

NORTH LODGE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of North Lodge Parish Council held at the Civic Centre, Newcastle Road, Chester-le-Street on Wednesday 17th March 2010.

PRESENT: Chairman: Cllr. Mrs. M. Caygill.
Councillors: Mrs. S. Brown, Mrs. E. Forrester, Mrs. L. LeDune, Mrs. M. May, Prof. V. McEwan, C. Walton, C. Noble-Nesbitt.
County Councillor: P. May.
Clerk: Mr. D. Murrell.

Also in attendance were two residents.

The meeting commenced at 6.30pm with the Chairman welcoming everyone. County Councillor P. May was not present at the commencement of the meeting.

Item 1. 10/23 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for Absence were received from Councillors Mrs. D. Prest and S. Tones, and also from County Councillor P. May for his expected late arrival at the meeting.

Item 2. 10/24 Report of the Police

The Chairman welcomed Sgt. Paul Hadden, PCSO Lesley Hunter and an observer to the meeting and invited them to give their report. The PCSO reported on the matters contained in the written report attached (Appendix 1). The Chairman and Cllr. Mrs. Walton advised of anti-social behaviour at and near the Sustrans bridge at Low Flatts. Sgt. Haddon agreed to contact the County Council regarding cleaning the area, and also agreed to send more patrols there. Sgt. Haddon reported on Police performance against targets and Councillors were pleased to learn of successes with a falling recorded crime level and an increased detection level. However, the Sgt. advised that public confidence in the Police remained low. Councillors put forward suggestions as to how confidence might be improved including higher Police visibility levels. Sgt. Haddon urged that all incidents be reported to the Police so that they could react appropriately. The Chairman thanked the Police for their report.

As County Councillor P. May was not yet present at the meeting, Councillors agreed to defer Agenda Item 3.

Item 4. 10/25 Adoption of Minutes of Meeting

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on Wednesday 17th February 2010, 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 5. 10/26 Matters Arising

a) Re Minute 10/15. Regarding the proposed bus lane scheme, the Chairman advised that at the recent Residents' Association meeting many concerns had been expressed. The head teacher of Park View School had also advised the Chairman of his great concerns. The Chairman advised that a School Travel Plan meeting was soon to be held to consider the bus lane proposal, and it was expected that the meeting would be attended by School Governors, representatives of the Police and other bodies together with an officer of the County Council who would give a

presentation on the proposal. County Cllr. J. Cordon had contacted the Chairman to confirm his strong opposition to the proposal which he would also be making known to the County Council officers delivering the project. Councillors agreed with Cllr. Noble-Nesbitt's concerns regarding the short three-week consultation period proposed by the County Council, and the need for the County Council to involve a wide number of residents, not just those in North Road, in the consultation process. Councillors were in agreement that the proposed bus lane scheme was not wanted by residents, and not appropriate nor necessary for the area except that the part of the scheme intended to improve safety at Northlands roundabout was welcome and should be encouraged.

At this point, the Chairman adjourned the meeting in order that Councillors could discuss the bus lane proposals with the two residents in attendance.

The Chairman then re-convened the meeting.

b) Re Minute 10/16 section C). Re the altered bus service 25 through Picktree Village, Cllr. Mrs. Brown advised that many residents were now being inconvenienced by the new arrangements.

c) Re Minute 10/18 section a). Re traffic calming measures for Picktree Village, the Police had advised that these were still under consideration. The Clerk will contact County Cllr. J. Cordon to request progress in this matter.

d) Re Minute 10/18 section b). Re plans for the development at South Burns of a home for young people, the Chairman advised that concerns had been expressed by a former school teacher and by a school governor. The County Council had advised the Chairman that no application for change of use for the proposed building had yet been received, and Cllr. Tones and the Clerk had confirmed this from checks of the Planning Department website.

e) Re Minute 10/18 section d). Re a website for the Council, Cllr. Noble-Nesbitt advised that a useful meeting had been held, attended by himself, the Clerk and an officer of the County Council, to agree a way forward in general. Councillors discussed certain features for the website and agreed that the matter should be progressed by Cllr. Noble-Nesbitt, Cllr. Prof. McEwan and the Clerk. The Chairman thanked Cllr. Noble-Nesbitt for the great amount of time he had given to the project to date, and thanked Cllr. Prof. McEwan and the Clerk for their involvement.

f) Re Minute 10/19 section 10g). Re an additional grit bin requested for the Lombard Drive / Leander Avenue junction, the Clerk advised that this had been rejected by the County Council. Cllr. Noble-Nesbitt advised that the County Council had a bin siting assessment form in draft, and Councillors agreed to defer further consideration of this matter until the draft form became a formal document.

g) Re Minute 10/20 section a). The Clerk advised that contact was still awaited from the County Council regarding the footpath between 34 and 35 Longdean Park, and the costings for the flower beds in North Road. The Clerk is to pursue the matter of the footpath, and the Chairman will pursue the costings.

h) Re Minute 10/21 section a). Re tree works at the open space between North Lodge and Picktree Lodge estates, a resident had expressed dissatisfaction that trees had not been completely removed. The Chairman had advised the resident that the work was the responsibility of the County Council, and any further requests should be addressed there.

