

## **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 16<sup>th</sup> July 2024.

PRESENT: Chairman: Councillor Patrick Driscoll.  
Councillors: Margaret Caygill, Jackie Gregory, Maureen May, Dennis Hall, Craig Martin, Chris Veitch.  
County Councillor: Craig Martin.  
Clerk: David Murrell.

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

### **Item 1. 24/76 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for Absence were received from Councillor Sue Brown.

### **Item 2. 24/77 Declarations of Interest**

Councillor Craig Martin declared interests as a County Councillor and as a Trustee of Park View Academy. Councillor Chris Veitch declared an interest as a member of the North Lodge Remembrance Group. Councillor Jackie Gregory declared an interest as a member of the North Lodge Remembrance Group WhatsApp Group.

### **Item 3. 24/78 Report of the County Councillor**

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

- a) A signalised pedestrian crossing was being installed on Vigo Lane near to Ambleside Court.
- b) Gateshead Council had been considering a project to improve the Barley Mow roundabout but funding wasn't available at present.
- c) Re litter bins near the Wheatsheaf, the County Cllr advised that the County Council would not remove the old bin until a new bin could be installed.
- d) There had been three fires recently in the woods alongside the A693. Cllr Gregory kindly offered to approach the Fire Service to report any further incidents and to ask the Service to press the County Council to remove the unauthorised encampment there.
- e) Cllr Gregory advised that recently the baffle bank in Blind Lane had been mown which had destroyed a habitat for wildlife. The County Cllr advised that residents there had complained about it not having been cut.

The Chairman thanked the County Councillor for his report.

### **Item 4. 24/79 Adoption of Minutes of Meeting**

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> June 2024, 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. 24/80 Chairman's Report**

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

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This summer season stretches unseasonal weather to new rainy heights but hopefully there can be a late upturn. Updates for this season include another Parish community volunteer litter pick at 1 p.m. on the 18<sup>th</sup> of July, all welcome, as highlighted by the Parish social media and website. The other main event is that all residents will be getting the latest annual newsletter on their doorsteps, with all the yearly news and events, contact numbers, and outlines from Parish Council portfolio holders. As the Parish continues to expand, as the new "Avant" development matures, this is a welcoming starting point for all new parishioners.

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Councillors thanked the Chairman for his report.

Regarding outstanding matters -

- a) Re Minute 24/63 section e). Re the siting of the air pollution monitor at Blind Lane/North Road, Cllr Gregory advised that a reply had just been received from the County Council and she would update Councillors once she had fully considered the information provided.
- b) Re Minute 24/65. Cllr Veitch reminded Councillors that the North Lodge Remembrance Group was an entirely separate body to the Parish Council.
- c) Re Minute 24/68 section a). Re the Virgin Media cabinets at Longdean Park, Cllr Hall considered it unlikely that residents would take any further formal steps unless there was a change in the law. The County Cllr continues to make enquiries re the appearances of similar cabinets around the County.

**Item 6. 24/81 Portfolio Holders' Reports**

**a) Communications and Media Development**

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

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A number of posts on Facebook and X (Twitter) these includes posts regarding Activity Week, the local Steam Fair at Lambton Park, Brass Band Bash in Chester le Street and the Summer litter pick organised for July 18th.

As always if any councillor has anything they wish to have posted on our social media please let me know.

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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**

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**Police**

**Crime**

Please refer to Police.uk for information on your area.

**Community Safety**

**Operation Trinity.**

Police officers who are investigating a suspect who, is alleged to have committed a sexual offence can apply for civil orders to further protect the public from potential harm.

Suspects do not have to be charged with an offence to be subject to an order.

**Recruitment**

Eighteen PCSOs have been recruited and have commenced training.

Applications for Police Constable Entry Programme (PCEP) will go live on Monday, July 15.

Two-year training programme

No degree required (or completed)

UK manual driving licence holder .Contact Durham Constabulary for more information.  
Well done to Durham Constabulary football team who were runners up in the Ron Hogg Memorial tournament, which was held recently.  
Teams from the police, fire service, charities and other agencies go head-to-head to take home the winner's trophy.  
For non emergency incidents, please use telephone number 101  
For all emergency incidents, please use telephone number 999  
For more information on the above subjects and other crime and community issues, please refer to the social media accounts of Durham Constabulary  
**Co Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue service (CDDFRS)**

#### Operation Trailblazer

To stamp out antisocial behaviour in our communities by ensuring firefighters work along side others to reduce disorder in our communities.

If you have any information about deliberate fire setting in your area, you are encouraged to report it anonymously to Firestoppers by calling 0800 169 5558 or complete a report online

<https://forms.theiline.co.uk/firestoppers>

#### Prevention of Wildfires

Firefighters are urging you to pack a picnic instead of a barbecue this summer to reduce the risk of wildfires.

