

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 18th July 2023.

PRESENT: Chairman: Councillor Patrick Driscoll.
Councillors: Sue Brown, Elsie Forrester, Jackie Gregory, Maureen May, Dennis Hall, Craig Martin, John Waugh.
County Councillor: Craig Martin.
Clerk: David Murrell.

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting which commenced at 6.30pm.

Item 1. 23/73 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for Absence were received from Councillors Margaret Caygill and Chris Veitch.

Item 2. 23/74 Declarations of Interest

Councillor Craig Martin declared interests as a County Councillor and as a Trustee of Park View Academy.

Item 3. 23/75 Report of the County Councillor

The Chairman invited the County Councillor to give his report which included the following matters.

- a) Re Northlands roundabout, the County Council Clean and Green team had suggested that a successful design would be one of a similar style to the roundabout near the Arnison Centre. Any proposed design would be brought to the Parish Council for discussion.
- b) Re the recently opened-up view of the Parish Church following demolition of the bus garage, the County Cllr had been advised by the Planning Department that some weight would be given to retaining this in any planning application for the site.
- c) Re a new leisure centre for the town, the County Cllr advised that he had not heard from anywhere in the County Council that this would not be built.
- d) Re the entrance to Picktree Lodge, Cllr Martin advised that he continued to press the Clean and Green Team for a design and cost quote and would like the project to be delivered during the coming autumn and winter.

The Chairman thanked the County Councillor for his report.

Item 4. 23/76 Adoption of Minutes of Meeting

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on Tuesday 20th June 2023, 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. 23/77 Chairman's Report

The Chairman's report included the matter contained in his written report below -

Electronic communications are usually the quickest, most wide ranging, and direct forms of communication. However, they are not infallible, and the Parish Council has found this out over the last two months. As reported in the previous month's minutes, it was necessary to remind some residents that the Council's Facebook and Twitter pages needed to remain as information boards only, for the benefit of residents, and not as an open- ended discourse.

Now, there has been some outside interference in the Parish Council's e-mail account, which has caused some internal confusion and consternation, with vigilance needed to counter this, by all councillors. Within this background though, there is one style of communication which is as inclusive and valuable as at any time over the past few years. This is the Annual Summer Newsletter, which is distributed to every resident, and doesn't require computer or smart phone access, or any electronic literacy. What it does contain are all the crucial contacts and links any resident may need for reference, and a layout of all the year's events covered by each Parish Councillor portfolio holder. Hopefully, this should be as informative and relevant as it is every year, which will be landing on your doormat over the Summer, and long may it continue.

In addition, the Chairman and Cllr Hall outlined the recent concern with the email addresses and Councillors confirmed that home addresses in the Newsletter were to be replaced by email addresses. It was unfortunate that this had not been done this year. Cllr Hall considered that otherwise this year's Newsletter looked very good and read very well.

Councillors thanked the Chairman for his report.

Regarding outstanding matters -

- a) Re Minute 23/61 section b). The County Cllr advised that a stock of new waste bins was still awaited.
- b) Re Minute 23/61 section f). Re a tree for the Queen's Green Canopy, Cllr Brown and the County Cllr are to meet to progress this.
- c) Re Minute 23/61 section g). Cllr Gregory advised that another large advertising board had appeared, this time at the motorway roundabout. The County Cllr kindly agreed to seek the removal of the board.
- d) Re Minute 23/63 section b). Re fly-tipping on the railway embankment at Drum Lane, the County Cllr will again chase up removal.

Item 6. 23/78 Portfolio Holders' Reports

a) Communications and Media Development

In his absence from the meeting, Cllr Veitch had provided the following written report -

Nothing to report other than due to the bogus emails I have decided not to proceed with "Meet the Councillor" due to data security reasons until we are happy that we are secure. I do not want to provide a digital photo or personal information.

Update for litter pick - due to the lacklustre response from the council and as per my last update the Lambton worm will lead the litter pick. We have agreed Saturday 19th august. It will be advertised on social media and I ask if any councillor has a particular area they think needs to be considered they email me asap.

The Chairman thanked Cllr Veitch for his report and invited Cllr Gregory to give her report which included the matters contained in her written report below -

b) Crime and Community Safety

Crime

No crime reports supplied to the council.

Community Safety

Durham Constabulary

Drug Offences

Officers have arrested 27 men during dozens of raids to tackle the growing number of cannabis farms being set up by serious and organised crime groups(OCGs).

Forty-two warrants have been executed at homes across County Durham and Darlington.

Anti-social Behaviour

If you think you have been a victim of anti-social behaviour, find out where to report at

www.durham-pcc.gov.uk/asb

Scams

Be care when dealing with a random person on social media selling tickets to a sold out festival or concert. If they will only accept payment via bank transfer, it could be a ticket scam.

Find out more here: <http://actionfraud.police.uk/ticketfraud>

BikeSafe is back

Are you a qualified motorcyclist who wants to hone your skills with the Durham Roads & Armed Policing Unit?

