

West Rainton & Leamside Parish

Annual Parish Meeting

**Held at St Mary's Church Meeting Room, West
Rainton on Thursday 8th May 2025 at 6.30 pm**

1. Present

West Rainton and Leamside Parish Councillors: Ian Diggory (Chairperson), Alan Langford and Kevin Wood
M Ramshaw – Parish Clerk (Minute Taker)
Durham County Councillors: Alan Bell and Phil Heaviside
8 x Members of the Public

2. Chairmans's introduction

Cllr Diggory welcomed everyone to the meeting and introductions were made.

3. Consideration of the minutes from the Annual Parish Meeting 9th May, 2024

The minutes of the previous meeting held 9th May 2024 were agreed.

4. Chairman to present 2024/25 Annual Report of the Parish Council

Cllr Diggory discussed the contents of the Parish Councils Annual report. This included the financial position of the Parish Council and the work that the Council had done throughout the Year.

He commented on the two Planning Applications regarding the proposed relocation of the Russell Foster Football League to Leamside and the issues around the 'Hub' that is a part of the Banks Homes development.

Cllr Wood also stated that where people and organisations approach the Parish Council for help, the Parish Council has acted and supported wherever possible.

5. Public Participation

A member of the public advised those present that in the past the Village Partnership has issued a welcome pack for new residents but that had now been phased out and replaced by the Village News. Copies of the Village News have been left at the Banks Site and the School for any potential house purchasers and people who may be moving into the area.

A member of the public said thank you to the Parish Council for its ongoing work acknowledging that they felt many people don't appreciate the work the Parish Council does.

The issue of road safety was raised as a major concern. Concerns around speeding traffic on the 'top road' and the increase in traffic once the retail area within the new development is open were discussed.

A member of the public raised the issue of footpaths and whether it was possible for the Parish Council to look at joining existing footpaths to connect West Rainton and Leamside.

A tree planting scheme was discussed by a member of the public. This had been developed alongside Believe Housing by the Green Group. The Green Group completed a report and this was shared with Believe Housing.

County Councillor Bell shared some information around the planting of fruit trees. The member of the public advised that an area of County Council land at Middle Rainton had been developed and 24-26 fruit trees had been planted 2-3 years ago. Two noticeboards are also being developed, one for the history of the area.

Another member of the public raised an issue of walking from the bottom of Marks Lane to Finchale Abbey as the path ends and there is nowhere to walk along Pithouse Lane and how it would be useful to connect the two areas.

A member of the public thanked the Parish Council for creating a Working Group and providing two Parish Councillors to look at the situation with Jubilee Hall. The member of the public also thanked Janet Tayler and Chris Burns for their support.

A member of the public raised their concern around the residential care home being rated as inadequate by the Care Quality Commission. It was felt the home had lost its strong links to the local community.

County Councillor Bell thanked everyone for the warm welcome received at the Meeting. He felt the information presented at the meeting was informative and that good communication is key between the Parish Council and its residents. County Councillor Bell went on to share his views on improving communication which included the use of social media.

County Councillor Bell went on to give an update regarding the Banks development and advised of a complaint he had received regarding dust on the site. He also discussed the lack of a commercial partner to take on the Community Hub on the site.

County Councillor Bell also discussed the importance of Jubilee Hall to the Village and that he felt the outcome of the Public Meeting was brilliant.

The meeting closed at 19:55.

Signed: Date:

West Rainton & Leamside Parish Council Chairperson