While the weather might be looking drizzly at the moment, when temperatures start to rise again, dry conditions mean that fire can easily spread if the area is exposed to flame.

Pack a picnic instead of a barbecue.

Do not start fires in the countryside. This includes camp fires.

Take your litter home.

If you see a possible wildfire, get to a place of safety immediately and then call 999 and ask for the fire and rescue service.

Never leave a lit barbecue unattended and ensure it is fully extinguished before disposing of it.

Read more here: <https://shorturl.at/Z7Sht>

#### Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP)

A three-year plan which focuses on how to keep communities safe, has been published.

The CRMP is an important document - it allows CDDFRS to consider and meet the changing risks in communities and ensure your safety and that of firefighters and staff.

Full document available on the CDDFRS website.

#### Smoke Alarms

If you, or someone you know, needs smoke alarms installing or replacing, contact CDDFRS Community Safety Team to book in a visit on 0345 223 4221

#### Recruitment

New appointment - Director Of Community Risk Management - Ben Cairns

CDDFRS welcomes eight new firefighters, who have transferred from Services across the UK.

If you live or work within five minutes of a fire station and you want to join CDDFRS as an On-Call Firefighter, register your interest here: <https://rb.gy/io86k3>

On July 17, six firefighters from Durham, Consett and High Handenhold Fire Stations are taking on the National Three Peak Challenge in aid of @thefirefighterscharity

Dressed in full fire kit, the aim is to climb the three highest peaks in the UK in under 24 hours.

For all emergency fire related incidents, please use telephone number 999

For more information on the above subjects, please refer to the social media accounts of Co Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue service.

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

**c) Finance**

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I have inspected the financial information supplied to me by the Clerk and can confirm that everything appears correct.  
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The Chairman thanked Cllr Veitch for his report. Cllr Driscoll then gave his report which included the matters contained in his written report below -

**d) Highways and Community Assets**

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The monthly bus shelters inspection was carried out on Monday the 8<sup>th</sup> of July 2024. All the shelters appeared to be in good order, and required only a full leaf clearance in the shelter next to the " Lambton Worm" public house, and a full cleaning of the seat adjacent to it.

In addition, the two shelters with painted rear walls, across the road from the " Lambton Worm", and south bound near the Lombard drive entrance, have both now had a new coat of paint to smarten them up, before the advent of the Autumn and Winter weather.  
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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**

**Flower Beds**

Gardeners have fed and watered all beds. Beds are flourishing now. More sunshine needed.

**Raised Shrub Beds in North Road** (planted last year)

Shrubs etc are developing well.

**Ivy**

Stephen Makepeace will trim back the ivy on the wall of the bus stop in Picktree Village to ensure that the Parish Council sign is not obscured.

The Chairman thanked Cllr May for her report.

**f) Meetings of Partnership Organisations**

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

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

**g) Play Areas**

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The equipment at both Low Flatts and Merlin Drive appear to be in good order.

It is very disappointing that a number of jobs by DCC are still outstanding, in particular the installation of the new goal posts which should be in place for the school summer holiday. Could an alternative installer be sought?  
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Re the installation of goal posts, the Clerk advised that the County Council Outdoor Facilities Officer was chasing this up.

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

**h) Policy and Governance**

Cllr Hall advised that following the recent general election, it was anticipated that the new government would announce several policy amendments such as increased powers for larger councils and changes to transport, planning and residential development controls. The Clerk is to send a welcome message to the new MP.

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

**i) Project Development, Business and External Relations**

Cllr Martin advised that approval was awaited for the S106 application for the memorial artwork.

The Clerk is to advise Councillors of the amount of S106 funding still available to the Parish.

The Chairman thanked Cllr Martin for his report.

#### **j) Picktree Village**

In her absence from the meeting, Cllr Brown had provided a written report which included the following matters -

As requested after discussion at our June meeting, I contacted the resident by email. She was pleased to discuss her concerns and hopes together we may get some sort of reasonable solution. Sgt Duffy from Northumbria Police has met with the local Sunderland Councillor to discuss concerns. The resident is awaiting his response and does not want to hassle him especially as he has shown interest in the problem. He has had no response from Durham Police or DCC. We agreed to meet in person after the election and my return from holiday. She is particularly concerned around speeding of buses and large and small vans and commercial vehicles. While awaiting a response from Sgt Duffy her neighbours on the lane are collecting speed information. She will contact NLP COUNCIL clerk David and myself if there is anything to report before or after we meet and she will keep us posted re any developments. I will report on our meeting in my September report to Councillors.

Picktree Farmhouse.