At this point, County Councillor P. May arrived at the meeting.

Item 3. 10/27 Reports of the County Councillors

The Chairman welcomed County Councillor P. May to the meeting and invited him to give his report which included the following matters. **A)** County Cllr. May confirmed his opposition to the proposed bus lane for North Road. He agreed to request sight of any appraisal held by the County Council in support of the proposal. **B)** The County Council was in the process of sending out consultation letters regarding proposed "No Waiting" road markings at Lombard Drive. It was expected that the Parish Council would receive a letter shortly. **C)** Cllr. Noble-Nesbitt expressed concern at the lack of a good consultation policy by the County Council with the Parish Council. County Cllr. May agreed to express this to all Directors of County Council departments. **D)** The County Council had advised County Cllr. May of the difficulties of contacting utility companies regarding the condition of their cabinets in public places. The Clerk advised the County Cllr. of the actions being taken regarding utility boxes in the Parish, and the County Cllr. agreed to pursue this. **E)** County Cllr. May outlined the Neighbourhood Warden scheme soon to be introduced by the County Council. **F)** The County Council was consulting on the future of its Care Homes, and the County Cllr. urged people to respond to the consultation.

At this point, the two residents left the meeting.

G) Cllr. Mrs. Walton enquired if the County Council intended to re-introduce litter pickers to the area. County Cllr. May advised that this was receiving consideration. The Chairman reported that litter and rubbish required clearing at Footpath no. 5, Low Flatts, and the County Cllr. agreed to take this matter forward. **H)** County Cllr. May gave a synopsis of the County Council Conservative Group's position regarding the Boundary Committee's current review of the electoral arrangements for the area. Cllr. Noble-Nesbitt advised that he had drafted a submission to the Boundary Committee in support of the Parish Council's proposal for the Parish. The Chairman, Cllr. Noble-Nesbitt and the Clerk will finalise the submission.

The Chairman thanked County Councillor May for his report.

Item 6. 10/28 Correspondence

1) From Go North East Limited
Letter re bus service 25.

2) From Sunderland and North Durham Royal Society For The Blind
Request for donation.

(Resolved - to refer the request to the next meeting of the Finance Committee).

3) From Butterwick Hospice Care
Request for donation.

(Resolved - to refer the request to the next meeting of the Finance Committee).

4) From
Letter re fence at Merlin Drive Play Area.

The Clerk outlined the request of the resident. The Chairman and the Clerk are to reply to the letter.

5) From the Campaign to Protect Rural England
a) Newsletter - CPRE Overview, Spring 2010.
b) Letter re proposed wind farms in Teesdale.

- 6) From Durham Police
 - a) Update re policing issues.
 - b) email re Picktree Village traffic calming.
 - 7) From Chester-le-Street & District Council for Voluntary Services and Volunteer Bureau Newsletter - CVS News, edition 51, February 2010.
 - 8) From BDO LLP
 - Audit Briefing, Issue 1, Winter 2010.
 - 9) From the Information Commissioner
 - Letter re confirmation of renewal, Data Protection Act 1998.
 - 10) From County Durham Association of Local Councils
 - a) email re Licensing and Parish Councils.
 - b) email re Royal Garden Party nominations.
- The Clerk advised that, unfortunately, the Council's nomination had not been successful.
- c) Invitation to Anti-Social Behaviour event to be held on Friday 19th March 2010.
 - d) Invitation to Quality Status seminar to be held on Tuesday 20th April 2010.

- 11) From Durham County Council
 - a) email re provision of salt bin.
 - b) email re residential care homes consultation.
 - c) email re school "Keep Clear" signs.

A site meeting is to be arranged by the Clerk to meet the County Council to discuss the positioning of the signs. Cllrs. Mrs. LeDune, Prof. McEwan and Noble-Nesbitt expressed an interest in attending the meeting.

- d) Agenda papers for the Chester-le-Street & District Area Action Partnership Board Meeting held on Monday 22nd February 2010.
- e) email re Parish Council website.

- 12) Various planning applications, approvals and refusals from Durham County Council, of which the following were within North Lodge Parish:-
 - a) Application for demolition of existing conservatory and erection of sun lounge and first floor extension both at rear and erection of single storey extension at side (south elevation), at 41 Picktree Lodge.
 - b) Application for erection of detached garage to rear of property, erection of 1.5m high brick wall/railing and enlargement of current parking area, at 7 Blind Lane.
 - c) Application for erection of first-floor extension over existing attached garage, at 45 Longdean Park.
 - d) Application for erection of first-floor extension at side of dwelling above existing garage, single storey extension to rear of dwelling and construction of pitched roof over existing flat roof at front, at 4 Mitford Close.
 - e) Approval for erection of single storey extension at side / rear of dwelling to replace existing detached garage, at 45 Leander Avenue.

