councillors were urged to deliver to their allotted areas as soon as possible.
- c) Items 2, 4 and 6 from last month's report had been attended to by the County Council.
- d) County Cllr. May advised that, on the path from Lyndhurst Avenue to the steps near to the Northlands bus shelter, two lights were obscured by overhanging trees. The footpath surface was deteriorating and the County Cllr. would be taking up these matters with the County Council.
- e) Councillors discussed the growing number of temporary advertising signs appearing on roadsides in the Parish. County Cllr. May outlined the court process involved for the County Council to obtain an order for such signs to be removed. The Clerk will investigate if there is a policy document on the County Council website.

The Chairman thanked Cllr. Noble-Nesbitt and invited Cllr. Mrs. Caygill to give her report.

#### **c) Play Areas**

Cllr. Mrs. Caygill advised that at Low Flatts, the footpath previously cleared by the Co-op team was again overgrown. The Clerk will ask the Co-op if they would be willing to attend to it again. The copse of trees alongside the A693 was still in need of cleaning and cutting back. The Clerk will again ask the County Council to attend to this. At Merlin Drive, strimming around the play area fence had been carried out, presumably by the County Council. Cllr. Mrs. Caygill would welcome a meeting with the County Council to discuss signage. The Clerk will seek to arrange this. Cllr. Mrs. May expressed concern at the condition of the perimeter fence on the west side. The Clerk will ask the County Council to inspect this. Cllr. Mrs. May advised that the "Jubilee" seat had rusty studs and might need to be replaced. Cllr. Mrs. May suggested that the Probation Service might be able to clean seats throughout the Parish. County Cllr. May suggested that Park View School might take on the upkeep of seats in Lombard Drive.

The Chairman thanked Cllr. Mrs. Caygill.

#### **d) Planning**

The Chairman advised that negotiations were still ongoing re the County Durham Plan. The Government had announced intended changes to planning laws re brown field sites. The County Council was assessing the implications of this.

Councillors thanked the Chairman for his report.

The Chairman invited Cllr. Waugh to give his report.

#### **e) Finance**

Cllr. Waugh gave an up-date of bank balances held by the Parish Council and asked Councillors to put forward proposals for projects.

The Chairman thanked Cllr. Waugh and invited Cllr. Mrs. Forrester to give her report.

#### **f) Publicity**

Cllr. Mrs. Forrester's report included the matters contained in her written report attached (Appendix 3).

The Chairman thanked Cllr. Mrs. Forrester.

#### **Item 7. 15/90 Correspondence**

1) From North Lodge Residents Association

Email re grass cutting at Merlin Drive play area.

2) From Park View School

Email re parking in Lombard Drive.

3) From BDO LLP

Email re outstanding Audit review points.

The Auditor had observed that the County Council had remitted £10 less than requested by the Parish Council re the 2014/2015 Precept and Council Tax Support Grant. However, the Auditor did not consider this to be a major issue.

4) From the North East Combined Authority

Update re stakeholder engagement on devolution.

5) From Durham Constabulary

Email re youth gathering on 7<sup>th</sup> July 2015.

6) From Highways England

Email re land ownership at Barley Mow

7) From the County Durham Association of Local Councils

a) Agenda for the Chester-le-Street Sub-Committee meeting held on Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> June 2015.

b) Agenda for the Smaller Local Councils Forum meeting to be held on Friday 24<sup>th</sup> July 2015.

c) Email re Durham County Council Contaminated Land Inspection Strategy consultation.

8) From Durham County Council

a) Email re Durham County Pension Fund consultation on Funding Strategy Statement and Statement of Investment Principles.

b) Email re update of County Durham Strategic Housing Land Assessment.

9) Various planning applications, approvals and refusals from Durham County Council, of which the following was within North Lodge Parish:-

Application for single storey rear extension, at 1 Drum Park.

#### **Item 8. 15/91 Welcome Signs**

The Chairman asked Councillors to give some thought to ideas for types of signs. An additional meeting to discuss these will be arranged at the September meeting of the Parish Council.

**Item 9. 15/92 Payment of Accounts**

<b>TO</b>	<b>AMOUNT</b>	<b>REASON</b>	<b>VAT</b>
Salaries	£480.95	Salaries July 2015	
Expenses	£80.00	Expenses July 2015	
Durham County Pension Fund	£140.11	Pensions July 2015	
Npower Northern Ltd	£21.73	Power for Christmas Lights	£3.62
Pot-It-On	£470.00	Horticulture	

(**Resolved** - the payments be approved as submitted).

**Item 10. 15/93 Other Matters for Information**

- a) Cllr. Mrs. May had asked a local printer to quote for the production of ID badges for Parish Council representatives on external meetings.
- b) Cllr. Mrs. Forrester gave an up-date re the development of the pond area. The Clerk will again ask the County Council to provide a waste bin for the area.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 8.57pm.

