

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 19th November 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.

Before the start of the meeting, Councillors were pleased to receive a visit by Steve White, the acting Police, Crime and Victims Commissioner for Durham. Mr. White outlined the role of the Commissioner and answered Councillors' questions. The Chairman thanked Mr. White for his informative presentation.

The Chairman then commenced the meeting.

Item 1. 19/103 Apologies for Absence

There were no Apologies for Absence. The Chairman advised Councillors of the resignation of David Snaith from the Council.

Item 2. 19/104 Declarations of Interest

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

Item 3. 19/105 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 -

Poppies on street lights

A North Lodge resident has embarked on a project to promote the period of remembrance by fixing plastic poppies onto street lights. Chris Veitch is concerned that following the centenary, last year, Remembrance Day would have less of a public impact. He believes that we should make a big deal recognising the sacrifice all parts of our society have made during war, which is something that means a lot to Chris as a Fire Fighter. I've supported Chris by ensuring his project complied with Council policies. Along with helping put them up, which we hope will involve more volunteers in the future. Thanks also needs to be given to Washington Waterjet Ltd, Excel Signs and Exhibitions, Dav Kumar of Imperial Claims, and T.S. Reed Insurance.

Chris' long term ambitions are to form a North Lodge Remembrance Group to provide a sustainable future to these projects. He also intends on campaigning to try and get a war memorial for our area.

Apprenticeship Retention

Durham County Council has been celebrating its continued success in providing training experiences within the organisation. There are now 327 apprentices working for the Council, increase from last years figure of 121.

I questioned what the Council is doing to ensure that they have a job to go to following their training. As too often they are brought in with no further future prospects with training providers.

They currently continue to employ around 72% of apprentices that come into the organisation. While they do not have data on the remainder, it is reported they quite often leave DCC early to take employment up with other organisations.

New Council Vision

During the last meeting of County Council we voted on a new vision for Durham County Council for the next 15 years. It has 3 key aims: More and Better Jobs, People Live Long and Independent Lives, and Connected Communities.

I've been campaigning to ensure that this vision is lot fairer than our previous one. That no particular area County Durham gets any particular mention. I believe the Council have listened and I voted to support this proposal.

The adoption of this new vision marks the potential reorganisation of internal structures of the Council, along with how we scrutinise DCC's work. As the Council aligns it self to deliver its new purpose.

In addition, 1) The Clerk is to write to thank the person responsible for the recent display of poppies attached to lampposts in the Parish. 2) Re the condition of the footpath between 20/21 Lyndhurst Avenue and North Road, the County Cllr will obtain an estimate of the cost of repair.

The Chairman thanked the County Councillor for his report.

Item 4. 19/106 Adoption of Minutes of Meeting

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on Tuesday 15th October 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. 19/107 Chairman's Report

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

Welcome everyone,

On Sunday, 10th September, I attended the Remembrance Service Chester-le-Street and laid a wreath on behalf of the North Lodge residents and Parish Council.

The Nations Toast to the Heroes of WW2

The SSAFA, the Armed Forces Charity have requested that local councils take the lead in the proposed VE anniversary weekend 8th-10th May 2020. I will be making enquiries with members of the North Lodge community in an attempt to arrange a local tribute to the men and women who, gave so much to ensure we all enjoy the freedom we have today.

If the enquiries are a success, then a report showing full details of a suggested commemorative event including costs will be submitted for consideration by Councillors at the January 2020 Council meeting.

If any other Councillor has an idea for the weekend in question, please submit details showing costs to the Council.

Councillors thanked the Chairman for her report.

Regarding outstanding matters -

Re Minute 19/95 section 5). Cllr Caygill advised that pupils from Park View School were now involved in the design of artwork for the Drum Industrial Estate.

Item 6. 19/108 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.

More dog bags have been dumped at the Sustrans entrance. The clerk will report at the meeting on the update regarding a sign.

With the help of DCC Play Areas adviser we have located a possible seat for the fenced area, which our County Councillor has kindly agreed to fund. The clerk will report on this.

