

Item 12

Notices of 11 Motions:

a) **Station Road development concerns**

Motion: That local residents' concerns are noted and the Parish Council monitors the ongoing situation.

Station Road Development concern has been raised by locals that the development may have stalled due to a significant number of housing developments currently in the area. This is concerning in the event that the develop remains unfinished roads, footpaths, release of S106 funds, reopening of public footpath 8 (temporary closure until 03 March 2026 or until completion of the works, whichever is the earlier). I move that local residents 'concerns are noted and the Parish Council monitors the ongoing situation.

b) **War Memorial Valuation**

Motion: That the Parish Council increases the value of the War Memorial to a minimum of £7,600 (original cost-plus compound inflation), and seeks advice from Historic England, The War Memorial Trust or Imperial War Museum for guidance about establishing a more realistic valuation for insurance purposes.

The Parish Council as custodian of the War Memorial WM Reference 10249 Grade 2 listed (erected by public donation at a cost of £121 by a previous generation as a physical symbol and location to remember and respect those who served, fought or died in conflict) has place a nominal value of £1 (Asset Register) on this historic structure which was unveiled on the 13 November 1921 (source Historic England). Whilst a monetary value can never be placed upon those that made the ultimate sacrifice for their country (1914-18 60 names 1939-45 12 names). I feel that this derisory amount does not adequately reflect the true value of the memorial. I move that the Parish Council increases the value of the War Memorial to a minimum of £7,600 (original cost-plus compound inflation), and seeks advice from Historic England, The War Memorial Trust or Imperial War Museum for guidance about establishing a more realistic valuation for insurance purposes.

c) **Adoption of an Information Management System**

Motion: That the Parish Council immediately introduces a unique distinct identification number (UIN) to all documents, communications, emails, letters , calls, complaints, internal reports / advice, NALC / CDALC / SLCC communications, FOI, SARS, Asset Register etc.

To improve the Parish Council's information management systems to increase the efficient and effective use of Parish Council resources. I move that the Parish Council immediately introduces a unique distinct identification number (UIN) to all documents, communications, emails, letters , calls, complaints, internal reports / advice, NALC /

CDALC / SLCC communications, FOI, SARS, Asset Register etc. That will allow officers, members and the general public to be able to rapidly identify, track and access information held by the Parish Council.

d) Creation of a Cemetery Group

Motion: That the Parish Council commences a 6-month consultation exercise to gauge public interest in the creation of "A Friends of West Rainton and Leamside Cemetery Group" similar to other groups throughout the country.

e) Cemetery Maintenance

Motion: That the Parish Council updates its cemetery regulations to increase the size of adult graves to 9ft x 4 ft which takes into account both vertical and horizontal spacing between burials, the cemetery maintenance contract is reviewed to ensure areas within grave surrounds and headstones are maintained, and where families have opt-out the councils work flexibly and in partnership with the bereaved.

Concern has been raised by local residents about the general untidy appearance of areas of the cemetery in particular overgrown areas within grave surrounds / around headstones which is having a detrimental effect on the overall appearance of the cemetery. Having reviewed Parish Council Regulations (2000 to present) this in part has been directly caused by the Parish Council reducing the adult grave dimensions 9ft x 4ft set by Secretary of State, currently 7ft x 3ft and previously 6ft x 2ft 6 inches which has resulted in graves being closely spaced which has directly affected the methods employed by contractors cutting the grass. (Unfortunately, I have been unable to review the current cemetery maintenance contract which has been requested but not supplied). The current cemetery regulations allow grave owners to opt-out, as the Parish Council exercises day-to-day control over the cemetery land regardless of ownership. The Parish Council recognises it bears ultimate responsibility for the safety, maintenance and upkeep of the entire cemetery regardless of whether bereaved families feel that they have been left with no other choice but to opt out. I move that the Parish Council updates its cemetery regulations to increase the size of adult graves to 9ft x 4 ft which takes into account both vertical and horizontal spacing between burials, the cemetery maintenance contract is review to ensure areas within grave surrounds and headstones are maintained, and where families have opt-out the councils work flexible and in partnership with the bereaved.

Regulation of graves

33.20

The Secretary of State can make orders on the management, regulation and control of cemeteries¹, and his predecessors made such regulations². The older ones (in so far as they are not superseded) required grave spaces to measure at least 9 ft x 4 ft for adults; and either 6 ft x 3 ft or 4 1/2 ft x 4 ft for children under twelve; only one body might be buried at one time in a common grave except in the case of members of the same family; no unwall'd grave might be opened in the case of adults for at least fourteen years, and in the case of children for at least eight, save to bury another member of the same family, and the bricks of vaults and walled graves containing coffins are never to be disturbed.

