

NORTH LODGE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of North Lodge Parish Council held at Park View Community School, Lombard Drive, Chester-le-Street on Tuesday 21st June 2011.

PRESENT: Chairman: Cllr. Mrs. M. May.
Councillors: Mrs. S. Brown, Mrs. M. Caygill, Mrs. E. Forrester,
Mrs. L. LeDune, Mrs. C. Walton, Mr. C. Jukes,
Mr. C. Noble-Nesbitt.

County Councillor: Mr. P. May.

Clerk: Mr. D. Murrell.

The meeting commenced at 6.30pm with the Chairman welcoming everyone. Councillor Mrs. S. Brown was not present at the start of the meeting.

Item 1. 11/63 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for Absence were received from Councillors Prof. V. McEwan and Mrs. D. Prest, and from PCSO L. Hunter.

Item 2. 11/64 Report of the Police

In the absence of the Police, PCSO L. Hunter had provided a written report (Appendix 1, attached) and this was read by the Clerk.

The Chairman thanked PCSO Hunter, in her absence, for providing the report.

Item 3. 11/65 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.

- 1) Re the possibility of a speed visor for the area, the County Council was presently carrying out a risk assessment. Councillors agreed that it would be appropriate for the Parish Council to contribute towards the cost of operating any such visor.
- 2) Residents in an area of Kingsmere had received a letter from the County Council asking for vehicles to be parked so as not to hinder the refuse wagon on collection days. County Cllr. May was now awaiting a feedback report from the County Council.
- 3) County Council records confirmed that the Merlin Drive play area land was owned by the County Council under Land Registry title numbers DU310043 and DU319872.
- 4) County Cllr. May had seen evidence that the "gateway" project land at Barley Mow was owned by the Highways Agency under Land Registry title numbers DU314829 and DU314835. Cllr. Noble-Nesbitt advised that the County Durham Definitive Map showed this land as being adopted by the County Council.
- 5) The AAP had taken a lease on a town centre shop, to be manned by volunteers, to promote events in, and be an information place for, the town.
- 6) County Cllr. May was aware of two properties in his Ward where there were derelict cars in the gardens. The Neighbourhood Warden team was investigating to see if any action could be taken.
- 7) Re Park View Lower School trees overhanging into a resident's garden, nothing appeared to have been done yet by the School. Cllr. Mrs. Caygill kindly agreed to take this up with the School.
- 8) Good progress was being made towards adoption and improvement of two unadopted footpaths on North Lodge Estate.

9) Re consultation on the County Durham Plan, County Cllr. May advised that sites in the North Lodge area for potential development included 27 more houses at Ambleside Court, 222 houses at BOC, 34 houses at Pelaw House and an extension of the Drum Industrial Estate to the south west of the A693. Councillors agreed with the Chairman that to facilitate a full discussion on this matter, and to make a submission on the consultation, a Parish Council sub-group should be set up and this would meet on Tuesday 28th June 2011.

The Chairman thanked County Councillor May for his report.

Item 4. 11/66 Adoption of Minutes of Meeting

The Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council held on Tuesday 17th May 2011, 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 5. 11/67 Matters Arising

a) Re Minute 11/54. Re speeding traffic in Blind Lane, the Clerk will contact the Police to ascertain whether or not the figures quoted in their report to the May Parish Council meeting showed a serious problem.

b) Re Minute 11/55 section 5). Re closer working between Parish Councils and the Chester-le-Street and District AAP Sub-Committee of the County Durham Association of Local Councils, the Chairman would take an opportunity to raise this matter at the forthcoming meeting of the Sub-Committee. Councillors Mrs. Caygill and Mrs. Forrester, should they be available, would also attend the meeting as representatives of the Parish Council.

c) Re Minute 11/57 section a). County Cllr. May advised that the flower beds on Northlands roundabout had now been created and awaited planting.

d) Re Minute 11/57 section e). Re dangerous steps at Low Flatts, the Clerk advised that there had still been no further communication from Sustrans. Councillors agreed that, having twice advised Sustrans of the concerns of the Parish Council, there was no further action to be taken at present.

e) Re Minute 11/62. Re the poor appearance of utility boxes, the Clerk advised that there had not yet been a reply from the County Council.

