

NORTH LODGE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Meeting of North Lodge Parish Council held at Park View School, Lombard Drive, Chester-le-Street on Tuesday 18th May 2021.

PRESENT: Chairman: Councillor Dennis Hall.
Councillors: Margaret Caygill, Elsie Forrester, Jackie Gregory, Maureen May, Patrick Driscoll, John Waugh.
Clerk: David Murrell.

The retiring Chairman, Councillor Jackie Gregory, commenced the meeting by welcoming everyone.

Item 1. 21/44 Election of Chairman

Nominations were requested for the office of Chairman for the year 2021 / 2022. Cllr Dennis Hall was proposed and seconded. There were no other nominations. Cllr Dennis Hall was duly elected, therefore, as Chairman.

(Resolved on a show of hands with five for and one abstention - that Cllr Dennis Hall is duly elected as Chairman for 2021 / 2022).

Cllr. Hall thanked those who had put their confidence in him as Chairman and said that he was looking forward to the year ahead. Councillors thanked Cllr Gregory for all her hard work during her two years in the Chair which included a particularly challenging period of time.

Item 2. 21/45 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for Absence were received from County Councillor Craig Martin.

Item 3. 21/46 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

Item 4. 21/47 Election of Vice-Chairman

Nominations were requested for the office of Vice-Chairman for the year 2021 / 2022. Cllr Patrick Driscoll was proposed and seconded. There were no other nominations. Cllr Patrick Driscoll was duly elected, therefore, as Vice-Chairman.

(Resolved - that Cllr Patrick Driscoll is duly elected as Vice-Chairman for 2021 / 2022).

The Chairman welcomed Cllr Driscoll as Vice-Chairman.

Item 5. 21/48 Election of Portfolio Holders

The following Councillors were elected as Portfolio Holders - a) Crime & Community Safety - Cllr Jackie Gregory, b) Finance - Cllr John Waugh, c) Highways - Cllr Jackie Gregory and Cllr Patrick Driscoll, d) Horticulture - Cllr Maureen May and Cllr Patrick Driscoll, e) Planning - Cllr John Waugh, f) Play Areas - Cllr Margaret Caygill, g) Policy & Governance - Cllr Dennis Hall, h) Publicity - Cllr Elsie Forrester, i) Website - Cllr Jackie Gregory.

Item 6. 21/49 Report of the County Councillor

The County Councillor was not present and, therefore, no report was made.

Item 7. 21/50 Adoption of Minutes of Meeting

The Minutes of the Virtual Meeting of the Parish Council held on Tuesday 20th April 2021, draft copies of which had been previously circulated, were adopted as a true and accurate record of the Meeting and were duly signed by the Chairman.

Item 8. 21/51 Chairman's Report

The Chairman's Report included his introductory comments as the incoming Chairman. Issues he would like the Council to address included representation, engagement and communication.

Regarding outstanding matters -

a) Re Minute 21/38 section a). Re overgrowing shrubs at a path from Vigo Lane into Ambleside Court, the Clerk advised that a reply was still awaited from the developers of the estate.

b) Re Minute 21/38 section b). Re thinning of woodland alongside the A693, Cllr Caygill advised that there was still a considerable amount of brash left from the work. She would continue to take up this matter with the County Councillor.

c) Re Minute 21/39 section d). Re debris and litter under the Tuppenny bridge at Low Flatts, the Chairman had observed that this had been cleared but was already beginning to build up again. Cllr Caygill advised that a meeting with Sustrans on various matters was being sought and she would ask for this matter to be on the agenda for that meeting.

d) Re Minute 21/39 section e). The Chairman updated Councillors re the unsuccessful court case that considered an extension to the time period for virtual Council meetings.

e) Re Minute 21/42. The Clerk gave an update re the outstanding cheque. This matter was expected to be resolved within the next few days.

Item 9. 21/52 Portfolio Holders' Reports

a) Crime and Community Safety

The Chairman invited Cllr Gregory to give her report which included the matters contained in her written report below -

Crime and Community Safety report 18th May 2021.

Crime

No incidents recorded.

Community Safety

Speeding vehicles on the local estates.

Picktree Lodge C2C cycle route: A1m underpass and nearby woods attracting groups of youths.

Police to monitor these areas.

Residents are reminded to report any incidents to police as opposed to making comments only, on Facebook groups.

Thank you to David for circulating 'In the Know' emails

The Chairman thanked Cllr Gregory for her report and invited Cllr Waugh to give his Finance report which included the following matters -

b) Finance

Cllr Waugh advised that he had studied the financial information supplied by the Clerk and he confirmed that everything appeared to be in order. There was a substantial balance at the Bank. The Chairman thanked Cllr Waugh for his report and invited Cllr Gregory to give the Highways report.

c) Highways

Cllr Gregory advised that there were no matters to report. Cllr May advised that she had reported to the County Councillor a dangerous manhole cover in Picktree Village.

