

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 17th May 2022.

PRESENT: Chairman: Councillor Dennis Hall.

Councillors: Sue Brown, Margaret Caygill, Elsie Forrester, Jackie Gregory, Maureen May, Patrick Driscoll, John Waugh.

Clerk: David Murrell.

The retiring Chairman, Councillor Dennis Hall, commenced the meeting by welcoming everyone.

Item 1. 22/46 Election of Chairman

Nominations were requested for the office of Chairman for the year 2022/2023. Cllr Dennis Hall was proposed and seconded. There were no other nominations. Cllr Dennis Hall was duly re-elected, therefore, as Chairman.

(Resolved - that Cllr Dennis Hall is duly elected as Chairman for 2022/2023).

Cllr. Hall thanked Councillors for their support.

Item 2. 22/47 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for Absence were received from Councillors Craig Martin and Chris Veitch.

Item 3. 22/48 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

Item 4. 22/49 Election of Vice-Chairman

Nominations were requested for the office of Vice-Chairman for the year 2022/2023. Cllr Patrick Driscoll was proposed and seconded. There were no other nominations. Cllr Patrick Driscoll was duly re-elected, therefore, as Vice-Chairman.

(Resolved - that Cllr Patrick Driscoll is duly elected as Vice-Chairman for 2022/2023).

Cllr Driscoll thanked Councillors for their support.

Item 5. 22/50 Election of Portfolio Holders

The following Councillors were elected as Portfolio Holders - a) Communications and Media Development - Cllr Chris Veitch, b) Crime & Community Safety - Cllr Jackie Gregory, c) Finance - Cllr John Waugh, d) Highways and Community Assets - Cllr Patrick Driscoll, e) Horticulture - Cllr Maureen May, f) Meetings of Partnership Organisations - Cllr Elsie Forrester, g) Planning - Cllr John Waugh, h) Play Areas - Cllr Margaret Caygill, i) Policy & Governance - Cllr Dennis Hall, j) Project Development, Business and External Relations - Cllr Craig Martin.

Regarding Highways and Community Assets, Councillors agreed that the brief for the former Highways Portfolio should be developed to include inspection of the bus shelters, public seating and other community assets for any concerns that could require attention. Any issues regarding roads and footpaths are to be brought by Councillors to the attention of the Portfolio Holder for action as appropriate.

Item 6. 22/51 Report of the County Councillor

In the absence of the County Councillor, no report was made.

Item 7. 22/52 Adoption of Minutes of Meeting

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on Tuesday 19th April 2022, 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. 22/53 Chairman's Report

The Chairman's report included the matters contained in his written report below -

A Business Items: Forward Plan:

The Forthcoming Year:

I am keen to develop new projects and initiatives

In May 2021 I asked all members to come forward to discuss informally with me what projects that might involve spending they would like to take forward within their portfolio

The Minutes of the Meeting of 15 June 2021 record those other suggestions were put forward in the feedback from Members...:

Youth activity, horticultural schemes

Parish Surgeries

Park View Youth activities

Treeplanting

Police Community Trust Schemes

Environmental Schemes

I would like there to be tabled at the June Meeting an item under which we can discuss whether to take any of these forward.....meanwhile, please contact me informally with your views or arrange a meeting with me...

Can I ask all of you to do a brief written note as part of your Portfolio Report setting out the nature of potential schemes/projects/plans or other spending decisions within your remit (ex-Finance, Planning, Policy & Governance, External Partners)

If you have no suggestions, please say so, and say why....

Please forward to me 7 days before the June meeting (14 June). Please discuss with me beforehand if you wish

We will table an item under which we can have a discussion.....

Community Engagement:

April: The Community Fund scheme began in April: David has drafted publicity text and a revised application form in readiness for the initiative going live. I am planning further discussions with potential partners over the coming weeks and will report back.

May: At the time of writing, a series of meetings have taken place with Park View School concerning the Community Arts Awards Initiative. The judges have made their selections and the presentation date is Monday 16 May at 1.45pm

B Other Matters:

Memorial Plaque: The event on Friday 6 May which I attended went well. David thank you for making the arrangements

Item: 9 i Policy and Governance Portfolio

Queen's Speech 10 May:

Planning reforms

People will be given the right to vote on some planning applications in their area, as part of planning reforms due to be announced today. The Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill will also scrap plans for new zonal planning areas as well scrap legally binding housing targets in local authority areas, it has been reported.

[BBC News Online: Government drops controversial planning reforms after Tory anger](#)

Infrastructure Levy:

A Levelling-up and Regeneration Bill will introduce a new “locally set, non-negotiable levy”, paid by developers, to deliver infrastructure such as schools and new roads.

Remote Meetings:

Over 10,000 signatures have been obtained.