**North Lodge Parish Council**

**Accounts for the month as submitted to the Meeting of North Lodge Parish Council held on Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> September 2015.**

TO	AMOUNT	REASON	VAT
Salaries		Salaries August 2015	
Expenses	£80.00	Expenses August 2015	
Durham County Pension Fund	£140.11	Pensions August 2015	
Salaries		Salaries September 2015	
Expenses	£80.00	Expenses September 2015	
Durham County Pension Fund	£140.11	Pensions September 2015	
HM Revenue & Customs		P.A.Y.E.	
Pot-It-On	£319.56	Horticulture August 2015	
Pot-It-On		Horticulture September 2015	
D. Snaith	£150.00	Chair's Quarterly Allowance	
D. Murrell (via Post Office Ltd)	£24.74	Postage Stamps	
BDO LLP	£120.00	Audit Fee	£20.00
<b><u>Balance to 31<sup>st</sup> July 2015</u></b>			
Balance b/f	£38544.00	Balances at Bank:-	
Deduct Payments - July 2015	<u>£ 1192.79</u>		
	£37351.21		
		Current	£ 1084.44
		30 Day	<u>£36406.88</u>
		Total	£37491.32
		Deduct cheques not yet presented	<u>£ 140.11</u>
Balance c/f	£37351.21		£37351.21

**County Councillor Peter May**  
**North Lodge Parish Council Report July 2015**

## **Polling Stations for North Lodge**

**As the normal venue for the polling station (Wheatsheaf) is no longer available I have been asked to suggest alternatives.**

Grassed area next to the Merlin Drive play area might be considered.

Also the grassed area where Kingsmere joins North Road. They both would require portaloos and generators.

The car park of the Pelaw Grange dog track might be an alternative

The above are being considered

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### **Lombard Drive seating**

Asking the Council to give a price for removing the seats from under the trees at Lombard Drive and resiting with new seats . The old paving to be removed and area reinstated.

**The new seats for Caxton Way/Picktree Lodge.** Pelaw Grange Bus stop and Shields Road have been signed off by me along with the Horticultural plans agreed by the joint Parish and Residents Association group.

### **Bridge at Picktree Lodge**

Asking Council to reinstate area that has been strimmed and to remove old concrete seat base.

### **Woodland behind Picktree plinth.**

Investigated recently by myself and Parish Councillor Maureen May. The area needs clearing up and I am asking the Council to investigate.

### **Overhanging tree at Merlin Drive play area**

Have asked Martin Briscoe to investigate (sent photos) I believe the tree belongs to the house Lough Finn North Lodge.

### **New seating**

Planning to ask for extra seat in Picktree Village

Caxton Way - Picktree Lodge South Path

Newcastle road near bus stop.

### **Closure of County Hall**

**This is the message given to Councillors from the CEO George Garlick**

*Dear colleagues*

*Next week Cabinet will consider a report on the council's approach to office accommodation.*

*As you know, over recent years our top priority has been to stimulate economic growth and regeneration, creating jobs and attracting investment to the county. We are making good progress, with major investments such as Hitachi in Newton Aycliffe and Atom Bank in Durham City.*

*Cabinet will consider a proposal for the council to move its headquarters from County Hall, at Aykley Heads in Durham City so that the area can become a 'strategic employment site', capable of attracting thousands of jobs and millions of pounds of investment to the county.*

*Aykley Heads has already shown its potential in recent years, with Sunderland Marine and Durham Constabulary developing new head offices on the site. They will soon be joined by Atom Bank, who are going to build their UK headquarters on the site, having taken up temporary accommodation in a former council building which we made available to get them to invest in the city.*

*Depending on the outcome of the discussions over the County Durham Plan, we believe that the proposed strategic employment site could create between 2,500 and 6,000 private sector jobs.*

*We will also be proposing to Members that in moving off the site, they should consider relocating the council's headquarters to Durham City centre, in order to support the local economy and to trigger further city centre development and regeneration. This would be accompanied by accommodating more of our office-based staff in the four main office bases we have established in recent years – Crook Civic Centre, Meadowfield Direct Services, Green Lane in Spennymoor and Spectrum 8 in Seaham. This approach would*

*make the most of the council's property assets across the county and help to spread the economic impact of the council's operations.*

*As many of you will know, the existing County Hall is a very large complex, developed in the 1960s when local government was very different. As well as being costly to run and maintain, it is too big for the current size of the council and if we move, we need to ensure that we develop more affordable and suitable accommodation, capable of meeting our future needs. This includes the County Records Office archive, where we are running out of space and need to improve storage.*

*Office workspace and working practices have moved on considerably since the council's main offices were established, so we are also suggesting that if we move, the council should adopt more modern working practices which will improve the way we work, achieve cost savings and ensure that the moves are affordable.*

*The proposed move is clearly a major project and will take some time.*

*Next week, Cabinet will be asked to agree in principle to moving County Hall to Durham City centre to free-up our Aykley Heads site for job creation and investment. If Cabinet agrees, we would then develop an outline business case to look at potential options for the move.*

*Members would consider this towards the end of this year, and if they decide to proceed, we would then develop a detailed business case on their preferred option.*

*A final decision on that, would be made in Spring 2016, after which time we would begin planning in detail for the relocation and moves and changes to the way in which we would need to work.*

*If Cabinet agrees, then I envisage that we are looking at up to four years before we vacate County Hall and we start to see development work at Aykley Heads.*

