

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 17th September 2019.

PRESENT: Chairman: Councillor Jackie Gregory.

Councillors: Margaret Caygill, Elsie Forrester, Maureen May, Patrick Driscoll, Dennis Hall, Colin Noble-Nesbitt, John Waugh.

County Councillor: Craig Martin.

Clerk: David Murrell.

The Chairman commenced the meeting by welcoming everyone back after the summer recess.

Item 1. 19/83 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for Absence were received from Councillor David Snaith.

Item 2. 19/84 Declarations of Interest

Councillor Margaret Caygill declared an interest as a Governor of Park View School.

Item 3. 19/85 Report of the County Councillor

The Chairman invited County Councillor Craig Martin to give his report which included the matters contained in his written report below -

Fir Tree Northlands Roundabout

The living Christmas Tree located on Northlands roundabout has sadly died. What was left of it has been removed. The planting of a permanent tree was intended to be a more sustainable and cheaper alternative to having a disposable one.

The Council's Clean and Green team do not like to watch a project fail and will be funding another tree, rather than out of my own neighborhood budget. When questioning the Council over the reasons it failed, it was indicated that more could have been done to keep the tree alive.

The new fir tree will be smaller and grown from a pot, to give it the best chance possible to bed in. I do not want to watch another tree die as that is not a sustainable solution.

The Durham Miners Association Funding

July's Cabinet tabled a report requesting just over £1 million from Durham County Council to refurbish Redhills. This miner's hall that hosted the Pitman's Parliament is in major need of substantial repairs. The funding is part a bid totaling almost £7 million, with money expected to come from the National Lottery Heritage Fund.

We discovered that the organisation responsible for running Redhills has it written into their constitution to support the Governing Political Group. Legal queries were made questioning that the Council's money should not be spent on groups that actively support a specific political party. We were deeply concerned about the bias involved in our current Cabinet making this decision.

The funding is to be granted on the basis that a new organisation is setup to run the hall that has no structural political bias. Worth noting that there is funding out there for local historical projects from the Council, just depends on who you are.

Cllr Craig Martin

In addition, 1) The County Cllr will give consideration to funding repair of the footpath between Lyndhurst Avenue and North Road. 2) Re the bus stop towards the west end of Vigo Lane, the County Cllr understood that a shelter would be provided by a bus company.
The Chairman thanked the County Councillor for his report.

Item 4. 19/86 Adoption of Minutes of Meeting

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on Tuesday 16th July 2019, 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. 19/87 Chairman's Report

The Chairman's report included the matters contained in her written report below -

Chairman's Report

I welcome back the Councillors after the summer recess.

Around the Parish, many summer gardening area's looked good however, one or two needing attention.

Highways England have not recommence the planned work on the bridges in the Picktree Lodge area therefore, the Parish Council has had no option other then to inform the local MP. The Council looks forward to receiving his comments.

Durham Constabulary has introduced a new format where members of the public can inspect recorded crimes not only for local areas but nationwide ones too.

Unfortunately, Mr Ron Hogg, The Police, Crime and Victims Commissioner for Co Durham has announced that he is unwell and will be taking some time away from the post. He has requested that the post is temporary filled.

I am sure that we all wish him well.

Councillors thanked the Chairman for her report.

Regarding outstanding matters -

a) Re Minute 19/77. The Chairman updated Councillors re responses to various requests made by the Council for attention to be given to overhanging trees along North Road. The County Cllr will take up with the County Council trees on the A693 (lamppost 2373) that had not yet been attended to.

b) Re Minute 19/77 section c). The Chairman and Clerk will provide, for consideration when setting the Precept, a report re the potential employment of a part-time Warden.

c) Re Minute 19/77 section d). Re the notice board at Merlin Drive, the Clerk advised that the supplier had now agreed to provide a replacement at no cost to the Council.

d) Re Minute 19/77 section f). Re a potential health and safety risk at the junction of the new path from the Avant development and North Road, a report was awaited from Cllr Snaith. The Clerk will ask him for his update.

