

West Rainton & Leamside Parish Council
Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held at
19:00 On Thursday 21st November 2024
at St Mary's Church Meeting Room, West Rainton

Present: Councillors I Diggory (Chairperson), B Kellett, A Wallage, M Massey
A Langford, K Wood and P Morson

In Attendance: Mark Ramshaw (Parish Clerk)
Steven Corfield (Co-option candidate)

NOTE:

The meeting was not audio or video recorded.

1) Apologies for Absence

An apology was received from Cllr Boettcher (family bereavement) **Parish Council resolved** to approve this absence.

2) Declarations of interest

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

3) Public Participation

No members of the public were present.

4) Minutes of Previous Meeting

a) Approval of Minutes

Parish Council resolved that the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 17th October 2024 be approved as a correct record.

b) Update on actions taken

Cllr Diggory advised that he had asked the Parish Clerk to contact Richard from the Green Group regarding the consideration of developing a wider tree planting plan for the Parish. The Parish Clerk advised that Richard had responded and said he would take it to the next meeting of the Green Group on December 5th 2024 and report back to the Parish Council after that date.

5) Co-option to Parish Councillor Vacancy

The Parish Clerk advised members that one application had been received from Steven Corfield. Steven was in attendance and spoke about himself and the reasons he was interested in becoming a Parish Councillor. **Parish Council resolved** to co-opt Steven onto the Parish Council. The acceptance form was signed and witnessed by the Parish Clerk.

Signed:.....

Dated:.....

6) Finance Report

PART A: FOR INFORMATION					
1. INCOME		Income from DCC for S106 - Marmax Furniture	£3,772.00		
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 - November	BACS	604.68	
2	HM Revenue and Customs Only 465PD00171320	HMRC Liability - November	BACS	151.00	
3	M Ramshaw	Parish Clerk Net Salary - December	BACS	497.82	
4	HM Revenue and Customs Only 465PD00171320	HMRC Liability - December	BACS	124.40	
5	Special Branch Tree Services NE Ltd	Cemetery maintenance - October 24	BACS	391.81	
6	Special Branch Tree Services NE Ltd	Village maintenance - October 24	BACS	336.00	
7	Royal British Legion	Poppy Wreath	Debit Card	24.49	
8	WR&LVP	Friends of JH membership	BACS	25.00	
9	Lloyds Bank	Service Charge (Debit Card)	Direct Debit	3.00	
10	Unity Trust Bank	Service Charge	Direct Debit	5.40	
11	EON	Electricity Supply - November & December	Direct Debit	60.00	
		TOTAL		£2,223.60	
B) Expenditure requiring approval					
ITEM	PAYEE	PURPOSE	Payment Method	AMOUNT (£)	BUDGET PROVISION
12	G Coates	Village/Planters maintenance	BACS	200.00	Y
13	Durham County Council	Festive Lighting / supply, erection & disposal of Christmas tree	BACS	3010.12	Y
14	Pittington Brass Band	Donation for Christmas performance	BACS	150.00	Y
15	Anglian Water Business (National) Ltd	Cemetery Water Supply - 2/8-1/11/24	BACS	25.77	Y
		TOTAL		£3,385.89	
Total Expenditure A + B				£5,609.49	

Parish Council resolved to:

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

The Parish Clerk advised that there had been a discrepancy in the payment to Gedney Bulb Company that had been reported in October as £128.40 when the actual invoice and amount paid was £109.20.

7) Planning Applications

No planning applications within the Parish had been circulated by Durham County Council since the last meeting.

8) Annual Plan 2024/25

Cllr Diggory referred members to the previously circulated updated Annual Plan 2024/25.

Signed:.....

Dated:.....

Discussions took place around some of the Plan.

Section 1.3 – Application to DCC to register footpath. Cllr Wallage advised members that there has been a lot of concerns raised by residents about the extent of tree felling in the area of the unregistered public footpath. Cllr Wallage informed members that the Forestry Commission has confirmed that a new felling licence was granted May 2024. This license requires all stakeholders affected by the felling to be advised of the new license prior to the commencement of felling. This has not been the case. Cllr Wallage agreed to write to the forestry commission to raise this issue and ask about its monitoring arrangements. A copy of the new licence is to be circulated to all members.

Section 2.1 – Consideration of traffic calming measures. Progress on the implementation of any measures, in addition to the “slow” road markings installed some years ago on the Old Sunderland Road by DCC, has stalled due to the lack of response from DCC to more recent attempts to consider other measures. It is considered likely that this lack of response is due to previous views expressed that other measures would not meet the necessary criteria, be ineffective or unaffordable. If the lack of DCC funding is still an issue, it was felt that if costings were available the Parish Council could then consider whether it could fund any additional measures and/ or work to secure additional funding in the future. Cllr Diggory agreed to write to DCC to try and progress.

Section 2.3 – Cllr Wallage advised the Community Emergency Plan is nearing completion.

Section 4.9 – Members discussed the continuing issues regarding parking around the Doctors Surgery. Cllr Wallage advised that the Practice Manager is trying to arrange another meeting with the appropriate DCC officers to try and resolve but was struggling to get a response from a DCC contact to attend. Cllr Wallage advised that she had passed on the name of a contact in the Estates Department who may be able to assist. Cllr Wallage advised she will attend the meeting once convened.

Section 4.13 – Quotes for Tarmac Repairs – attempts to be made to obtain 2 further comparable quotes.

9) School Avenue Park Project Fencing

Cllr Diggory advised that a budget estimate for the installation of fencing to enclose the seating areas, the gym and the existing play park into a family park area had been obtained. This was considered affordable given grant funding opportunities from S106 monies and the level of Parish Council Reserves. Cllrs Diggory and Wallage subsequently met on site with representatives from DCC to discuss and seek their support to fencing proposals. Any boulders no longer needed once fencing is installed will be relocated by DCC free of charge to fill gaps in the boulders on the green opposite the garage. A quotation for 2 fencing options is awaited from DCC.

Signed:.....

Dated:.....

10) Cemetery Maintenance Contract 2025/26

The Parish Clerk referred members to the report. **Parish Council discussed the situation and resolved** to approve option 2 and waive standing orders due to the performance of the current contractor and his expertise/experience of working in West Rainton Cemetery. The Parish Clerk agreed to seek an annual price from the existing contractor.

11) Cemetery Noticeboard

The Parish Clerk referred members to the information circulated.

The Parish Clerk referred members to the previously circulated report. The cemetery noticeboard had been damaged during a storm beyond repair. The Council's insurers had confirmed the damage would be covered by our policy. However, due to the Parish Council being in a 3 year insurance agreement, any claim which would be more than 40% of the annual premium would negate the long-term agreement at the time of the next annual renewal (March 25). A new insurance quote would need to be obtained that would inevitably be higher than that due under the current 3 year agreement.

Parish Council asked the Parish Clerk to try and obtain further information to clarify the implications and costs if the Parish Council did claim.

Parish Council resolved to install the replacement on the Cemetery Wall to reduce the risk of similar damage occurring in the future.

12) West Rainton & Leamside Village Partnership feedback

Cllr Diggory advised that he was unable to attend the last meeting of the Partnership. He advised that the Partnership continue to work towards charitable status.

13) Smaller Councils Forum

No attendees were present from the Parish Council.

14) General Correspondence

The Parish Clerk advised there was no general correspondence for discussion.

15) Date and time of next meeting

It was noted that the next meeting is Thursday 16th January at 7.00pm

Signed:.....

Dated:.....