Durham Constabulary has 112 workshop spaces available during August, September and October, as part of the BikeSafe initiative which looks to provide advance riding skills to motor cyclists. The course costs £65 and all information, including how to sign up, can be found at

www.bikesafe.co.uk/durham

Police Constable recruitment is now OPEN.

All entry routes are available. Apply at www.durham.police.uk/.../become-a-police-constable

Applications submitted by 5pm on Friday, July 21st.

Any questions contact policerecruitong@durham.police.uk or positive.action @durham.police.uk if you need help and support as a diverse applicant.

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For further information use Durham Constabulary social media accounts.

Non emergency calls to police, please use telephone number 101

All emergency calls to police, please use telephone number 999

Co Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Service (CDDFRS)

CDDFRS has teamed up with Durham Constabulary, Chester-le-Street Area Action Partnership and Fiona Gosling, who's son died from cold water shock after jumping into the River Wear near Bishop Auckland.

The authorities have produced a new video to raise awareness amongst young people of the dangers of open water. The video will be shared with schools across Co Durham.

The fire service are encouraging parents and carers to talk to their children about the consequences of Anti Social Behaviour (ASB) including deliberate fire setting.

Any information on ASB & deliberate fire setting can be reported anonymously using telephone no. 0800 169 5558 or www.ddfire.gov.uk/firestoppers.

CDDFRS has recorded the lowest level of accidental house fires since records began. However, 60% of house fires start in the kitchen. An unattended pan can catch fire and have a devastating

impact on your home and family. If you would like a free home fire safety visit or further information use telephone 0345 223 4221 or www.ddfire.gov.uk

Remember to regularly test your fire alarm. If you need smoke alarms or yours aren't working, contact the community Safety team using telephone number 0345 2234 221 for advice.

CDDFRS are proud to announce that they have been ranked 26th best apprenticeship employer in the country. There was only two Fire and Rescue Services included in the list of 100 successful entries.

For further information use Co Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue service social media accounts.

For any emergency calls to the fire service, please use telephone number 999

The Chairman thanked Cllr Gregory for her report and invited Cllr Waugh to give his Finance report which included the matter contained in his written report below -

c) Finance

I have inspected the financial information supplied to me by the clerk and can confirm that everything appears correct.

The Chairman thanked Cllr Waugh for his Finance report. Cllr Driscoll then gave his report which included the matters contained in his written report below -

d) Highways and Community Assets

The monthly bus shelters inspection was completed on Saturday the 8th of July 2023. All shelters appeared in good condition, with the one notable exception of the glass shelter in Picktree Village, on the right-hand side as you approach the village from the Spire Hospital end. In late June the clerk had a report from Nexus that the bottom right glass panel had been smashed. The shards of glass have now been removed, and a replacement glass section should follow, and be slotted into the gap.

Other minor work on the 8th was in removing leaves and twigs from the floor of the shelter at the Lambton Worm public house, and lopping off tree branches at the rear of the glass shelter to prevent scraping on the glass during peak growing time in the Summer. In conclusion and in addition, the 'Hoppings Fun Fair' poster on the railings near the conjunction of North Road and Lombard Drive, has now been removed.

In addition, Cllr Gregory advised that two street signs had been given necessary attention. Councillors thanked Cllr Driscoll for his report and the Chairman invited Cllr May to give her report which included the matters contained in her written report below -

e) Horticulture

SUMMER BEDDING

All summer bedding planted. Due to the unsettled weather during the past few weeks, Stephen Makepeace and his team have increased watering and have given all bedding another application of fertiliser which will give added lift and growth.

Unfortunately, in a few areas, some plants have been pulled out of the ground by? rabbits/animals or vandals and left lying on top of the soil. These have been replanted by the Gardener.

At Barley Mow bus stop going south (on north side of bus shelter) all the plants have been stolen and removed. This bed is now totally empty. Photographic evidence has been taken,

NORTH ROAD -TWO RAISED SHRUB BEDS

The Parish Council has now received approval for the £1.6K grant for the above two shrub beds to

be planted up. Work on these two beds will commence a.s.a.p.

Resignations

Councillor Gregory and Councillor Veitch have resigned from the Horticulture Sub Group. The team would like to thank them both for their hard work and contribution to the group.

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

f) Meetings of Partnership Organisations

Cllr Forrester advised that information on some proposed boundary changes was expected to be made available at the forthcoming CDALC Smaller Councils Forum.

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

g) Planning

Cllr Waugh advised that he continued to provide weekly updates and commentaries, where necessary, to Councillors on planning applications. Re a recently received planning application DM/23/01932/FPA for a commercial development at Drum Road, Cllr Waugh outlined the application, advised that he would be providing a written report and expected that the Council would submit comments to the Planning Department.

The Chairman thanked Cllr Waugh for his Finance report.

h) Play Areas

In the absence of Cllr Caygill from the meeting, no report was made.

Cllr Waugh advised that he had observed a health and safety risk at Low Flatts play area where a recently installed slide faced into the sun and therefore the metal of the slide could become very hot to the touch, potentially causing great harm. The Clerk will take this up with the County Council Outdoor Facilities Co-ordinator.