- e) Re Minute 19/77 section g). Re potential health concerns at the Drum pond area, the Clerk will send to the County Cllr a list of concerns.
- f) Re Minute 19/78 section d3). Cllr Driscoll gave an update re canvassing residents of Picktree Village on the provision of battery powered Christmas lights.
- g) Re Minute 19/79 section 4d). Cllr Waugh declared an interest in this matter.

Item 6. 19/88 Portfolio Holders' Reports

The Chairman invited Cllr Caygill to give her report which included the matters contained in her written report below -

a) Play Areas

LOW FLATTS

Equipment appears to be in good order.

The old waste bin has been removed from within the fenced area and this leaves a much cleaner environment. The new positioned bin appears to be used.

At the Sustrans entrance a number of dog waste bins have been dumped again. We should have a notice here.

The young hedging needs to be cleared of weeds once again.

MERLIN DRIVE

Equipment appears to be in good order.

The safety surface is shrinking and has become a serious trip hazard. DCC needs to be made aware once again about this.

I have been informed about a lot of dog waste in the area around the Play Area.

In addition, 1) Re a notice for the Sustrans bridge entrance to Low Flatts play area, Cllr Caygill, the Chairman and the Clerk will together consider this. 2) Cllr Caygill will contact the County Council re the possibility of installing a seat inside the play equipment fence at Low Flatts and 3) re deteriorating safety surfacing at Merlin Drive.

The Chairman thanked Cllr Caygill for her report and invited Cllr Forrester to give her report which included the following matters -

b) Publicity

Cllr Forrester gave an informative report on local matters including The Village Survival Guide, Pledge to Reduce Single Use Plastics, the AAP Meeting 15/07/2019, Community Led Housing, Shop Chester-le-Street Project Update and County Durham Vision 2035.

In addition, 1) Councillors considered that it was necessary to establish a protocol for the death of senior national figures. 2) Cllr Hall considered that the town centre did not offer an attractive proposition to draw people in. The Chair will draft an email to be sent to the AAP outlining concerns about the town centre.

The Chairman thanked Cllr Forrester for her report and invited Cllrs May and Driscoll to give their reports which included the matters contained in the written reports below -

c) Horticulture

NORTH LODGE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

HORTICULTURE REPORT

17 September 2019

Durham County Councils Responsibilities

- **Flower Beds**
All flower beds starting to die back and will soon be emptied in readiness for planting of winter bedding.
 - **Christmas Tree lights in Picktree Village**
Durham County Council (DCC) are unable to help with the installation of battery powered lights into living trees. However John Dent (DCC) has informed us that battery powered lights could be installed by a reputable electrical company if required. Further investigations ongoing.
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Parish Council Responsibilities.

- **Insect Friendly Plants in Parish Tubs**
Presently there are environmental/insect friendly plants planted within the Parish flower tubs at Lambton Park (2) and North Road (6). Next season all tubs will contain such plants.
 - **Blossom Trees at entrance to North lodge, Lambton Park**
Graham Cozens will be contacted in June 2020 for re-assessment of these trees.
 - **Plinth at top of Picktree Lodge**
The area at the front of the plinth has now been seeded and will be cut by Durham County Council
 - **Tubs within Parish**
All tubs have been strimmed.
 - **Non - Registered land at Wheatsheaf Area**
Durham County Council (DCC) have agreed to work with the Parish Council. If agreed, the Parish Gardener will remove top rubbish from area – e.g. nettles etc., DCC will rotovate, and then the Parish Gardener will sow wild seeds.
 - Discussion required for leaf clearing at Lambton Park horticulture beds.
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Environmental Caretaker

- Odour observed at Kingsmere Bus Shelter, North Road. Caretaker swilled shelter with water etc. immediately
- Small amount of graffiti found in Lambton Worm bus shelter, this requires a strong graffiti removal solution for removal.

NORTH LODGE PARISH COUNCIL

YEAR 3 AUDIT

Parish Council/Gardeners Responsibility.