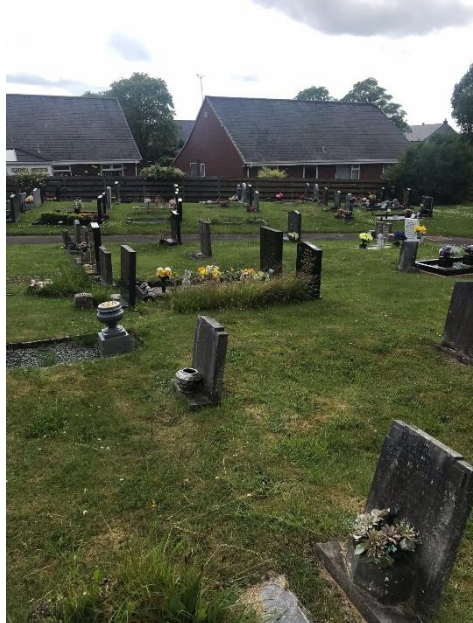
More recent regulations make additional provision³, of which the most important is that no burial, scattering of ashes, erection of a tombstone or memorial or the making of any additional inscription on such, is to be carried out without the permission of the proper officer of the authority.

#FootnoteB

¹ Local Government Act 1972, s 214(3).

² Under Burial Act 1852, s 44. These regulations were not printed in the series of Statutory Rules and Orders.

³ Local Authorities Cemeteries Order 1977, SI 1977/204, Sch 2, Part I.





WEST RANTON & LEAMSIDE PARISH COUNCIL RULES, REGULATIONS AND FEES, 2007

DIMENSION OF GRAVE.	6ft x 2ft 6inches.
GRAVE PURCHASE:	
Double	£110.00
Single:	£ 80.00
CREMATED REMAINS.	
New Plot 18" x 18"	£ 15.00
INTERMENT FEE	
Re-opening of grave	£ 10. 00
CHILD under 2 years old	FREE
MEMORIAL FEES:	£ 10. 00
MEASUREMENTS NOT TO EXCEED 2ft 6" in width x 2ft 9" in height	

Grave surrounds are allowed but must not exceed the stated dimension parameters of 6ft x 2ft 6". Any surrounds should be of commercial quality and be laid to professional standards.
Please Note: The Parish Council reserves the right to make alterations if these standards are breached.

Prior to the erection of headstones and monuments of the laying of grave surrounds permission must be obtained via the Clerk to the Parish Council to ensure conformity to the laid down standards and dimensions.

Relatives of the interred person are responsible for the upkeep of the grave and are generally liable in case of injuries to persons suffered as a result of a poorly maintained grave, e.g. falling or leaning headstones, etc., .

The cost of interring a person who was a resident of the parish at the time of death shall be standard. This applies to persons residing in a nursing home but formerly a resident.

The cost of interring a person who was not a resident of the parish but lived outside the parish boundaries shall be DOUBLE

The above rules will be strictly adhered to.

Elizabeth Briggs - Clerk to Council
17 Church Vale., High Pitington
(On behalf of West Rainton & Leamside Parish Council)
March 2007



WEST RANTON & LEAMSIDE PARISH COUNCIL RULES, REGULATIONS AND FEES, 2006

DIMENSION OF GRAVE.	6ft x 2ft 6inches.
GRAVE PURCHASE:	
Double	£110.00
Single:	£ 80.00
CREMATED REMAINS.	
New Plot 18" x 18"	£ 15.00
INTERMENT FEE	
Re-opening of grave	£ 10. 00
CHILD under 2 years old	FREE
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The cost of interring a person who was not a resident of the parish but lived outside the parish boundaries shall be DOUBLE

The above rules will be strictly adhered to.

Elizabeth Briggs - Clerk to Council
17 Church Vale., High Pitington
(On behalf of West Rainton & Leamside Parish Council)
May 2006.

f) **Financial Regulations**

Motion: Proposed Amendment to West Rainton and Leamside Parish Financial Regulation Item 5.18 to ensure more stringent financial management of council resources by the Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) and an appropriate level of oversight by Members.