Two local authority bodies, LLG, ADSO have begun a petition to support the necessary change in the law; here’s the details:

<https://www.change.org/p/uk-government-and-parliament-for-councils-in-england-to-have-the-choice-to-meet-remotely>

Regarding new projects and initiatives, Councillors agreed that this is to be an Agenda item for the June Council meeting. Re the Community Arts Awards, the Chairman thanked all those who had been involved in this successful project. The Chairman also advised that a Twitter account was now up and running for the Council. Cllr Veitch and the Clerk would liaise over its development. Councillors thanked the Chairman for his report.

Regarding outstanding matters -

Re Minute 22/40 section d). Re the commemoration event for former gardener Frank Leighton, Cllr Caygill was aware that his family were very appreciative of the support shown by the Council.

Item 9. 22/54 Portfolio Holders' Reports

a) Communications and Media Development

In the absence of the Portfolio Holder, no report was made.

b) Crime and Community Safety

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

Crime

No details of crime incidents for North Lodge, were supplied to Council.

Police UK website shows a small percentage drop in crime figures for March regarding Chester-le-Street town (North Lodge is included in this area).

Community Safety

Operation Sceptre:

This week there is an amnesty on knives and bladed articles. These articles can be disposed of anonymously at any police station.

Operation Aztec:

This refers to the disposal of unwanted and unlicensed guns and ammunition. These articles can be deposited at designated police stations.

Durham Police is supporting Dementia week. The Herbert Protocol allows residents to supply the local police with details of relatives suffering from this disease. If any incident arises involving the family member, the family can be contacted immediately.

Please contact Durham Constabulary for further information on any of the above Operations.

For emergency calls, please use telephone number 999

For non emergency calls, please use telephone number 101

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

c) Finance

I have been through the financial information supplied to me by the clerk and I can confirm everything appears to be in order.

The Chairman thanked Cllr Waugh for his Finance report.

d) Highways and Community Assets

Cllr Waugh had observed parked vans in Blind Lane causing pedestrians to have to walk into the road to pass by. Cllr Gregory kindly agreed to report this to the Police.

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

e) Horticulture

SUMMARY

Durham County Council

For many years we have had an excellent working relationship with the Clean & Green Team at Durham County Council.

Graham Cozens has informed me that if we appoint a gardener, the maintenance contract with Durham County Council can be dissolved as it was only temporary for this year April 2022 - March 2023.

Appointment of Parish Gardener

The above is an important single item which is agendered for the next Horticulture Sub Group.

Anyone who has any information or issues which they would like the Sub Committee to discuss, please email Councillor May by 20 May 2022.

In addition, Cllr Gregory advised that the plinth at the entrance to Picktree Lodge needed planting up. Councillors agreed a budget of £150 for this. The writing on the plinth needed to be re-painted and quotes for this are to be sought. Cllr Gregory was thanked for her work to date on this matter. The Chairman thanked Cllr May for her report and invited Cllr Forrester to give her report which included the following matters -

f) Meetings of Partnership Organisations

Cllr Forrester reported on 1) the recent AAP meeting where new officials had been elected, 2) agreement for funding for improvements to the pocket park at Camperdown Avenue, 3) the Police report to the AAP meeting, 4) Cllr Forrester had been re-elected as the CDALC representative to the AAP.

Cllr Forrester also reported on the sad death of Derek Briggs, a highly valued member of the Chester-le-Street community who had volunteered great amounts of his time in various roles and duties.

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

g) Planning

Durham County Council are currently consulting widely on changes to their Highways Design Guide and their Residential Amenity Standards. These are extensive documents aiming to give greater clarity and a much sharper focus than currently exists. I have been through both documents and there appears nothing in it to concern the Parish Council. It might make it much more prescriptive regarding domestic extensions and would aim to reduce the negative impact some larger extensions can have on neighbouring properties. It also would have greater control over garage conversions, drive lengths, walls and fences.

Highway design changes are proposed which include increasing the current estate road width from 4.8m to 5.5m. The aim of this would be to encourage drivers not to park on footpaths. The documents are available online and response must be made by 7th June.

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

h) Play Areas

MERLIN DRIVE

Equipment appears to be in good order.
The latest date for the refurbishment is June/July.

LOW FLATTS

Equipment appears to be in good order.
No further work has been done on the hedge gap fencing.
The plans for refurbishing this area will be discussed at the meeting when it is hoped to have had some guidance on the money available.

Regarding refurbishment of Low Flatts, the guidance on money available was still awaited. Councillors were asked to send to the Clerk any comments they wished to make on the refurbishment plans that had been proposed by the County Council. In addition at Low Flatts, the Clerk is to arrange for weeds to be strimmed around the play equipment fence. The Chairman thanked Cllr Caygill for her report.

i) Policy and Governance

Cllr Hall's report was contained in his Chairman's Report (Minute 22/53, above).
Councillors thanked Cllr Hall for his report.

j) Project Development, Business and External Relations

In the absence of the Portfolio Holder, no report was made.

Item 10. 22/55 Correspondence

- 1) From Park View School
Request for donation.