MERLIN DRIVE

Equipment appears to be in good order.

The moles have been busy again causing many raised mounds. DCC are aware of this.

Re a dog waste bag sign for the entrance to Low Flatts play area near to the Sustrans cycleway, Cllr Caygill and the Clerk had sourced a suitable sign and Councillors approved its purchase and installation. Re the installation of a seat inside the play equipment fence at Low Flatts, Cllr Caygill and the Clerk had identified two suitable options. The Clerk will circularise these to Councillors. The Chairman thanked Cllr Caygill for her report and invited Cllr Forrester to give her report.

b) Publicity

Cllr Forrester advised that there were several items of information to report and these would be forwarded to Councillors by the Clerk.

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
19 November 2019**

Durham County Councils Responsibilities

- **Flower Beds**

All flower beds are now all planted up with winter bedding.

Parish Council Responsibilities.

- **Fallen Leaves**

On Sunday 10 November 2019, residence from North Lodge, Lambton Park cleared many leaves from grassed and planted area on North Road just outside North Lodge Lambton Park. Councillor Driscoll also gave a helping hand.

- **Wasteland near to Wheatsheaf Pub**

The work on this area (tidying and planting of wild flowers) will take place in early spring.

- **Christmas Tree in Picktree Village**

Following a lot of research and communication with Durham County Council, to establish the feasibility (Risk Assessment etc.) of planting a Christmas tree in Picktree Village, we have almost reached a positive outcome and hopefully the tree will be planted at the beginning of December subject to availability. County Councillor Craig Martin has kindly agreed to fund this project from his allocated Neighbourhood Budget.

Environmental Caretaker

- **Graffiti**

Graffiti observed in North Lodge Estate bus shelter (going south) has now been removed.

- **Dog Waste Bags**

Despite the caretaker removing all litter from the Low Flatts Play area monthly within his rota, it is still being reported that used dog waste bags are being left on the ground at the bottom of the "Black Path" near to the tuppenny bridge, by some irresponsible dog owners. This is both unhygienic and unsightly. A notice will be erected shortly discouraging this practice.

Councillor M May & Councillor P Driscoll (Horticulture Portfolio Holders)

**NORTH LODGE PARISH COUNCIL
YEAR 3 AUDIT**

Parish Council/Gardeners Responsibility.

DATE 07/10/19 – 10/11/19

Description	Comment Total Hours	Present Month/Hrs 21	Accumulation 82
Shrub Bed close to northlands Roundabout.	Some initial weeding.	0.75	7.25
Tubs at North Road near to Northlands Roundabout.	Weeding, feeding and watering	0.75	5.25
Bus Shelter –Northlands (North Bound)	Tidying bus stand, cleaning seat.	1.25	3.5
Flower/Shrub Beds (Back and two sides).	Started cutting back flowers and shrub beds	2.0	4.0
Checking of Low Flatts Play Area – Hawthorn Hedge.			
Flower Bed at entrance to Longdean Park.			
Shrub Bed within Longdean Park.			
Bus Shelter North Road – opposite Lambton Worm pub (South Bound).	General maintenance.	0.5	2.0
Bus Shelter North Road –Lambton Worm pub (North Bound). No flowers	Tidying bus stand. Cleaning seat.	1.25	3.5
Raised Shrub Beds North Road			1.5
Flower Beds at entrance to North Lodge (Lambton Park).	Weeding, feeding and watering	0.75	10.25
Tubs at Lambton Park entrance.	Weeding. Feeding and watering	0.75	3.5
Bus Shelter – North Lodge Estate (South Bound). No flowers.	Tidying and maintenance.	0.75	2.25
Tubs in North Road. Near to the Living Christmas Tree.	Weeding, feeding and watering.	0.75	5.75