Item 6. 11/68 Correspondence

1) From Lloyds TSB PLC

Letter re unpaid cheque and bank mandate.

The Clerk advised that the Bank had written to apologise for the inconvenience caused to the Council through the Bank not up-dating its records regarding the Council's bank mandate. The Bank had supplied a new mandate, which was duly completed by the Council's signatories, and had made a payment of £100 into the Council's account by way of compensation. The Clerk will return the replacement mandate to the Bank.

2) From Community Consultation Ltd

Confirmation of renewal of insurance cover to 31st May 2012.

3) From Durham Police Authority

a) Letter advising Policing Priorities for 2011/12.

The priorities are Tackling anti-social behaviour, Reducing the impact caused by drug and alcohol abuse, Protecting vulnerable people from harm.

b) Notification of future workshop re handover of governance to the incoming Police and Crime Commissioner.

4) From the Local Government Boundary Commission for England

Letter re further draft recommendations for the electoral review of County Durham.

- 5) From County Durham Association of Local Councils
- a) email re the Local Government Boundary Commission for England further draft recommendations.
 - b) email re nominations for election of officials at the CDALC Annual General Meeting.
 - c) email re Code of Conduct requirements following the forthcoming abolition of Standards for England.

The National Association of Local Councils was considering whether or not there was a need for a replacement scheme for the Code of Conduct which would become obsolete following the abolition, next year, of Standards for England. Councillors discussed this and agreed that there was no need to take any action on this matter.

- d) email re the County Durham Plan consultation papers.
- e) email re the future of local council audit.

The National Association of Local Councils was considering Government proposals for amendments to the audit system.

- f) Agenda for the Chester-le-Street CDALC Sub-Committee meeting to be held on Saturday 25th June 2011.
- g) email re new e-learning courses for councillors.

- 6) From Cestria Community Housing Association
email of introduction from the Customer Relationship Manager.

- 7) From Durham County Council

- a) Letter and document re the Durham County Council Pension Fund final valuation report.
- b) Letter re proposed parking restrictions at Ashley Terrace and Co-operative Street.
- c) email re the removal of existing hackney carriage zones in County Durham.

From the 1st September 2011, all taxi cabs licensed by Durham County Council will be able to ply for hire in the streets and public taxi ranks throughout the County, without restriction.

- d) email from the Local Councils Support Officer offering a meeting with the Parish Council Chairman and Clerk to discuss the relationship between the Parish and County Councils.

The Chairman and Clerk will arrange to meet the Support Officer at a convenient time.

- e) Board Papers for the Chester-le-Street and District Area Action Partnership Board meeting held on Monday 23rd May 2011.
- f) Questionnaire from the AAP Community Groups & Buildings Task Group.

Due to the short timescale for replies, the Chairman and Clerk had completed and returned the questionnaire.

- g) Information and contact details re the AAP Community Groups & Buildings Task Group.
- h) Notification of the Chester-le-Street and District Area Action Partnership Board meeting to be held on Monday 27th June 2011.
- i) Letter re Overview & Scrutiny Review of Area Action Partnerships.
- j) Invitation to celebration event re public art work, to be held at Northlands play area on Monday 4th July 2011.

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

- a) Application for erection of two-storey extension at side (north elevation) of dwelling and single storey extension to rear, at 64 Longdean Park.
- b) Approval for conversion of existing garage to habitable room and erection of first floor extension above existing garage / kitchen at side of dwelling, at 62 Lombard Drive.

- c) Approval for increase in height of existing ridge line and installation of dormer windows to provide additional bedrooms, erection of kitchen and lobby extension, new access gates/ driveway and construction of swimming pool (revision of appln 2/10/00181/FUL), at Woodcroft, Picktree Village.
- d) Approval for installation of solar panels on outbuilding to rear of property, at Garden House, Picktree Village.