Proposed Amendment to West Rainton and Leamside Parish Financial Regulation Item 5.18 to ensure more stringent financial management of council resources by the Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) and an appropriate level of oversight by Members. The policy as currently worded has the potential of allowing the unlimited authorisation of multiple distinctly separate expenditures under this regulation each up to the value of £2,000 with no financial cap / budget without prior council approval in any financial year. Potentially leaving the Parish Council in theory with liabilities that may exceed its available resources - Precept £41,483 (2025/26). Examination of the Parish Councils minutes for the last 5 years shows this scenario may be highly unlikely but it is only prudent to implement safeguarding measure against this possibility to ensure public resources. I move with immediate effect the establishment of a Contingency Fund up to the value of £2,000 (approximately 5% of Council Precept £41,483 (25/26)), the Parish Clerk shall immediately report such action to all members, and to the Council at the next Parish Council meeting.

Current Financial Regulation 5.18

5.18. In cases of serious risk to the delivery of Council services or to public safety on Council premises, the Clerk may authorise expenditure of up to £2,000 excluding VAT on repair, replacement or other work that in their judgement is necessary, whether or not there is any budget for such expenditure. The Clerk shall report such action to the Chair as soon as possible and to the Council as soon as practicable thereafter.

Proposed Financial Regulation 5.18

5.18. In cases of serious risk to the delivery of Council services or to public safety on Council premises, the Clerk may authorise expenditure on repair, replacement or other work that in their judgement is necessary, such expenditure may only be allocated from the Contingency Budget. The Clerk shall immediately report such action to all members, and the Council at the next Parish Council Meeting

g) Road Safety – Moorsley Road

Motion: That the Parish Council write to Durham County Council's Highways Department to raise the issue of road safety on this section of road and supports the installation of traffic management / calming measures and street lighting.

Motion Road Safety Moorsley Road (Pittington Crossing) between the Old Durham County Council Depot / Pittington Beck and junction with Pittington Road in the vicinity of the public bridleway – walker, horse riders and cyclist only, Path Reference Number 25 affected length of road approximately 0.145 miles – 3 residential properties (speed limit 60 mph). Concern has been raised about road safety in this area following a serious road traffic accidents in recent years due to speeding traffic which had the potential for traffic / pedestrian fatalities in the proximity to the Public Bridleway. I move the Parish Council write to Durham County Council's Highways Department to raise the issue of road safety on this section of road and supports the installation of traffic management / calming measures and street lighting.

[Definitive Public Rights of Way map online - Durham County Council](#)



h) **Public Transport**

Motion: That West Rainton and Leamside Parish Council writes to Durham County Council's Integrated Passenger Transport Team (copying the Lumley and West Rainton Division County Councillor's into this communication) about re-establishing this hourly bus route through the village to service the local population.

West Rainton is currently only serviced by the [Go North East 20 and 20A](#) services in respect of Public Transport following the discontinuation of an hourly X20 express service through West Rainton (following the original main route between Durham and Sunderland), the reason given for the discontinuation of this service by the bus operating company related to a perceived problem with buses rejoining the A690 dual carriageway at Rainton Gate. The X20 service now completely bypasses the village on the A690 thus depriving the Population of West Rainton approximately 3,000 people of this additional service. Following Durham County Council investment in the installation of traffic lights at Rainton Gate in 2023 at a total public cost / expenditure of £1,272,912.92 and the speed limit begin 50 mph at West Rainton. I move that West Rainton and Leamside Parish Council writes to Durham County Council's Integrated Passenger Transport Team (copying the Lumley and West Rainton Division County Councillor's into this communication) about re-establishing this hourly bus route through the village to service the local population.

i) **Road Safety – Station Road**

Motion: That the Parish Council raises the issue of road safety on Station Road Bank with DCC Planning and Highways Departments to see whether additional off-road parking can be provided by Banks Homes or Durham County Council alternatively traffic calming measure in the form of a "Priority to Oncoming Traffic" contra flow system heading towards West Rainton from Leamside can be installed.

At the Annual Parish Council held May 2025 the matter of road safety on the banked section of Station Road and the possible installation of additional off-street parking was discussed. The Parish Council was briefed by a Lumley and West Rainton Division County Councillor that Banks Homes had sort permission to install additional off-street parking. The Planning Department under delegated authority had refused permission on the grounds that it would prevent the planting of trees in the area between the boundary of the site, and Station Road a strip of land measuring approximately 10 to 12 metres in width. Having contacted DCC Planning, DCC Highways and Banks Homes they have confirmed no additional planning application have been submitted or refused for off-street parking, and there are no trees been planted outside the confines of the site.