Councillors considered this request for a donation of £70 to provide planting in the Lower School grounds for the forthcoming Queen's Jubilee. Although the request fell outside some of the parameters for requests to the Council, it was agreed that, as there were special circumstances, the request would be considered.

(Resolved - to provide a donation of seventy pounds to Park View Lower School for planting).

- 2) From Durham County Council
a) email re quote for Christmas Tree lights.

The quote was discussed and approved.

- b) Notification of consultation re pharmacies and practice dispensaries in County Durham.

Item 11. 22/56 Proposals, Reports and Requests for Consideration

a) A Defibrillator for Picktree Village

The Clerk advised that approval had now been obtained from the County Council for the siting of the defibrillator and post on the footpath. The next stage was to approach Northern Powergrid for the installation of a power connection.

b) Painting of the Sustrans Bridge, North Road

Cllr Gregory, as a resident of the Parish, advised that she had received a reply from the MP confirming that he would contact Sustrans to request progress in this matter.

c) Review of the Future Usage of the Flower Barrels

Councillors agreed that the barrels should be planted up this year, following which the situation was to be reviewed.

d) The Annual Newsletter

Cllr May gave an update on progress with compilation of articles for the Newsletter.

Item 12. 22/57 Payment of Accounts

TO	AMOUNT	REASON	VAT
Salaries	£ 526.34	Salaries May 2022	
Expenses	£ 90.00	Expenses May 2022	
C. Veitch (via ebay)	£ 14.99	Union Jack Flags	
C. Veitch (via Tor Coatings Ltd)	£ 79.73	Paint for Crowns	£ 13.29
Zoom inc	£ 14.39	Monthly Subscription - May 2022	£ 2.40
ANS Group Ltd	£ 39.86	Monthly Subscription - May 2022	£ 6.64
I. Herberson	£ 50.00	Internal Audit Fee	
Cty DhM Assn of Local Councils	£ 10.00	Training Fee	
Park View School	£ 70.00	Donation	
First Prize Winner	£ 150.00	Community Arts Programme	
Second Prize Winner	£ 100.00	Community Arts Programme	
Third Prize Winner	£ 50.00	Community Arts Programme	
Zurich Municipal	£ 719.11	Annual Insurance Premium	
Total of Above Payments	£1914.42		

Payments Made by Debit Card

TO	AMOUNT	REASON	VAT
Richardsons Photographers	£ 90.00	Group Photograph	£ 15.00
XL Displays Ltd	£ 94.20	Noticeboard	£ 15.70
Made by Cooper Ltd	£ 459.90	Platinum Jubilee Badges	£ 76.65
Total Card Payments	£ 644.10		

(Resolved - the payments be approved as submitted).

Item 13. 22/58 Other Matters for Information

Cllr Gregory considered that Park View Lower School might benefit from financial and volunteer assistance with its gardening work. The Chairman asked Cllr May, as Horticulture Portfolio Holder, to take forward this potential partnership with the School.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 8.31pm.

North Lodge Parish Council

Accounts for the month as submitted to the Meeting of North Lodge Parish Council held on Tuesday 21st June 2022.

TO	AMOUNT	REASON	VAT
Salaries	£	Salaries June 2022	
Expenses	£ 90.00	Expenses June 2022	
D. Hall	£	Chair's Quarterly Allowance	
HM Revenue & Customs	£	P.A.Y.E.	
HM Revenue & Customs	£	Employer's N.I.C.	
Zoom inc	£ 14.39	Monthly Subscription - June 2022	£ 2.40
ANS Group Ltd	£ 39.86	Monthly Subscription - June 2022	£ 6.64
DSJ Property Services	£ 410.00	Various Works	
Total of Above Payments	£		

Payments Made by Debit Card

TO	AMOUNT	REASON	VAT
The Lambton Worm	£ 150.00	Catering for Memorial Event	£ 25.00
XL Displays Ltd	£ 594.60	Noticeboards	£ 99.10
Cash Withdrawal	£ 160.00	Prizes for Community Arts	
Durham Fuel Centre	£ 39.00	Compost	
Congburn Nurseries	£ 146.00	Bedding Plants	
Total Card Payments	£1089.60		

Balance to 31st May 2022

Balance b/f	£83082.94	Balances at Bank:-	
Deduct Payments - May 2022	<u>£ 1914.42</u>	Treasurers Account	£ 1244.23
	£81168.52	Instant Account	<u>£79145.31</u>
Deduct Card Payments for month	<u>£ 1089.60</u>	Total	£80389.54
	£80078.92		
Add Bank Interest Received	<u>£ .62</u>	Deduct cheques not yet presented	£ 10.00
	£80079.54		
Add Grant Received	<u>£ 300.00</u>		
	£80379.54		
Balance c/f	£80379.54		£80379.54

One cheque not yet presented -
£10.00 cheque number 1498 dated 17/05/22 for training fee payable to County Durham Association of Local Councils.