Item 7. 10/29 Portfolio Holders' Reports

a) Play Areas Cllr. Mrs. Caygill's report included the following matters. 1) Cllr. Mrs. Caygill advised that a quote of £5,500 had been obtained by the County Council for the installation of an additional set of swings at Merlin Drive play area. This was considered to be expensive and the County Council will seek further quotes. 2) Cllr. Mrs. Walton advised that there was evidence of rabbits at Low Flatts play area, and Cllr. Mrs. Caygill will therefore contact the pest controller.

Councillors thanked Cllr. Mrs. Caygill for her report and the Chairman invited Cllr. Mrs. Walton to give her report.

b) Horticulture Cllr. Mrs. Walton reported on the matters contained in her written report attached (Appendix 2). Re attention to the Millennium Yew, the Chairman and Cllr. Noble-Nesbitt will take this matter forward. The Chairman thanked Cllr. Mrs. Walton and the Clerk for their work in fixing tree guards at Merlin Drive play area.

The Chairman thanked Cllr. Mrs. Walton for her report and invited Cllr. Noble-Nesbitt to give his report.

c) Highways Cllr. Noble-Nesbitt's report included the following matters. 1) The road crossing refuge for North Road had still not yet been installed by the County Council. County Cllr. May advised that he had been informed that the work was imminent. 2) Any problems regarding road or footpath surfacing should be advised to the County Council Highways Action Line.

The Chairman thanked Cllr. Noble-Nesbitt for his report and invited Cllr. Mrs. Forrester to give her report.

d) Publicity Cllr. Mrs. Forrester's report included the following matters. 1) The music festival (ChesterFest) was planned for the 14th August at the field next to the Youth Centre and Swimming Baths. 2) Councillors were requested to begin consideration of items for this year's Newsletter.

3) The Area Action Partnership was giving consideration to the provision of some free car parking in the town this Christmas.

The Chairman thanked Cllr. Mrs. Forrester for her report.

e) Planning In the absence of Cllr. Tones, no report was made.

f) Finance In the absence of Cllr. Jukes, no report was made.

Item 8. 10/30 The Chairman's Report

The Chairman advised that a resident of Lyndhurst Avenue had complained of ruts being caused by vehicles in a neighbouring grass verge there. The resident had been advised to firstly raise the matter with the neighbour before considering an approach to the Highways Authority.

Councillors thanked the Chairman for her report.

Item 9. 10/31 The Annual Risk Assessment

Councillors discussed the Annual Risk Assessment which had been prepared by the Clerk.

Regarding the gardener's safety equipment, Cllr. Mrs. Walton reminded Councillors that the current gardener utilised his own equipment, the Council's being securely stored away.

(Resolved - to approve the Annual Risk Assessment in the format provided, Appendix 3 attached).

Item 10. 10/32 Payment of Accounts

The following accounts were submitted for payment.

<u>TO</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>	<u>REASON</u>	<u>VAT</u>
D. Murrell	£	Salary/Exps. March 10	
Durham County Pension Fund	£	Clerk's Pension March 10	
Mrs. M.S. Caygill	£ 150.00	Chair's Quarterly Allowance	
D. Murrell (via Costco)	£ 10.56	Photocopier Paper	£ 1.57
County Dhm Assn of Local Councils	£ 20.00	Standing Orders Booklet	
Country Care Pest Control	£ 250.00	Pest Control at Merlin Drive	
D. Murrell (via Post Office Ltd)	£ 7.85	Postage	

(**Resolved** - the accounts rendered be approved for payment).

Item 11. 10/33 Other Matters for Consideration

The following matter was submitted for consideration.

Cllr. Mrs. Walton had utilised the County Council's "Handyperson" scheme and had found the service provided to be excellent.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 9.25pm.

North Lodge Parish Council

Accounts for the month as submitted to the Meeting of North Lodge Parish Council held on Wednesday 21st April 2010.

<u>TO</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>	<u>REASON</u>	<u>VAT</u>
D. Murrell	£	Salary/Exps. April 10	
Durham County Pension Fund	£	Clerk's Pension April 10	
D. Murrell (via Post Office Ltd)	£ 22.32	Stamps	
County Dhm Assn of Local Councils	£ 255.23	Annual Subscription	
Durham County Council	£ 258.50	Christmas Tree Lights	£38.50

Balance to 31st March 2010

Balance b/f	£20314.94	Bank:-	
Deduct Payments - March 10	<u>£ 1051.36</u>	Current	£ 692.15
	£19263.58	30 Day	<u>£18847.85</u>
		Total	£19540.00
Add Bank Interest Received	£ 7.55		
Add Tree Week Grant Received	<u>£ 150.00</u>		
		Deduct cheques not yet presented	<u>£ 118.87</u>
Balance c/f	£19421.13		<u>£19421.13</u>