Item 7. 11/69 Portfolio Holders' Reports

The Chairman invited Cllr. Mrs. Caygill to give her report.

a) Play Areas Cllr. Mrs. Caygill's report included the following matters. There were rabbit holes at both play areas. The Clerk will contact the County Council to request that these be filled. At Merlin Drive play area, it appeared that the recent poor safety surfacing repair had not been attended to, and the Clerk will pursue this with the County Council.

The Chairman thanked Cllr. Mrs. Caygill for her report and 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 the position of gardener/handyperson, Councillors agreed that it was now time to seek applicants for the post. An initial rate of £7 per hour plus expenses of £6 per week worked was agreed. The Clerk will prepare a letter, to be signed by the Chairman, advising the present gardening firm that the Council will no longer be using their services. Councillors thanked Cllr. Mrs. Walton for doing so much work herself during the non-appearance of the gardener.

The Chairman thanked Cllr. Mrs. Walton for her report and invited Cllr. Jukes to give his report.

c) Finance Cllr. Jukes advised that there were no matters to report on.

The Chairman thanked Cllr. Jukes and invited Cllr. Noble-Nesbitt to give his report.

d) Highways Cllr. Noble-Nesbitt reported that several estate roads were still in a condition of distress following the bad winter weather. However, it appeared that the County Council was making steady progress with repair work.

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

At this point, Cllr. Mrs. Brown arrived at the meeting.

e) Publicity Cllr. Mrs. Forrester's report included the following matters relating to the town and the work of the AAP. 1) The Youth Centre building would be retained and converted to a gym/dance studio, 2) From 1st April 2012, all refuse collections would be on a 2-weekly basis, with a new bin for recycling material, 3) The County Council was trying to establish the ownership of various properties which were in a disused condition, 4) Advertising on lampposts was to be made an offence, 5) Usage of the Riverside park was being given much attention by the County Council to improve its general standards of cleanliness and appearance.

Cllr. Noble-Nesbitt advised that he had the material for the Newsletter. The Clerk will contact the printers to ascertain a price for the job.

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

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

g) Website In the absence of Cllr. Prof. McEwan, Cllr. Noble-Nesbitt gave a report on the present position in the development of the website.

The Chairman thanked Cllr. Noble-Nesbitt for his report.

Item 8. 11/70 The Chairman's Report

The Chairman reported on matters contained in her written report attached (Appendices 3 and 4). Re item 2 of the report, Councillors agreed that the position of Parish Council member on the AAP should be changed by rotation every two years.

Councillors thanked the Chairman for her report.

Item 9. 11/71 The Boundary Commission's Further Draft Recommendations

Cllr. Noble-Nesbitt advised that the Draft was greatly in line with the proposals submitted by the Parish Council although there were some details which required attention. Councillors agreed that Cllr. Noble-Nesbitt should draw up a case to present to the Parish Council at its July meeting.

Item 10. 11/72 Review of the Effectiveness of the System of Internal Control

The Clerk had previously circulated a draft copy of the Annual Governance Statement. Councillors discussed item 2 of the Statement, the maintenance of an adequate system of internal control, and agreed that robust procedures were in place.

(Resolved - that an adequate system of internal control is in place).

Item 11. 11/73 Approval of the Statement of Accounts

The Clerk had previously circulated a draft copy of the Statement of Accounts for 2010 / 2011 (Appendix 5, attached). Councillors discussed the Accounts and agreed that the Statement should be approved and it was duly signed by the Chairman and the Clerk.

(Resolved - to approve the Statement of Accounts for 2010 / 2011).

The Chairman thanked the Clerk for his work in producing the Accounts.

Item 12. 11/74 Approval of the Annual Governance Statement

The Clerk had previously circulated a draft copy of the Annual Governance Statement for 2010 / 2011 (Appendix 6, attached). Councillors discussed the Statement and agreed that it should be approved. The Statement was duly signed by the Chairman and the Clerk.