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

i) Policy and Governance

Debate on the state of local government in England and the case for the reinvigoration of local democracy, 15 June 2023: (publ 14 June):

Government should consider accelerating work to devolve greater legal and fiscal powers to local government, moving to long-term and sustainable funding arrangements, and enshrining the Charter of Local Self-Governance in UK law.

<https://www.local.gov.uk/parliament/briefings-and-responses/debate-state-local-government-england-and-case-reinvigoration>

AEA: **Post Polls Report:** (27 June):

<https://www.aea-elections.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/AEA-2023-Post-Polls-Report-27-June-2023.pdf>

2023 Review: Boundary Commission Final report and recommendations to Parliament: (28 June):

We have now concluded the 2023 Review of Parliamentary constituencies in England and submitted our final report and recommendations.

<https://boundarycommissionforengland.independent.gov.uk/2023-review/>

Virtual Council Meeting Survey - 2023: (5 July):

<https://www.local.gov.uk/publications/virtual-council-meeting-survey-2023>

Launch of Office for Local Government - LGA response: (4 July):

<https://www.local.gov.uk/about/news/launch-office-local-government-lga-response>

Debate Not Hate: Ending abuse in public life for councillors: (3 July):

<https://www.local.gov.uk/publications/debate-not-hate-ending-abuse-public-life-councillors>

The Chairman thanked Cllr Hall for his report and invited Cllr Martin to give his report.

j) Project Development, Business and External Relations

Cllr Martin advised that he had no updates or matters to report.

The Chairman thanked Cllr Martin.

Item 7. 23/79 Correspondence

- 1) From a Resident
email re overhanging trees.
- 2) From Nexus Bus Infrastructure
email re damaged bus shelter at Picktree Village.
- 3) From Durham County Council
Letter re 2024/25 Budget Planning.
- 4) Various planning applications, approvals and refusals from Durham County Council, of which the following were within North Lodge Parish:-
 - a) Application for replacement fascia, fenestration, guttering, roof tiles, soffits, cedar wood cladding and render, at 40 Longdean Park.
 - b) Application for erection of B8 logistics warehouse with ancillary B2/E(g(iii)) industrial and E(g(i)) offices with associated access, parking, landscape and infrastructure works, at land to the west of Drum Industrial Estate, Drum Road.

Item 8. 23/80 Proposals, Reports and Requests for Consideration

a) The Annual Newsletter

Cllr May advised that the Newsletter was now at the printers. Councillors would be advised when it was available for distribution. The final composition had been well received by Councillors. Cllr May was thanked for all her hard work in producing the Newsletter.

b) A Location for a Coronation Bench

In the absence from the meeting of Cllr Caygill, Councillors agreed to defer this item to the next meeting of the Council.

c) Provision and Siting of Seats at the Play Areas

In the absence from the meeting of Cllr Caygill, Councillors agreed to defer this item to the next meeting of the Council.

Item 9. 23/81 Payment of Accounts

TO	AMOUNT	REASON	VAT
Salaries	£ 569.74	Salaries July 2023	
Expenses	£ 105.00	Expenses July 2023	
Durham County Council	£ 2472.00	Procurement Fee	£ 412.00
DSJ Property Services	£ 240.00	Repair to Bus Shelter	
Makepeace Landscapes	£ 1882.39	Horticulture	£ 313.73

Total of Above Payments £ 5269.13

Payments Made by Debit Card and Direct Debit

TO	AMOUNT	REASON	VAT
Zoom inc	£ 15.59	Monthly Subscription - July 2023	£ 2.60
ANS Group Ltd	£ 46.25	Monthly Subscription - July 2023	£ 7.71

Total Card and D/D Payments £ 61.84

(Resolved - the payments be approved as submitted).

Item 10. 23/82 Other Matters for Information

Cllr Gregory commented that a new footpath was being laid on the Gateshead side of Vigo Lane. The County Cllr advised that he understood that work would begin on a footpath on the Durham side as soon as the current work was completed.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 7.45pm.

North Lodge Parish Council

Accounts for the month as submitted to the Meeting of North Lodge Parish Council held on Tuesday 18th July 2023.

	TO	AMOUNT	REASON	VAT
Salaries		£	Salaries July 2023	
Expenses		£ 105.00	Expenses July 2023	
Total of Above Payments		£		

Payments Made by Debit Card and Direct Debit

	TO	AMOUNT	REASON	VAT
Zoom inc		£ 15.59	Monthly Subscription - July 2023	£ 2.60
ANS Group Ltd		£ 46.25	Monthly Subscription - July 2023	£ 7.71
Total Card and D/D Payments		£ 61.84		

Balance to 30th June 2023

Balance b/f	£76535.96	Balances at Bank:-	
Deduct Payments - June 2023	<u>£47402.95</u>	Treasurers Account	£ 638.66
	£29133.01	Instant Account	<u>£64418.32</u>
Deduct Card and D/D Payments	<u>£ 71.34</u>	Total	£65056.98
	£29061.67		
Add Bank Interest Received	<u>£ 51.84</u>	Deduct cheques not yet presented	<u>£ Nil</u>
	£29113.51		
Add Grant Received	<u>£35943.47</u>		
Balance c/f	£65056.98		£65056.98