Millennium Flower Bed at entrance to Lombard drive.	Cleared and planted bed, watered and fed.	5.0	6.75
Description	Comment	Present Month/Hrs	Accumulation
	Total Hours		
Jubilee Tree at Entrance to Lombard Drive.			
Tubs in Lombard Drive, - near school	Feeding and watering.	0.5	2.0
Bus Shelter – North Lodge Estate (North Bound). (Flowers on north side).	Cleaned bus stand and seat, watered and weeded around flowers.	2.0	6.0
Bus Shelter. Barley Mow Inn (South Bound).	Tidying bus stand, cleaning seat.	0.75	2.75
Bus Stop. Barley Gate, Vigo Lane. No flowers.			
Bus Shelter. Ambleside Court Vigo Lane. (Laurel on West side)	Tidying bus stand and cleaning seat.	0.75	2.75
Flower Bed around plinth – bottom and top at entrance to Picktree Lodge.	Weeding, feeding and watering.	0.75	6.75
Planting of flowers below wall opposite plinth at entrance to Picktree Lodge.			
Bus Shelter (Glass) in Picktree Village.	General cleaning.	0.5	2.0
Bus Shelter. Ash Meadows, Picktree Village Flower/shrub bed both sides.	General cleaning.	0.5	2.0
Small Shrub/Flower Beds in Picktree Village (opposite Mr & Mrs Kirkup).	Some weeding, feeding and watering.	0.75	2.25
Heather Bed at Picktree Village.			
Daffodil planting.			
Handyman.			

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

Items of General Interest:

The Good Councillor's guide to transport planning published by NALC;

The National Association of Local Councils (NALC) has published a new guide for local (parish and town) councillors on transport planning.

This handy and easy-to-read resource, aimed at England's 100,000 local councillors, developed in partnership with the **Transport Planning Society**, and is the latest guide in a series as part of the National Improvement Strategy for local councils.

The guide includes practical advice and guidance, and covers:

- What is transport planning?
- Delivering integrated transport networks
- The role of local councillors
- Case studies
- Resources

Cllr Sue Baxter, chairman of NALC, said: "I'm delighted to have worked with the Transport Planning Society to publish this latest guide in our popular *The Good Councillor's guide* series. It is vital local councillors understand the principles of transport planning and how it can influence their work in building stronger, more connected communities. This new guide will help local councillors to be equipped with the basic information to consider transport issues at the local council level and thereby improve it."

The clerk should be able to access copies

Guidance; Pocket parks: helping communities transform unloved, neglected or derelict areas into new green spaces; (31 October):

Invitation to community-led organisations in partnership with local authorities to apply for funding to create new pocket parks and refurbish existing parks.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pocket-parks-helping-communities-transform-unloved-neglected-or-derelict-areas-into-new-green-spaces>

Re the Transport Planning Society guide, the Clerk will circularise copies to Councillors.

The Chairman thanked Cllr Hall for his report 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 Chairman thanked Cllr Waugh for his report and invited Cllr Noble-Nesbitt to give his report which included the matters contained in his written report below -

f) Highways and Website

- The school time 20mph flashing lights on North Road and Lombard Drive continued to operate at incorrect times when checked a few days ago, seemingly beyond DCC's ability to do timely changes as needed.
- The footpath at street lighting column 2373, A693 just west of Northlands Roundabout, continues to be blocked by overhanging vegetation, now shorn of its leaves, producing a slightly less **dangerous** situation that appears to be on the DCC schedule for attention, after county councillor intervention.
- The Highways England work around the Picktree Lodge Estate entrance has reintroduced their service buildings in a similar fashion to those for the previous failed attempts to repair the motorway bridge over the Sustrans cycleway. The Sustrans cycleway diversion along the Vigo Lane south verge appears to be quite wide but very poorly formed as seen today. There is then a gap westward and around into Picktree Lodge Estate entrance, after which a 75 cm [30 inches] cycle track has been laid adjacent to the inside edge of the existing pavement. Room for one cycle only going one way. There is a speed bump just before the sign for the Public footpath. A good standard of crossing for cycles has then been constructed but in an unfortunate position with respect to the blind bend of the road.
- After the shortlived and massive autumn fall of leaves, paths around the parish have variously become more difficult to walk around, particularly in or after some protracted rainfall. Leaf clearing efforts of residents, supplemented by DCC's clearing machine were effective on North Road to each side of the Lambton Park entrance. A blocked and submerged road drain just north of that entrance was reported to DCC but by the time it was looked at DCC declared it to be not needing of any action other than through normal routines.
- Following an alert from a resident, the semi-permanent pavement pool on North Road, opposite to the gable end of 4 Kingsmere, was reported to DCC and has been marked with white lines awaiting scheduled attention within three months.....
- The footpath behind 66 Picktree Lodge is particularly badly affected by fallen leaves decaying and sticking already.