The Chairman thanked Cllr Gregory for her report and invited Cllr May to give her report which included the matters contained in the written report below -

d) Horticulture

NORTH LODGE PARISH COUNCIL

Report to Council 18 May 2021

Subject: Schedule

Portfolio: HORTICULTURE -

Prepared by: Maureen May

Sent to Clerk on: 17 May 2021

1 I have contacted Martin Briscoe at Durham County Council and have asked for a monthly update on any horticultural work in the parish that they have done within the month. The report should be sent to me by the 15th of the month in order that I can update the Parish Council at the monthly meeting. At the time of writing this report, I have not received any information.

2 I have inspected the various areas of horticulture in the parish and am satisfied that the County Council have generally carried out the agreed arrangement. However I have observed the following:

- 2.1 Two flower beds at the entrance to Lambton Park need weeding and general tidying up.
- 2.2 Millennium Flower Bed at Lombard Drive needs the weeds killing around the perimeter pathways.
- 2.3 Jubilee Tree in Lombard Drive. The base area looks very drab and perhaps the Parish Council should consider improving its look by investing in a surrounding flower bed or building a surrounding wall containing seasonal flowers. This needs discussion with Parish Councillors
- 2.4 Shrub/flower beds Picktree Village needs weeding.
- 2.5 North Road raised beds next to old Police houses have been cleaned out but the northern most bed needs more attention. Of particular concern is the Southern bed wall which needs urgent attention as it looks as though the roots of the large conifer may have cracked the wall. This needs discussion with Parish Councillors
- 2.6 Shrub bed in Longdean Park needs further attention as the shrubs need cutting back but

this may require postponing until the autumn.

- 2.7 The barrels need summer bedding attention.
- 2.8 Bus shelter at Northlands North bound requires some weeding and tidying the North side.
Bus shelter North Lodge North bound needs tidying
- 2.9 Bus shelter Barley Mow - general tidying
- 2.10 Bus shelter Ambleside Court - path way entrance needs shrubs cutting back as they are now starting to become overgrown.
- 2.11 Bus shelter Picktree Village needs ivy removing from the South side.

3 RECOMMENDATIONS *(Select as appropriate)*

- 3.1 To agree items 2.3 and 2.5 on action to be taken.

Councillor M. May

Re the Jubilee tree in Lombard Drive, this matter will be included in a future Agenda. Re the North Road raised beds, Cllrs May and Driscoll are to consult with the County Council re any need for repair work.

The Chairman thanked Cllr May for her report and invited Cllr Waugh to give his Planning report which included the following matters -

e) Planning

Cllr Waugh advised that he continued to inform Councillors on a weekly basis of any new planning applications in the Parish and also to highlight any concerns. There had been no contentious issues during the last month.

The Chairman thanked Cllr Waugh for his report and invited Cllr Caygill to give her report which included the matters contained in the written report below -

f) Play Areas

Both Play Areas have been inspected and equipment appears to be in working order.

An order has been placed for the repainting of the goal posts and the hedge replacing at Low Flatts.

The reported bin emptying and the rubbish removal around the area at Low Flatts has also been carried out.

Re hedge replacing, Councillors agreed that Cllr Caygill and the Clerk should arrange for this to be carried out in the autumn planting season.

The Chairman thanked Cllr Caygill for her report.

g) Policy and Governance

Cllr Hall advised that he would continue to update the Council re virtual meetings and he recommended various virtual courses for Councillors.

Councillors thanked the Chairman for his report and he invited Cllr Forrester to give her report which included the following matters -

h) Publicity

Cllr Forrester advised there had been no recent AAP meetings to report on although she would bring information once the meetings had recommenced. Cllr Forrester provided an update on leadership positions following the recent County Council elections.

The Chairman thanked Cllr Forrester for her report and invited Cllr Gregory to give her Website report which included the following matters -

i) Website

Cllr Gregory advised that the website was being kept up-to-date. There were further Council policies that could be considered for approval and then added to the website. If Councillors had any photos to help illustrate the Parish could they please send them in to the Clerk.

The Chairman thanked Cllr Gregory for her report.

Item 10. 21/53 Correspondence

Various planning applications, approvals and refusals from Durham County Council, of which the following was within North Lodge Parish:-

Reserved matters application for one dwelling (Plot 3) in relation to appearance, landscaping layout and scale relating to DM/19/01917/OUT), at site of former Pelaw Grange Cottage.

