

West Rainton & Leamside Parish Council
Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held at
19:00 On Thursday 20th June 2025
at St Mary's Church Meeting Room, West Rainton

Present: Councillors I Diggory (Chairperson), S Corfield, A Langford, M Stabler and K Wood

In Attendance:

Parish Clerk

Phil Heaviside (County Councillor – Lumley and West Rainton)

NOTE:

The meeting was not audio or video recorded.

1) Apologies for Absence

An apology had been received from Cllr Wallage (holiday).

Parish Council resolved to approve the absence of Cllr Wallage.

2) Declarations of interest

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

3) Public Participation

Cllr Heaviside commented that the new fence around the adult gym/children's park area looked good. He also advised that Cllr Bell was currently looking at a number of rights of way issues in the area.

4) Minutes of Previous Meeting

The Parish Clerk advised members that there had been an update to the original draft minutes circulated. Cllr Stabler had requested that the minutes be updated with his reason for abstaining on certain items.

Cllr Diggory advised members of comments on two further items that had been received. These did not lead to any further amendments.

Parish Council resolved that the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 15th May 2025 be approved as a correct record.

Signed:.....

Dated:.....

5) Finance Report

PART A: FOR INFORMATION			£		
1. INCOME		Durham Funeral Services (JM Interment CR/04)	215		
2. EXPENDITURE					
A) Expenditure previously agreed by Parish Council due this month					
ITEM	PAYEE	PURPOSE	Payment Method	AMOUNT (£)	
1	M Ramshaw	Parish Clerk Net Salary - June 25	BACS	497.82	
2	HM Revenue and Customs Only 465PD00171320	HMRC Liability - June 25	BACS	124.40	
3	Makepeace Landscapes	Cemetery Maintenance & 2 x hours strimming (Village)	BACS	708.00	
4	FR Surfacing Ltd	Tarmac Works - South Rd (Outside of Church entrance)	BACS	1800.00	
5	EON	Electricity Supply - Village Green	DD	30.00	
6	Lloyds	Debit Card Charge	DD	3.00	
7	Unity Bank	Account Service Charge	DD	6.00	
		TOTAL		3169.22	
B) Expenditure requiring approval					
ITEM	PAYEE	PURPOSE	Payment Method	AMOUNT (£)	BUDGET PROVISION
8	Durham County Council	Trade Waste Services - Cemetery	BACS	1025.44	Y
9	B & Q	20 x Multi-purpose Compost	Mastercard	110.00	Y
10	Cartridgesave.co.uk	1 x Black HP Ink Cartridge	Mastercard	39.46	Y
11	Greenbarnes Ltd	2 x Additional Keys for Noticeboards	BACS	16.87	Y
12	Mr G Coates	Village & Heritahe Garden maintenance (inc. weedkiller) and summer bedding plant planting	BACS	345.00	Y
13	St Marys Church	Room Hire x 6 meetings	BACS	120.00	Y
		TOTAL		1656.77	
Total Expenditure A + B				4825.99	

Parish Council resolved to:

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

6) Planning Applications

a) DCC Weekly Planning Applications

There were no DCC circulated planning applications.

b) Station Road Development – Planning Application Appeal

Cllr Diggory advised members of the original planning application which had been refused and acknowledged the public support from within the Parish for at least one 'shop' within the commercial development on the new site.

Signed:.....

Dated:.....

As a result of the public support Cllr Corfield contacted a number of companies to ascertain whether there would be any interest within the development. Whilst the Co-Op suggested they would look into it there was no firm commitment from any of the companies. One local businessman had also expressed an interest and his details would be passed to Woodside Developments.

As there are no firm proposals, **Parish Council resolved** that whilst some form of commercial development would be the preferred option, if this is not forthcoming then it would have no objection to the proposals for housing. Cllr Diggory agreed to draft the response which would be sent off by the Parish Clerk.

7) Jubilee Hall – Update from the Working Group

Cllr Wood updated members regarding the planned refurbishments and advised that an architect is now involved.