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 -

Current Crime

Please check the Police UK website.

The contents of this website relating to the Parish will be monitored for the next three months by the council's Portfolio Holder for Crime and Community. A report will be submitted to Council for discussion.

Community Safety

Thank you to the Acting Police Commissioner for Co Durham, Mr Steve White, for attending a meeting of Councillors, before an official council meeting in November, very informative.

Local speed monitoring data received for the Parish has been circulated for Councillors information.

Information from the National Neighbourhood Newsletter

Fraud Fighters Wanted. The ITV news team is set to work with Neighbourhood Watch highlighting crime against older people. To get involved please contact Deborah Waller, Senior Communication and Digital Manager at Neighbourhood Watch Network on deborah.waller@ourwatch.org.uk or call 0116 402 6111 From a joint Neighbourhood Watch and the Co-op survey it revealed that a number of victims of crime choose not to contact the police.

Please encourage victims of crime to inform the police.

The National Trading Standards initiative 'Friends Against Scams' celebrates its 3rd birthday. To find out more about the different types of fraud, cybersecurity and cybercrime prevention, contact www.friendsagainstscams.org.uk

Crime Prevention Advice for the long dark nights of Winter

Leave a light on when away from your property, invest in a light timer.

Ensure doors and windows are locked.

Ensure outbuildings and sheds are secured.

Invest in a burglary Alarm.

Thank you to David for circulating to Councillors, 'In the Know'

Remember

Non-emergency telephone calls to the Police use telephone number 101

All emergency telephone calls to the Police use telephone number 999

Re a letter to the Chief Constable regarding the revised Police reporting system, in view of information provided earlier by Steve White, Councillors agreed that this should not be sent at the moment but should be reviewed early next year.

Councillors thanked Cllr Gregory for her report.

h) Planning

In the absence of a Portfolio Holder, no report was made. The election of a Portfolio Holder is to be included in the Agenda for the next Council meeting.

Councillors had observed a newly formed pond on the site of the former Arizona Chemical works. Cllr Waugh outlined the likely reasons for this pond and advised that a lifering was visible there.

Item 7. 19/109 Correspondence

1) From Rt. Hon. Kevan Jones MP

Letter re Highways England work at Picktree Lodge.

2) From Park View School

email re Section 106 funding.

Councilors discussed the School's request for a letter of support re a Section 106 application for £40,000 to refurbish toilets. Councillors agreed to send a letter of support.

3) From an Anonymous Resident of Lombard Drive

Cllr Caygill had received an anonymous letter re overhanging branches and the condition of footpaths on North Lodge Estate.

Councillors noted the comments. The Clerk is to ask the County Council to inspect Lombard Drive for any overhanging branches.

- 4) From County Durham Association of Local Councils
 - a) email re forthcoming General Election.
 - b) email re Pocket Park funding.
 - c) email re Royal Garden Parties 2020.
 - d) Notification of Smaller Councils Forum meeting to be held on 21st November 2019.
 - e) email re unauthorised encampment consultation.
 - f) List of S106 monies available.

- 5) From Durham County Council
Letter re Precept 2020 / 2021.