DATE 08/07/19 – 08/09/19

No.	Description	Comment	Present Month/Hrs	Accumulation
		Total Hours	36	36
1	Shrub Bed close to northlands Roundabout.	Weeded, cut back bed and watered	6.5	6.5
3	Tubs at North Road near to Northlands Roundabout.	Strimmed around tubs, weeding, watering and feeding	1.0	1.0
1	Bus Shelter –Northlands (North Bound)	Tidying bus stand, cleaning seat.	1.5	1.5
3	Flower/Shrub Beds (Back and two sides).	Watered flowers and shrubs, plus feeding.	1.0	1.0
1	Checking of Low Flatts Play Area – Hawthorn Hedge.			
1	Flower Bed at entrance to Longdean Park.			
1	Shrub Bed within Longdean Park.			
1	Bus Shelter North Road – opposite Lambton Worm pub (South Bound).	General maintenance.	1.0	1.0
1	Bus Shelter North Road –Lambton Worm pub (North Bound). No flowers	Tidying bus stand. Cleaning seat.	1.5	1.5
2	Raised Shrub Beds North Road	Strimmed edges, weeded beds.	1.5	1.5
2	Flower Beds at entrance to North Lodge (Lambton Park).	Cleared area for seeding, seeded and re- cleared right side, watered flowers and fed	6.5	6.5
2	Tubs at Lambton Park entrance.	Weeded, watered and fed.	0.75	0.75
	Bus Shelter – North Lodge Estate (South Bound). No flowers.	Tidying and maintenance.	1.0	1.0
6	Tubs in North Road. Near to the Living Christmas Tree.	Strimmed around tubs, weeded, watered and fed.	1.0	1.0
1	Millennium Flower Bed at entrance to Lombard drive.	Watered flower bed, plus feeding.	0.75	0.75

No.	Description	Comment Total Hours	Present Month/Hrs	Accumulation
1	Jubilee Tree at Entrance to Lombard Drive.			
3	Tubs in Lombard Drive, - near school	Watered tubs and fed.	0.5	0.5
1	Bus Shelter – North Lodge Estate (North Bound). (Flowers on north side).	Cleaned bus stand and seat, including specific disinfecting of bus stand, watered flowers	2.5	2.5
1	Bus Shelter. Barley Mow Inn (South Bound).	Tidying bus stand, cleaning seat.	1.5	1.5
	Bus Stop. Barley Gate, Vigo Lane. No flowers.			
1	Bus Shelter. Ambleside Court Vigo Lane. (Laurel on West side)	Tidying bus stand and cleaning seat	1.5	1.5
2	Flower Bed around plinth – bottom and top at entrance to Picktree Lodge.	Weeded, prepared and sowed seed around plinth, tidied and watered plants, plus feeding.	3.5	3.5
1	Planting of flowers below wall opposite plinth at entrance to Picktree Lodge.			
1	Bus Shelter (Glass) in Picktree Village.	General cleaning.	1.0	1.0
2	Bus Shelter. Ash Meadows, Picktree Village Flower/shrub bed both sides.	General cleaning.	1.0	1.0
3	Small Shrub/Flower Beds in Picktree Village (opposite Mr & Mrs Kirkup).	Watering flowers and feeding	0.5	0.5
1	Heather Bed at Picktree Village.			
	Daffodil planting.			
	Handyman.			

In addition, 1) Re the land near the Wheatsheaf, North Road, Cllr May advised Councillors of her discussions with the County Council. Councillors agreed to proceed as outlined by Cllr May in her report. 2) Cllr Caygill will approach the School re the possibility of pupils taking part in the planting of barrels in Lombard Drive. 3) Re clearing the beds of leaves at the entrance to Lambton Park, Cllr May will see what help the Property Owners' Association can give to the Gardener.

The Chairman thanked Cllrs May and Driscoll for their reports and invited Cllr Hall to give his report which included the matters contained in his written report below -

d) Policy and Governance

**North Lodge Parish Council
Meeting on Tuesday 17 September 2019
Governance and Policy Portfolio**

Briefing Note/Update from Councillor Dennis Hall

National Association of Local Councils (8 August):

This week the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) published its updated Model Financial Regulations for England and Wales.

The documents include easy-to-use templates to create financial regulations for your local (parish and town) council that are up-to-date with the current legislation and regulations, and guidance to help complete the templates.

The financial regulations are an essential tool for local councils of all sizes. They set out the framework within which the council ensures responsible and sustainable management of the council's finances.

