

West Rainton & Leamside Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held at 19:00

On Thursday 20th June 2024

At St Mary's Church Meeting Room, West Rainton

Present: Councillors I Diggory (Chairperson), B Kellett, A Wallage and K Wood.

In attendance:

M Ramshaw, Parish Clerk

Allan Langford, Co-option candidate

NOTE The meeting was not audio or video recorded.

1) Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Cllr Boettcher (family event), Cllr Massey (family bereavement) and Cllr Morson (work). **Parish Council resolved** to approve these absences.

2) Declarations of interest

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

Cllr Wood advised that he would have a declaration of interest (item 10). It was agreed this should be raised when the item was reached.

3) Public Participation

No members of the public were present.

4) Minutes of Previous Meeting

Parish Council resolved that the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 16th May 2024 be approved as a correct record.

5) Co-option to Parish Councillor Vacancies

The Parish Clerk advised members that one application had been received from Allan Langford. Alan was in attendance and spoke about himself and the reasons he was interested in becoming a Parish Councillor. **Parish Council**

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Date.....

resolved to co-opt Allan onto the Parish Council. The acceptance form was signed and witnessed by the Parish Clerk.

6) Finance Report

PART A: FOR INFORMATION					
1. INCOME	Memorial Heedstone - Eden Memorials (Farrarr 1024)	£98.00	BACS		
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 24	BACS	482.55	
2	HM Revenue and Customs Only 465PD00171320	HMRC Liability - June 24	BACS	120.60	
3	Special Branch Tree Services NE Ltd	Village Maintenance - May 24	BACS	336.00	
4	Special Branch Tree Services NE Ltd	Cemetery maintenance - May 24	BACS	391.81	
5	EON	Electricity Supply - April	Direct Debit	30.00	
		TOTAL		1360.96	
B) Expenditure requiring approval					
ITEM	PAYEE	PURPOSE	Payment Method	AMOUNT (£)	BUDGET PROVISION
6	G Coates	Village maintenance (Heritage Garden, village signs, Jubilee Hall & war memorial) clear and plant planters	BACS	450.00	Y
7	Durham County Council	Trade Waste - Annual Contract	BACS	976.56	Y
		TOTAL		1426.56	
Total Expenditure A + B				£2,787.52	

Parish Council resolved to:

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

7) Planning Applications

The Parish Clerk referred members to the two planning applications that had been circulated by Durham County Council.

Cllr Kellett expressed his concerns regarding the application (DM/24/01186/HRN) to remove 14m of hedgerow. He advised that this was becoming more and more common and questioned how it would be replaced. Cllr Diggory agreed to write to DCC regarding this application and express the Parish Council's concerns around the replacement of the hedge.

There were no comments on the second application.

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8) Cemetery – Review of Cemetery Rules and Regulations

Cllr Wallage referred members to the report and a draft document reflecting proposed amendments to Cemetery Rules and Regulations that had been previously circulated. She advised members that the documents had been prepared following a great deal of research and a visit to the cemetery at Belmont who, like the majority of other cemeteries regionally and nationally, have a policy of no kerb sets in place. Feedback from members of the public who had previously made representations to the Parish Council had also been considered.

It was acknowledged that the current policy relating to the designated “lawn” burial area and the related grave adornment policy provides very little option for families to personalise their loved one’s graves in this current and future new burial areas.

Parish Council discussed the report and the options included within it.

Parish Council resolved to approve the draft Rules and Regulations document but noted that the document will remain in draft at this stage while all other cemetery related policies are reviewed.

9) Parish Council Plan (Annual Plan - 2024/25)

Cllr Wallage referred members to the updated 2024/25 annual plan document previously circulated. She highlighted the updates since the plan was approved in March, in particular an update on the Outdoor Gym and advised that the equipment had been ordered by DCC but they have not yet been able to provide an expected implementation date. It was agreed that the painting of the cemetery gates, as proposed by a resident at the Annual Parish Meeting, is also to be added to the plan. It was agreed to bring the Plan back each quarter for monitoring and review.

10) Proposal for 2-way Electric Vehicle Charging Point (EVCP)

Cllr Diggory introduced the previously circulated report and advised that there was some confusion as to what the report was about and who was bringing the report seeking Parish Council’s approval to the installation of the EVCP and the creation of a parking space on the Village Green outside Jubilee Hall.

Cllr Wood advised that he is involved with a community project group looking to support improvements at Jubilee Hall and that he was able to give information to this group about a Regional Project relating to the installation of 2-way EVCP that could help support the Hall with its energy efficiency plans and develop the Hall as a safe warm place in case of a community emergency. Cllr Wood provided more detail about the proposal and how it would work in practice. Other members raised concerns about the lack of any formal consultation on the proposal by the company involved and by the Trustees of Jubilee Hall, the legality of the proposal given the land outside Jubilee Hall is registered village

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green and the lack of any apparent consultation with DCC as the Highway Authority and Planning Authority.

Cllr Wood advised that he was a consultant working for Cybermore, (the lead Partner Company of the Regional Project) involved in the consultation with community groups and local councils over the roll out of these charging points.

In view of Cllr Woods clarified declaration of interests in this proposal, he was asked to leave the room and he took no further part in the discussion.

Further discussion of the proposal and consideration of information provided verbally by Cllr Wood highlighted the need for further clarity and information from independent sources.

Parish Council resolved to defer any decision pending consultation with the interested parties to include the trustees from the Jubilee Hall and the actual Company seeking Parish Council approval to install the charging point/parking bay. It was also agreed that advice would be sought from DCC Highways and Planning.

Cllr Wood returned to the room.

11) Financial Regulations

The Parish Clerk referred members to the previously circulated revised regulations. These are based on a template from NALC. **Parish Council resolved** to approve the financial regulations.

12) Standing Orders

The Parish Clerk referred members to the previously circulated revised regulations. These are based on a template from NALC. **Parish Council resolved** to approve the Standing Orders.

13) Planning for the future

Cllr Diggory deferred this item to the next Parish Council meeting.

14) West Rainton & Leamside Village Partnership

Cllr Diggory referred members to the briefing note that he had previously shared. The main focus of discussion was the Partnership applying to become a Charity.

15) Smaller Councils Forum

No information available.

16) General Correspondence

The Parish Clerk advised that there were two items.

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The first was correspondence received regarding the clock at St Mary's Church. It is currently out of order. Price to repair £3930.00. The Church are looking to gain funding for the repair.

The second correspondence was regarding a Park That Bike Project. This would lead to free secure bike parking being installed in the Village. Members considered the information and agreed to share any ideas regarding a site for a bike rack/store.

17) Date and Time of Next Meeting

Parish Council noted the next Parish Meeting to be held on Thursday 18th July 2024 at 19:00.

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