- 6) Various planning applications, approvals and refusals from Durham County Council, of which the following were within North Lodge Parish:-
 - a) Application for erection of storage unit, Unit 5, Drum Road.
 - b) Application for demolition of garage and reinstatement with 2 storey extension to north elevation. New first floor extension above existing flat roof to south, rear single storey ground floor extension and new window fenestration and change of external material appearance, at 59 Longdean Park.
 - c) Approval for single storey flat roof extension to rear of dwelling and 2no. bay windows to be added to front elevation, at 30 North Road.
 - d) Approval to crown clean and deadwood 2 no. sycamores and crown thin 1 no. beech, at 5A North Lodge.
 - e) Approval for various tree works, at 21B North Lodge.
 - f) Approval for demolition of existing garage, construction of new garage, render house, bi-folding doors and internal works, at 11 North Road.
 - g) Approval for works to 1 no. Oak tree (G1), pruning of overhanging branches (G2, G3 & G4), felling of 2 no. Sycamores (G4), at land adjacent to 16, Longdean Park.

Item 8. 19/110 Items Requested by Councillors

a) Communicating with the County Council

Cllr Hall outlined the conversations regarding methods of communications he had had with the County Council. Cllr Hall advised that there had been no offers of improvement from the County Council in its reporting systems. Councillors agreed, therefore, to ask CDALC to include this matter on the next available Agenda for the Smaller Councils Forum.

b) Status of the Drum pond area

It was now understood that the pond area at Drum Industrial Estate was in private ownership and could not be available to the general public for leisure purposes. Whilst this was disappointing, there was nothing further that the Parish Council could do at present.

Item 9. 19/111 Payment of Accounts

TO	AMOUNT	REASON	VAT
Salaries	£ 450.85	Salaries November 2019	
Expenses	£ 90.00	Expenses November 2019	
Pot-It-On	£ 190.00	Environment Care November 2019	
Pot-It-On	£ 282.00	Horticulture November 2019	
Cty DhM Assn of Local Councils	£ 27.00	Fee for Training Course	
D. Murrell (via Internet Ink)	£ 6.98	Printer Cartridges	£1.16

Total Payments £1046.83

(Resolved - the payments be approved as submitted).

Item 10. 19/112 Other Matters for Information

There were no other matters raised.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 8.35pm, wishing everyone an enjoyable winter recess.

North Lodge Parish Council

Accounts for the month as submitted to the Meeting of North Lodge Parish Council held on Tuesday 21st January 2020.

TO	AMOUNT	REASON	VAT
Salaries	£ 451.05	Salaries December 2019	
Expenses	£ 90.00	Expenses December 2019	
Pot-It-On	£ 152.00	Environment Care December 2019	
Pot-It-On	£ 144.00	Horticulture December 2019	
Salaries	£	Salaries January 2020	
Expenses	£ 90.00	Expenses January 2020	
Pot-It-On	£	Environment Care January 2020	
Pot-It-On	£	Horticulture January 2020	
HM Revenue & Customs	£ 405.80	P.A.Y.E.	
J. Gregory	£ 165.00	Chair's Quarterly Allowance	
Association of Local Council Clerks	£ 40.00	Annual Subscription	
Society of Local Council Clerks	£ 126.00	Annual Subscription	
CDALC	£ 27.00	Training Fee	
Signs Direct	£ 69.54	Sign for Play Area	£11.59
DSJ Property Services	£ 30.00	Fixing Sign to Post	
D. Murrell (via Curry's)	£ 12.99	Memory Stick	£ 2.17
D. Murrell (via Maxwells)	£ 12.00	Batteries for Tree Lights	£ 2.00
D. Murrell (via Keen Gardener)	£ 29.28	Tree Lights	£ 4.88
Formoss	£ 120.00	Christmas Tree	£20.00
Down to Earth Landscapes	£ 95.00	Erect and Dispose of Tree	

Total Payments £

Balance to 30th November 2019

Balance b/f	£35008.87	Balances at Bank:-	
Deduct Payments - Nov. 2019	<u>£ 1046.83</u>		
	£33962.04	Current	£ 911.84
		30 Day	<u>£33051.77</u>
		Total	£33963.61
Add Bank Interest Received	<u>£ 1.57</u>		
	£33963.61	Deduct cheques not yet presented	<u>£ Nil</u>
Balance c/f	£33963.61		£33963.61