The financial regulations are part of a package of support that local councils receive through membership of NALC and county association. Members also have access to documents such as a model standing orders, legal briefings and best practice guidance. All written by experts in the local council sector to help local councils keep up-to-date with legislation and best practice.

<https://www.nalc.gov.uk/news/entry/1262-nalc-publishes-updated-model-financial-regulations>

Pavement Parking: (9 September):

House of Commons Transport Committee; (6 September):

Pavement parking Thirteenth Report of Session 2017–19

<https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201719/cmselect/cmtrans/1982/1982.pdf>

And LGA commentary...

<https://www.local.gov.uk/about/news/lga-responds-transport-committees-call-ban-pavement-parking-across-england>

Developer Cash Benefits (1 September):

Press release; Communities to see how housing developers cash benefits them thanks to new planning rules; (1 September);

Local people will be able to see how every pound of property developers' cash, levied on new buildings, is spent supporting the new homes their community needs.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/communities-to-see-how-housing-developers-cash-benefits-them-thanks-to-new-planning-rules>

and LGA response...

<https://www.local.gov.uk/about/news/lga-responds-new-planning-rules-showing-how-developers-cash-spent-communities>

Councillor Dennis Hall Date 12 September 2019

Re revised Financial Regulations, Cllr Waugh is to consider if it is appropriate to adopt these. The Chairman thanked Cllr Hall and invited Cllr Waugh to give his report.

e) Finance

Cllr Waugh advised that he had received the most recent financial information and was satisfied that the Council's finances were in order. The Clerk advised of a dispute with the Council's bankers which resulted in the Bank making a compensation payment of £50 to the Council.

The Chairman thanked Cllr Waugh for his report and invited Cllr Noble-Nesbitt to give his report which included the following matters -

f) Highways and Website

1) The school time flashing lights on North Road were again operating at incorrect times. The Clerk will advise the County Council. 2) The outline planning application for the former Arizona Chemical land did not include a play area. Councillors agreed to await the full application before raising this matter with the Planning Department. 3) At Lombard Drive, a group of cyclists had been observed cycling on the pavement. Cllr Caygill will enquire if the cyclists are from the School. The Chairman will advise the PCSO.

The Chairman thanked Cllr Noble-Nesbitt for his report.

g) Crime and Community Safety

Cllr Gregory gave her report which included the matters contained in her written report below -

North Lodge Parish Council

Crime and Community Safety Report September 2019

The Police Service has introduced a new system of recording crime for the public information. This information can be viewed by using the website address police.uk

Crime incidents relating to DH3 postcode

Drum Road, Burglary, no suspect, insufficient evidence at this time.

Pelaw Grange (on or near), Anti-Social Behaviour, no details are provided on anti social behaviour incidents.

Vigo Lane (on or near) Vehicle Crime, no suspect, insufficient evidence at this time.

Vigo Lane Violence, on going investigation.

Violent crime can include offences against the person such as common assault through to Grievous Bodily Harm and Sexual Offences.

Community Safety.

Due Mr Ron Hogg the Police, Crime and Victims Commissioner being unwell, it is unlikely he will attend the November Council meeting as arranged. I shall update the Council in due course.

Thanks go to David for circulating 'In the Know' information.

For non emergency calls to police, please use telephone number 101

For emergency calls to Police, please use telephone number 999

Councillors thanked Cllr Gregory for her report.

h) Planning

In the absence of Cllr Snaith, no report was made.

Item 7. 19/89 Correspondence

1) From a resident

emails re notice board at Picktree Lodge.

Councillors discussed other sites at Picktree Lodge for a replacement notice board and agreed a possible site. The Clerk will advise the resident.

2) From Mazars

Notice of completion of Audit.

The Clerk was thanked for his work in achieving a clean report.

3) From the Chester-le-Street Remembrance Sunday Organising Group

Notification of meeting to be held on 24th September 2019.

4) From County Durham Association of Local Councils

a) Notification of CDALC AGM to be held on Saturday 12th October 2019.

Agreed that Cllrs Forrester and May are to represent the Council at the AGM.

b) email re pledge to reduce single use plastics.

c) email re long term empty property Council Tax Premium consultation.