Cllr Langford advised members that the Group involved is still formally the Working Group but it is anticipated this will change after the AGM of the Community Association on 26th June 2025.

It is envisaged that some members of the Working Group will move to join the Management Team.

Cllr Langford informed members that the Working Group is working through what will be required moving forward with regards to any funding.

Cllr Stabler arrived for the rest of the meeting (19:28).

8) Notice of Motions

The following motions were moved by Cllr Stabler:

a) Data Protection Breach – Publication of parish clerks pay

This motion was seconded by Cllr Diggory. The Parish Clerk advised that it was not a concern and was happy with the current detail recorded. No further action.

b) Introduction of a Service Level Agreement – to outline expectations for responding to telephone calls and emails

This motion was not seconded. This was due to the part-time nature of the Parish Clerk Support (10hrs per week). No further action.

c) Emergency delegated powers to parish clerk – to deal with 3 specific emergency situations

This motion was not seconded as Financial Regulations (5.18) already cover emergency situations and Parish Clerk delegated powers. No further action.

d) Freedom of Information Disclosure Log - to be made available on the Parish Council website

This motion was not seconded. Historically the Parish Council has received a very small number of FOI requests and all from the same resident. It was deemed unnecessary to create further work by maintaining a log. No further action.

Signed:.....

Dated:.....

e) Automated External Defibrillator (AED) – installation of an additional defibrillator

Cllr Diggory seconded this motion. Parish Council discussed that more details would be required, to include siting and maintenance requirements as well as seeking permission regarding a proposed site. Cllr Stabler was asked to compile a report including detailed costings and bring it to a future meeting for consideration.

f) West Rainton by PHILIP RONAN – to make the publication available on the Parish Council website

Cllr Diggory seconded this motion. **Parish Council resolved** to include a link to the publication (which is already available online) on the Parish Council website.

g) To install a permanent Christmas tree on the village green

This motion was not seconded. The costs identified were inclusive of VAT which is reclaimed. Parish Council also felt that there would be still ongoing costs around decorating the tree with lights as well as being much smaller than the trees currently supplied each year. No further action.

h) Correction to data protection registration

Cllr Diggory seconded this motion. The Parish Clerk advised that he had not been aware that the Certificate hadn't been updated but that he had made the relevant amendments with the Information Commissioners Office and as such the Certificate had been updated. No further action.

9) Summer Planting / Heritage Garden Maintenance

The Parish Clerk advised members that the planting for the summer bedding was now complete. The Heritage Garden is in need of some work including repair work to the block paving. The two benches are also in need of renovation or replacement. Cllr Wallage is to bring a report to a future Parish Council meeting.

10) General Correspondence

The Parish Clerk advised that there were three items:

- An enquiry regarding a fenced off dog exercising area – Cllr Diggory advised that he believed there was such an area attached to the Farmhouse Kitchen café in Leamside and that he would obtain details.
- The Mayors Charity – To be included on July's agenda,
- A thankyou from a resident who had enquired about a memorial bench and was grateful for the support she had received from the Parish Council

11) Date and time of next meeting

It was noted that the next meeting is Thursday 17th July 2025 at 7.00pm

Cllr Diggory advised members that he was pausing Standing Orders as he wished to raise some concerns.

Signed:.....

Dated:.....

He advised that there were concerns for the health and well-being of the Parish Clerk due to an unreasonable volume of emails and the tone they were written in from a serving Councillor.

Cllr Diggory felt that these amount to harassment and that they were not in keeping with the way the Parish Council operates and its relationship with the Parish Clerk.

Cllr Diggory recommended setting up a moderation system for emails to the Clerk from all Parish Councillors. The moderators would assess the content and appropriateness of emails and then, where appropriate, send them onto the Parish Clerk. The Parish Clerk was advised to forward any emails sent directly to him by a serving councillor to the lead moderator.

This moderation scheme would initially be in place until the next Parish Council meeting where it can then be reviewed. Cllr Wood agreed to be one moderator and Cllr Corfield agreed to be the second.

Signed:.....

Dated:.....