*We will of course keep you informed as the proposals progress with regular updates and bulletins. We are already planning another round of CMT staff roadshows later this year, when we hope to be able to provide you with more detail, once Cabinet has considered the proposal next week.*

**I wrote to George Garlick opposing the move to the centre of Durham pointing out that we should use this opportunity to help revitalise other areas and not to place the HQ in an already overcrowded city.**

**Spoke at the AAP meeting and the AAP have agreed to ask Durham County Council to consider CLS as an alternative to Durham City**

#### **Noise from 1 Drum Park (Coveris)**

Officers are looking, in the first instance, to abate the current noise issues which is to be followed by the submission of the discharge of condition application that will allow detailed determination of the noise assessment and sound attenuation measures to ensure that the noise levels remain under control for the foreseeable future and residential amenity is protected.

## **HORTICULTURE REPORT NORTH LODGE PARISH COUNCIL 21 July 2015**

### **Picktree Lodge**

- Plinth – Frank has planted flowers in top and in front of plinth. He will edge the half circle and possibly put formal edging around in order to stop soil running on to the grass.
  
- Wall opposite plinth (Sustrains Bridge area) - Frank has strimmed this area which looks very neat. However this area needs County Council attention for tidying to encourage grass regrowth.

- Diamond Bed – Frank has tidied/weeded this rose bed. County Councillor May has agreed to fund this bed to be enlarged by Durham County Council and filled with summer bedding plants around roses. In Autumn/Winter time, Frank will plant winter bedding around roses.
- New diamond bed will be cut out by Durham County Council and they will fill the bed with summer bedding. The bedding will be funded by County Councillor May. In Autumn, when the bedding has died back, roses (same as original diamond bed) and winter bedding will be planted by Frank.

### **Barley Mow**

- Currently only 4 tubs have been received. These have been planted with summer bedding by Frank. Martin Briscoe has been informed that there are still 2 tubs to be delivered.

### **Sustrains Bridge at Wheatsheaf Pub**

- Enquiries have been made by Councillor Forrester to establish if the seeding of wild flowers has been completed. It appears that this area will need re-seeding with better plant seeds.

### **Millennium Bed at Lombard Drive**

- Frank will attend and correct this bed in the school holidays.

### **Merlin Drive Play Area**

- A complaint has been made by a resident that this play park requires strimming around the fence area. As Durham County Council no longer strim, Frank has agreed to strim overgrown grass etc. along the fence which faces the grassed embankment area. As the fence to be strimmed, is the property of Durham County Council, County Councillor May has suggested that permission should be given before the job begins.

### **Lambton Park**

- Frank has filled 2 tubs with summer bedding at Lambton Park and weeded the flower beds etc.

### **Longdean Park**

- Flower bed at top of Longdean Park - Frank will enquire costing for edging around bed in order to stop soil falling away on to the grass. Unfortunately this bed is shaded by the tree which needs possibly trimming.
- Bottom of Longdean Park - Frank will clean and weed behind that bed and seed it in order for him to mow the grass when established.

### **Shrub bed at Lyndhurst Avenue**

- Frank will trim back the shrubs and bushes. Following this, County Councillor May will ask Durham County Council to remove all rubble, debris etc. which was left following the Northlands round-about redevelopment.



- When rubble has been removed by Durham County Council Frank will then attend to and tidy the shrub bed.

### **New Replacement Bus shelter at Northlands**

- Following discussions with Councillor Peter May, Frank and Martin Briscoe, Frank has planted an area of flowers/shrubs etc. around the bus shelter. The remaining area has been grass seeded by Durham County Council (as Turf would be difficult to take, due to the continual watering it would require). A resident adjacent to the bus shelter has kindly offered to help water the grass seed. Unfortunately, we have again had thieving of 2 plants from this bed. Consideration of reporting this to the police should be given.

### **Picktree Village**

Thanks are given to Mr & Mrs Kirkup and other Residents in Picktree Village for maintaining the flower beds in their village which look very attractive.

**All requested flower beds within the Parish have now been installed by Durham County Council and are looking very attractive.**

**Thanks also to all Residents and the Resident's Association for helping to look after our floral decorations within the Parish.**

### **Information**

At a meeting held on 07 July 2015, Councillor Walton, Councillor May and the Parish Gardener Frank Leighton have formulated an action plan for Horticulture within the Parish.

#### **It has been agreed that:**

- New timesheets to be printed. Completed ones will be delivered by Frank to Councillor Walton on a weekly basis.
- Councillor Walton, Councillor May and Frank Leighton will meet on the second Wednesday of each month. Frank will submit his monthly Invoice for work at this meeting. All documents will then be photocopied and delivered to David Murrell, Parish Council Clerk. Also at this meeting, progress and plans for the following month will be discussed.
- **NB:** Planting of flowers/summer bedding etc. has been identified as a priority at present.
- Frank has requested that if anyone wishes to plant any of their own plants into flower/shrub beds, he would be grateful if they would firstly liaise with himself or the Portfolio Holders in order to avoid any 'choking' of the existing plants.

A revised job description has been drawn up for Frank Leighton, Pot-It-On.

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