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

a) Application for single storey extension to side of house, at 29A Lyndhurst Avenue.

b) Application for demolition of existing garage, construction of new garage, render house, bi-folding doors and internal works, at 11 North Road.

c) Application for pruning works to weeping willow (T1) - Re-shape crown (approximately 33% of the height and spread taken off) with some crown raising and dead boughs to be removed, at 1 North Road.

d) Application for erection of 95 dwellings, at site of former Arizona Chemical, Vigo Lane.

e) Application for works to 1 no. Oak tree (G1), pruning of overhanging branches (G2, G3 & G4) felling of 2 no. Sycamores (G4), at land adjacent 16 Longdean Park.

f) Approval for variation of condition 2 of planning permission DM/18/03342/FPA to allow design changes including construction of new first floor level as opposed to dormer windows within roof space, at 27 North Lodge.

g) Approval for Cherry (T1 and T42) - prune to enable high-sided construction vehicles on site. Holly (t38) - reduce height by 3m and trim/prune sides to shape. TPO CLS-1, at Oaklea, North Road.

h) Approval to prune back branches from T2 Elm growing towards neighbouring boundary in line with inside face of Conifer hedge and remove low dead branch from rear of tree, remove 1x low branch from T3 Oak growing towards neighbouring boundary, cut 2 x dead/declining G1 Holly trees to ground level leaving basal growth, remove epicormic growth from 1x G2 Lime and 1x G2 Sycamore, crown lift both trees to 3m from ground level (TPO - CSL 2) at Picktree Manor, Picktree Lane.

Item 8. 19/90 Items Requested by Councillors**a) Roles and Duties of the Gardener and Environment Caretaker**

Councillors discussed this matter and agreed that the Chairman, taking into account comments made, should compile a proposal for circulation before the next meeting when the matter will again be included in the Agenda.

b) Communicating with the County Council

Due to the pressure of time, this matter is to be held over to the next meeting of the Council.

Item 9. 19/91 Payment of Accounts

TO	AMOUNT	REASON	VAT
Salaries	£ 451.05	Salaries August 2019	
Expenses	£ 90.00	Expenses August 2019	
Pot-It-On	£ 190.00	Environment Care August 2019	
Pot-It-On	£ 248.00	Horticulture August 2019	
DSJ Property Services	£ 90.00	Removal of Litter Bin	
Mazars LLP	£ 240.00	Audit Fee	£40.00
Salaries	£ 451.05	Salaries September 2019	
Expenses	£ 90.00	Expenses September 2019	
Pot-It-On	£ 152.00	Environment Care September 2019	
Pot-It-On	£ 252.00	Horticulture September 2019	
J. Gregory	£ 165.00	Chair's Quarterly Allowance	
D. Murrell (via Post Office Ltd)	£ 1.90	Postage	
HM Revenue & Customs	£ 405.80	P.A.Y.E.	

Total Payments £2826.80

(Resolved - the payments be approved as submitted).

Item 10. 19/92 Other Matters for Information

- 1) Cllr May will advise the Clerk of a suggestion for using some Section 106 money.
- 2) The Chairman reminded Councillors to consider items for inclusion in a winter Newsletter.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 9.05pm.

North Lodge Parish Council

Accounts for the month as submitted to the Meeting of North Lodge Parish Council held on Tuesday 15th October 2019.

	TO	AMOUNT	REASON	VAT
Salaries		£	Salaries October 2019	
Expenses		£ 90.00	Expenses October 2019	
Pot-It-On		£	Environment Care October 2019	
Pot-It-On		£	Horticulture October 2019	
Poppy Appeal		£ 50.00	Wreath and Donation	

Total Payments £

Balance to 30th September 2019

Balance b/f	£38969.92	Balances at Bank:-	
Deduct Payments - Aug/Sept 2019	<u>£ 2826.80</u>		
	£36143.12		Current £ 147.72
			30 Day <u>£36048.71</u>
			Total £36196.43
Add Bank Interest Received	<u>£ 3.31</u>		
	£36146.43	Deduct cheques not yet presented	<u>£ Nil</u>
Add Compensation Received	<u>£ 50.00</u>		
Balance c/f	£36196.43		£36196.43