- The farmhouse opposite the cottages has been empty for over a year
- Lambton Estate will not begin any renovations until 4 years have passed
- They can then get a grant to do the work
- Meanwhile in those 4 years the property is empty and no doubt deteriorating further!

The Chairman thanked Cllr Brown for her report.

#### **Item 7. 24/82 Correspondence**

1) From Kevan Jones

email of thanks following his retirement as an MP.

2) From County Durham Association of Local Councils

email re consultation on proposed Local Networks to replace Area Action Partnerships.

Councillors discussed this proposal and agreed that there were no concerns to raise.

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

- a) Application for 2no illuminated fascia signs and 5no illuminated totem signs, at The Business Village, Drum Road.
- b) Application for prior notification for the demolition of office building and gatehouse, at The Business Village, Drum Road.

#### **Item 8. 24/83 Proposals, Reports and Requests for Consideration**

##### **a) Proposal to Remove Member Home Addresses from the Register of Interests**

The County Council had proposed that Members' home addresses should be treated as sensitive and therefore should not be included in the Register of Interests. Councillors discussed this proposal and agreed that, although there were no specific concerns in this Parish, it would be prudent to follow the policy of the County Council. The Clerk will accordingly complete the County Council on-line survey.

##### **b) The Annual Newsletter**

Cllr May advised that the printers had now produced a draft which had been proof-read by the Clerk. It was expected therefore that the newsletters would soon be available for distribution by Councillors. Cllr May was thanked for all her excellent work to date on this project.

**Item 9. 24/84 Payment of Accounts**

TO	AMOUNT	REASON	VAT
Salaries	£ 615.14	Salaries July 2024	
Expenses	£ 110.00	Expenses July 2024	
Makepeace Landscapes	£ 2230.39	Horticulture July 2024	£371.73
DSJ Property Services	£ 410.00	Repairs to Bus Shelters	
<b>Total of Above Payments</b>	<b>£ 3365.53</b>		

**Payments Made by Debit Card and Direct Debit**

TO	AMOUNT	REASON	VAT
ANS Group Ltd	£ 46.25	Monthly Subscription - July 2024	£ 7.71
Tesco Stores Ltd	£ 38.35	Postage Stamps and Envelopes	£ .99
<b>Total Card and D/D Payments</b>	<b>£ 84.60</b>		

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

**Item 10. 24/85 Other Matters for Information**

- a) Re proposed changes to the Millennium Bed at Lombard Drive, the Clerk is to forward to the County Councillor correspondence to date with the County Council which the County Councillor will follow up.
- b) Cllr Gregory advised that a For Sale board had been erected on public land at the entrance to Lambton Park. The Clerk will advise the County Council Planning Enforcement team.
- c) The Chairman had observed work being carried out to the path between Low Flatts play area and Drum Industrial Estate.
- d) Cllr May advised of receipt of another scam email, purportedly from the Chairman. Councillors were advised to remain vigilant at all times.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 7.41pm.

**North Lodge Parish Council**

**Accounts for the month as submitted to the Meeting of North Lodge Parish Council held on Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> September 2024.**

TO	AMOUNT	REASON	VAT
Salaries	£ 615.14	Salaries August 2024	
Expenses	£ 110.00	Expenses August 2024	
Salaries	£	Salaries September 2024	
Expenses	£ 110.00	Expenses September 2024	
Makepeace Landscapes	£ 1882.39	Horticulture August 2024	£313.73
Makepeace Landscapes	£	Horticulture September 2024	£
DSJ Property Services	£ 420.00	Installation of Seat at Low Flatts	
HM Revenue & Customs	£	P.A.Y.E.	
HM Revenue & Customs	£	Employer's N.I.C.	
P. Driscoll	£ 195.00	Chair's Quarterly Allowance	
<b>Total of Above Payments</b>	<b>£</b>		

**Payments Made by Debit Card and Direct Debit**

TO	AMOUNT	REASON	VAT
ANS Group Ltd	£ 46.25	Monthly Subscription - August 2024	£ 7.71
ANS Group Ltd	£ 46.25	Monthly Subscription - Sept 2024	£ 7.71
Jak HQ Ltd	£ 486.00	Design and Printing of Newsletters	£ 16.00
<b>Total Card and D/D Payments</b>	<b>£ 578.50</b>		

**Balance to 31<sup>st</sup> July 2024**

Balance b/f	£68238.01	Balances at Bank:-	
Deduct Payments - July 2024	<u>£ 3365.53</u>	Treasurers Account	£ 615.13
	£64872.48	Instant Account	<u>£64243.29</u>
Deduct Card and D/D Payments	<u>£ 84.60</u>	Total	£64858.42
	£64787.88		
Add Bank Interest Received	<u>£ 70.54</u>	Deduct cheques not yet presented	<u>£ Nil</u>
Balance c/f	£64858.42		£64858.42