

West Rainton & Leamside Parish Council

Minutes of the Annual Meeting

held at 19:00

On Thursday 18th May 2023

At St Mary's Church Meeting Room, West Rainton

Present: Councillors I Diggory, M Massey, A Wallage (Chairperson) and K Wood.

In attendance:

M Ramshaw, Parish Clerk

NOTE The meeting was not audio or video recorded.

1) Election of Chairman for 2023/24

The outgoing Chairman Cllr Wallage opened the Meeting and asked Parish Councillors present for nominations for the Chairman for the coming year. Cllr Diggory proposed Cllr Wallage and this was seconded by Cllr Wood. **Parish Council resolved to approve** Cllr Wallage as Chairman for the upcoming year.

2) Declaration of Office

The declaration of acceptance of office form was duly completed and signed by Cllr Wallage and witnessed by the Parish Clerk.

3) Election of Vice Chairman

Cllr Wallage asked Parish Council for nominations for Vice Chairman. Cllr Diggory was proposed by Cllr Wood and this was seconded by Cllr Massey. **Parish Council resolved to approve** Cllr Diggory as Vice Chairman for the upcoming year.

4) Apologies

No apologies had been received prior to the meeting. Cllrs Boettcher, Kellett and Morson were not in attendance and had not submitted any apologies. **Parish Council resolved** to not approve these absences.

5) Declarations of interest

It was agreed that declarations of interest would be dealt with as and when the need arose.

Signature.....

Date.....

6) Appointments to Outside Bodies

Parish Council considered nominations and **resolved to agree** the following representative:

- West Rainton and LeamsideVillage Partnership – Cllr Wallage
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It was noted that Cllr Wood expressed an interest in representing the Parish Council at the Smaller Council Forum should Cllr Boettcher be happy to step down from this role. As Cllr Boettcher was not in attendance Parish Council resolved to defer this appointment until the June meeting.

7) Public Participation

No members of the public were present.

8) Minutes

Parish Council resolved that the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 20th April 2022 be approved as a correct record.

Signature.....

Date.....

9) FINANCE REPORT

PART A: FOR INFORMATION					
1. INCOME		Memorial Leaf (MC)	£167.00		
2. EXPENDITURE					
A) Expenditure previously agreed by Parish Council due this month					
ITEM	PAYEE	PURPOSE	AMOUNT (£)	CHEQUE NO.	
1	M Ramshaw	Parish Clerk Net Salary - May 23	441.19	303383	
2	HM Revenue and Customs Only 465PD00171320	HMRC Liability - May 23	110.40	303384	
3	Special Branch Tree Services NE Ltd	Village Green Maintenance - April 23	336.00	303385	
4	Special Branch Tree Services NE Ltd	Cemetery Maintenance - April 23	373.16	303386	
		TOTAL	1260.75		
B) Expenditure requiring approval					
ITEM	PAYEE	PURPOSE	AMOUNT (£)	BUDGET PROVISION	CHEQUE NO.
5	M Ramshaw	Reimbursement 1st class stamps x 8	8.80	Y	303387
6	DCC	Website Hosting and Support 2023/23	808.49	Y	303388
7	Odlings Ltd	Mulberry Leaf (DT)	97.80	Y	303389
8	Miss Annette Simpson	Internal Audit Fees yr end 31/3/23	220.00	Y	303390
9	G Coates	Village Maintenance work	90.00	Y	303391
10	Odlings Ltd	Mulberry Leaf (KC)	97.80	Y	303392
		TOTAL	1322.89		
Total Expenditure A + B			2583.64		

Parish Council resolved to:

1. Note income and expenditure reported for information.
2. Approve expenditure listed in Part B

Signature.....

Date.....

10) Internal Audit Report

The Parish Clerk advised members of the outcome from the internal audit. No issues had been raised. **Parish Council resolved** to note the contents of the report.

11) Draft Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2022/23

The Parish Clerk introduced the item and proceeded to go through the Annual Governance Statements to those present. **Parish Council resolved** to approve the Annual Governance Statements. The Parish Clerk then presented the Accounting Statements 2022/23 to the Parish Council. **Parish Council resolved** to approve the Accounting Statements. The Chairman and the Parish Clerk signed the required documentation.

12) Planning Applications

No planning applications had been received. No feedback necessary.

13) School Avenue Play Park Project

Cllr Wallage referred members to the previously circulated update report. She advised that funding applications had now been submitted by James Young from DCC in respect of the gym element of the project. However, the scheme on which was being sought had been cut back from that agreed with DCC and the Parish Council in February 23. There was a shortfall in funding available of £6113.49 due to there being less S106 monies available to bid for than previously advised. Consequently one item of equipment had been removed by James to match the funding available. There had been no consultation with the Parish Council before making this decision. Cllr Wallage has since made enquiries to confirm exactly what S106 monies had been received and where these had been allocated and was awaiting a response from the appropriate officer at DCC.

Members were asked consider the two options within the Report:

1. Funding the shortfall in the Gym scheme of £6113.49 from the Village Improvement Plan (VIP) Reserve Balance of £20k , to allow its preferred scheme to progress as planned.
2. Provisionally setting aside a further amount of £3326 from the VIP reserve to cover the cost of the street furniture for the non-gym element of the project to allow this to progress this year in case additional AAP funding cannot be secured, or to be used as match funding for a larger AAP application to include both a fence and the street furniture.

Members discussed the first option and **Parish Council resolved** to approve funding the shortfall to allow the preferred scheme to progress as planned.

Signature.....

Date.....

Members then discussed the second option and **Parish Council resolved** to approve setting aside a provisional sum for the cost of the street furniture part of the Project.

Cllr Wallage advised members she would continue to seek alternative funding for both options and that Parish Council funding would only be applied to the protect if no other funding was forthcoming within the required timescales.

14)Grant Funding Application

Cllr Wallage referred members to the circulated grant funding application from the Because We Care Project. **Parish Council resolved** to approve a grant of £300 to extend the Project for a further 6 months.

15)Arden House

Cllr Diggory advised members that further discussions with Believe Housing has taken place. Believe Housing have verbally advised on some conditions regarding taking up some form of lease on Arden House. £20000 as a minimum is required to be spent on the building which will include a full refurbishment. They have also advised that the agreement would fall outside of the Landlords Act legislation.

After some discussion it was agreed that a written proposal should be submitted by Believe Housing for final consideration and Cllr Diggory advised he would seek this from them.

16)Review of Cemetery Policy

The Parish Clerk referred members to the previously circulated report regarding a request from a resident for the Parish Council to amend its current policy on Grave Adornment. After detailed consideration, Parish Council concluded that the current policy was still appropriate and consequently it must be consistently applied. **Parish Council resolved** to agree to no changes to the current Policy.

17)Meetings Calendar 2023/24

Parish Councillors noted the dates for 2023/24 meetings.

18)West Rainton & Leamside Village Partnership

No meeting had taken place since the last Parish Council Meeting.

19)General Correspondence

The Clerk advised there was no correspondence for consideration.

20)Date and Time of Next Meeting

Parish Council noted the next Parish Meeting to be held on Thursday 15th June2023 at 19:00.

Signature.....

Date.....