Examination of the attached plan show the Development includes a large Meadow / Wild flower area at the bottom of Station Road which includes limited off-street Parking (formerly The Old Station Inn). The Parish Council recognises that resident living on Station Road have a right to park outside their own homes, but this needs to be balance against road safety as there is potential for fatalities and serious road traffic accidents with the increase of road traffic associated to the development.

The original Station Road development was refused on the grounds that a grade separated road junction had to be constructed on the A690. Examination of the Planning Application for the Station Road (150 dwellings £284,950 to £509,950) and Allenson View (65 dwellings start from £359,995) Developments show no S106 Agreement to specifically improve either section of road. DM/17/03214/FPA Allenson View (65 dwellings) clearly shows Decision Approved subject to S106 Agreement 08 Feb 2019 , and 8/CMA/4/112 Cathedral Meadows (150 dwellings) Decision Approved subject to S106 Agreement dated 13 Jan 2016. Governance Review shows Electorate of West Rainton and Leamside number of dwellings would be likely to yield a further 401 electors (no figure for increased population specified). I move that the Parish Council raises the issue of road safety on Station Road Bank with DCC Planning and Highways Departments to see whether additional off-road parking can be provided by Bank Homes or Durham County Council alternatively traffic calming measure in the form of a "Priority to Oncoming Traffic" contra flow system heading towards West Rainton from Leamside can be installed.

Extract DCC Planning Portal:

*Planning Application 8/CMA/4/112 150 Dwellings Station Road S106 £50,000
Community Contribution, £25,000 Highway Contribution A(1) M Carrville
Interchange, £75,000 Open Space Contributions.*

*Planning Application DM/17/03214/FPA Erection 65 Dwellings £6,000 new bus stops
Benridge Bank, £130,752 Belmont Community School*

j) Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) Consultation

Motion: The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman will be charged with investigating complaints from individual members of the public that they suffered injustice arising from maladministration in all local authorities, and be able to recommend redress to remedy that injustice including financial compensation. I move the Parish Council notes the ongoing consultation.

Local Government Reorganisation the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government is currently consulting on proposals to strengthen Parish and Town Council's Accountability by extending the remit of the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO). Under current legislation anyone that has suffered an injustice arising from maladministration by a Parish or Town Council does not have an independent route for seeking redress other than a challenge in the High Court by way of a judicial review claim which is expensive costing tens of thousands of pounds. The National Association of Local Council's (NALC) has responded to the consultation fully supports the proposal to include all Parish and Town Councils regardless of size (not just limiting the proposal to the larger parish and town councils). The proposal if adopted will extend the remit of the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman to include Parish and Town Councils (local government change that is long overdue - a consultation process that originally commenced in 2015). The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman will be charged with investigating complaints from individual members of the public that they suffered injustice arising from maladministration in all local authorities, and be able to recommend redress to remedy that injustice including financial compensation. I move the Parish Council notes the ongoing consultation.

The Government understands that there may be an argument for extending the jurisdiction of the Local Government Ombudsman to less populous parish and town councils. Respondents are invited to indicate their preferred population threshold. The table below indicates how many parish and town councils would be in the jurisdiction of the Local Government Ombudsman if the threshold were set at various population levels. Population threshold Approximate number of parish and town councils within jurisdiction

1,000 and more	2,640
5,000 and more	803
10,000 and more	444
20,000 and more	155
30,000 and more	26
35,000 and more	21
40,000 and more	11

k) Number of Parish Council Meetings

Motion: Propose standing orders are immediately amended so that the parish council holds 6 bimonthly meetings annually in May, July, September, November, January and March.

I move that the Parish Council amends its standing orders to attract more candidates to become Parish Councillors. The Council recognises its current schedule of 10 meetings is a significant time commitment for the vast majority of potential candidates at elections / bye-elections / co-option resulting in uncontested elections and vacant seats. Local Government Act 1972 Schedule 12 para 8(1) only requires the Parish Council to hold a minimum of 4 meetings annually. I propose standing order are immediately amended so that the parish council holds 6 bimonthly meetings annually in May, July, September, November, January and March.

l) Access to Village Green Map

Motion: I move that the Parish Council makes available on its website the Village Green Map for ease of reference for local residents.

<https://maps.durham.gov.uk/OLBasic2/Index.aspx?appid=70>