(Resolved - to approve the Annual Governance Statement for 2010 / 2011).

Item 13. 11/75 An Overall Amount for Donations

Councillors discussed the overall amount to be set aside for donations during the year 2011 / 2012 and agreed that the amount should be £500.

(Resolved - to set an overall amount of £500 for donations during the year 2011 / 2012).

Item 14. 11/76 Requests for Donations

The Clerk advised Councillors of the outstanding requests for donations. Councillors agreed to make donations of £50 to each of the following.

Victim Support

Butterwick House Children's Hospice

Action for Children

Great North Air Ambulance

Item 15. 11/77 Review of Salaries, Wages, Expenses and Allowances

The Clerk reminded Councillors that his salary was set in accordance with the national agreement and that no changes in this had been advised. Re his expenses, Councillors agreed to set a level of £80 per month with effect from July 2011.

(Resolved - to set a level of £80 per month for the Clerk's expenses, with effect from July 2011).

The Clerk thanked Councillors for their consideration of this matter.

The Chairman advised that the present level of Chairman's Allowance was considered to be satisfactory.

The hourly rate and amount of expenses for a new Gardener had been previously discussed at the meeting.

Item 16. 11/78 Payment of Accounts

The following accounts were submitted for payment.

TO	AMOUNT	REASON	VAT
D. Murrell		Salary/Exps. June 2011	
Durham County Pension Fund		Clerk's Pension June 2011	
Park View Community Association	£20.00	Room Hire	
Country Care Pest Control	£240.00	Pest Control	
M. May	£150.00	Chair's Quarterly Allowance	
Picture the Past	£10.00	Supply of Postcard	
Ian Herberson	£40.00	Fee for Internal Audit	
Cancer UK Chester-le-Street Branch	£50.00	Donation in memory of former Councillor Derek Yorke	
Durham County Council	£56.87	Filling of Rabbit Holes	£9.48
D. Murrell (via Staples)	£16.90	Copier Paper	£2.82
D. Murrell (via Printerinks.com)	£38.47	Photocopier Cartridge	£6.41
D. Murrell (via B & M Homestores)	£0.99	Plastic Drinking Cups	£0.17

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

Item 17. 11/79 Other Matters for Consideration

The following matters were submitted for consideration.

1) Cllr. Mrs. Caygill advised that the pond between Low Flatts and the Drum Industrial Estate was being used and enjoyed by many people, particularly fishermen. However, litter is a problem (a litter bin would be a help) and disabled people had difficulty of access (the installation of a gradient would help). Cllr. Mrs. Caygill will seek to discuss this with the manager of the Co-operative warehouse, and County Cllr. May kindly agreed to help in seeking solutions.

2) Cllr. Mrs. LeDune, on behalf of herself and Cllr. Mrs. Prest, advised that sub-stations in the area were of an untidy appearance. The Clerk will contact the County Council to ascertain what might be done, and Cllr. Mrs. Forrester kindly agreed to raise this matter at the next meeting of the AAP Environment Task Group.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 9.00pm.

North Lodge Parish Council

Accounts for the month as submitted to the Meeting of North Lodge Parish Council on Tuesday 19th July 2011.

TO	AMOUNT	REASON	VAT
D. Murrell		Salary/Exps. July 2011	
Durham County Pension Fund		Clerk's Pension July 2011	
Park View Community Association	£20.00	Room Hire	
Victim Support	£50.00	Donation	
Butterwick House Children's Hospice	£50.00	Donation	
Action for Children	£50.00	Donation	
Great North Air Ambulance	£50.00	Donation	

Balance to 30th June 2011

Balance b/f	£40593.53	Balances at Bank:-		
Deduct Payments - June 2011	<u>£ 1242.96</u>		Current	£ 1254.51
	£39350.57		30 Day	<u>£38528.95</u>
Add Compensation from Bank	<u>£ 100.00</u>		Total	£39783.46
Balance c/f	£39450.57	Deduct cheques not yet presented		<u>£ 332.89</u>
				£39450.57