Item 11. 21/54 Items Requested by Councillors

a) The pond area at Drum

Cllr Caygill considered that, despite previous communication with the County Councillor, the area remained an environmental concern. The Chairman considered that the poor condition of the surrounds of the pond impacted on the amenity of the area. The Clerk is to ask the County Councillor to take up the matter at the next meeting of the Drum Business Group, to consider asking the County Council Enforcement Team to intervene and to discuss progress at the next meeting of the Parish Council.

b) A new noticeboard for Barley Gate

A new noticeboard had previously been agreed in principle. Councillors now accepted the cost quotation and agreed the site. The Clerk is to place the order. Cllr Gregory suggested that Councillors should send to the Clerk any items that could be included in the noticeboard. Cllr Gregory advised Councillors of a problem reported by a resident of Picktree Village in that the recently installed replacement noticeboard there was blocking the view from within the bus shelter of oncoming traffic, particularly buses. Councillors agreed that the noticeboard should be moved back slightly to open up the view.

c) The Parish Council on social media

Councillors discussed the potential positives and negatives of the Council having a social media presence. The Chairman kindly offered to produce a report on this matter and Councillors were asked to submit to the Clerk any comments for consideration.

d) Damage to daffodils by some schoolchildren

Cllr Forrester reported on incidents in Queensmere of damage to daffodils and other plants caused by schoolchildren trampling or kicking them. The Clerk will contact the School to request assistance in stopping this unacceptable behaviour.

e) Parking at Queensmere

Cllr Forrester reported that, at school leaving time, there was much inconsiderate parking at Queensmere causing nuisance and difficulty to residents. Councillors also considered that parking at school leaving times in Lombard Drive caused problems. Cllr Gregory is to contact the Police and the Clerk is to contact the School to request intervention.

f) The Annual Newsletter

Cllr May gave an update on progress to date and asked for further items to be submitted for consideration. The Clerk confirmed that the Annual Report could be used as a basis for items. This matter is to be included in the Agenda for the next Parish Council meeting.

Item 12. 21/55 Payment of Accounts

| TO | AMOUNT | REASON | VAT |
|-------------------------------|------------------|--------------------------|------------|
| Salaries | £ 464.04 | Salaries May 2021 | |
| Expenses | £ 90.00 | Expenses May 2021 | |
| D. Murrell (via Zoom inc) | £ 14.39 | Monthly Subscription | £2.40 |
| UKFast | £ 28.99 | Monthly Subscription | £4.83 |
| Zurich Municipal | £ 705.72 | Annual Insurance Premium | |
| Ian Herberson | £ 50.00 | Internal Audit Fee | |
| Co DhM Assn of Local Councils | £ 389.69 | Annual Subscription | |
| Total Payments | £ 1742.83 | | |

(Resolved - the payments be approved as submitted).

Item 13. 21/56 Other Matters for Information

Cllr May advised that several seats required cleaning or re-painting. This matter is to be included in a future Agenda.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 7.48pm.

North Lodge Parish Council

Accounts for the month as submitted to the Meeting of North Lodge Parish Council held on Tuesday 15th June 2021.

| TO | AMOUNT | REASON | VAT |
|---------------------------|----------|-----------------------------|-------|
| Salaries | £ | Salaries June 2021 | |
| Expenses | £ 90.00 | Expenses June 2021 | |
| D. Murrell (via Zoom inc) | £ 14.39 | Monthly Subscription | £2.40 |
| D. Hall | £ | Chair's Quarterly Allowance | |
| HM Revenue & Customs | £ | P.A.Y.E. | |
| UKFast | £ 28.99 | Monthly Subscription | £4.83 |
| DSJ Property Services | £ 200.00 | Painting Goal Posts | |
| DSJ Property Services | £ 60.00 | Repositioning Noticeboard | |
| Total Payments | £ | | |

Balance to 31st May 2021

| | | | |
|----------------------------|------------------|----------------------------------|------------------|
| Balance b/f | £75934.21 | Balances at Bank:- | |
| Deduct Payments - May 2021 | <u>£ 1742.83</u> | Treasurers Account | £ 963.54 |
| | £74191.38 | Instant Account | <u>£73618.16</u> |
| | | Total | £74581.70 |
| Add Bank Interest Received | <u>£ .63</u> | Deduct cheques not yet presented | <u>£ 389.69</u> |
| Balance c/f | £74192.01 | | £74192.01 |

One cheque not yet presented -
£389.69 cheque number 1442 dated 18/05/21 for annual subscription payable to County Durham Association of Local Councils.