

NORTH LODGE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of North Lodge Parish Council held at Park View School, Lombard Drive, Chester-le-Street on Tuesday 15th November 2016.

PRESENT: Chairman: Cllr. Elsie Forrester.
Councillors: Margaret Caygill, Jackie Martin, Maureen May,
Patrick Driscoll, Dennis Hall, John Murray,
David Snaith, John Waugh.

County Councillor: Peter May.

Clerk: David Murrell.

The Chairman commenced the meeting at 6.00pm, welcoming everyone and expressing condolences to the Clerk and his family on the recent sad loss of his brother. The Clerk thanked everyone for the numerous messages of support received.

Item 1. 16/107 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for Absence were received from Councillors Carole Walton and Colin Noble-Nesbitt.

Item 2. 16/108 Declarations of Interest

Cllr. Margaret Caygill declared an interest as a Governor of Park View School. Cllr. Jackie Martin declared an interest as Chairman of North Lodge Residents Association. Cllr. Maureen May and County Cllr. Peter May declared interests, as the property owners, in the planning application for Hollydene.

Item 3. 16/109 Co-option of Councillor

John Murray had attended the October meeting of the Council when he had expressed an interest in being co-opted to the Council. Councillors were now asked to decide on his co-option. **(Resolved** - on a unanimous show of hands, to co-opt John Murray to the Council).
The Chairman welcomed Cllr. Murray to the Council.

Item 4. 16/110 Report of the County Councillor

The Chairman invited County Councillor Peter May to give his report which included matters contained in his written report attached (Appendix 1).
The Chairman thanked the County Councillor for his report.

Item 5. 16/111 Adoption of Minutes of Meeting

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on Tuesday 18th October 2016, 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 6. 16/112 Chairman's Report

Regarding outstanding matters -

- a) Re Minute 16/100. The Clerk confirmed that he had suggested to Mr. Martin that Mr. Martin should print in his newsletter a correction re his claims regarding installation of the flashing speed signs.
 - b) Re Minute 16/102 section c). Re the request for the kerbs at the junction of Low Flatts Road and North Road to be painted white, the Clerk advised that this had been declined by the County Council. However, the County Council had advised that they would install bollards at the junction although this would only be done when funding was available.
 - c) Re Minute 16/102 section e). The Clerk advised that work to the North Road bus shelter opposite Lombard Drive was scheduled for Wednesday 16th November 2016. Also, the County Council had now agreed to carry out the required repair work to the Northlands shelter. The Chairman provided up-dates re the CDALC AGM and the Remembrance Day parade. The parade had been very well organized this year and the Chairman had laid a wreath on behalf of the Council.
 - d) Re Minute 16/103 section c2). Re clearing of footpaths at Caxton Way/Picktree Lodge and North Road/Lyndhurst Avenue, County Cllr. May will again chase these up.
 - e) Re Minute 16/103 section c3). Re the missing "Keep Left" sign at the pedestrian refuge on North Road near to its junction with Low Flatts Road, the Clerk advised that a response was still awaited from the County Council. County Cllr. May advised that County Council Highways Officers were aware of the situation.
 - f) Re Minute 16/103 section c6). Re the re-painting of the 30mph road marking on North Road, County Cllr. May will chase this up.
 - g) Re Minute 16/103 section f2). The Clerk advised that no response had been received from the Co-op Environment Volunteers re the cleaning of the Low Flatts/Drum Industrial Estate path. Cllr. Caygill kindly agreed to chase this up.
- The Chairman's report included matters contained in her written report attached (Appendix 2).
Councillors thanked the Chairman for her report.

Item 7. 16/113 Portfolio Holders' Reports

a) Crime and Community Safety

The Chairman invited Cllr. Jackie Martin to give her report which included the matters contained in her written report attached (Appendix 3).

The Chairman thanked Cllr. Martin for her report and invited Cllr. John Waugh to give his report.

b) Finance

Cllr. Waugh confirmed that he had received the most recent bank statements and he was satisfied that the finances were in order.

The Chairman thanked Cllr. Waugh for his report.

c) Highways and Website

In his absence from the meeting, Cllr. Noble-Nesbitt had provided a written report (Appendix 4, attached) and this was read out by the Clerk.

The Chairman thanked Cllr. Noble-Nesbitt for his report and invited Cllr. Maureen May to give the Horticulture report.

d) Horticulture

Cllrs. May and Walton's report included the matters contained in the written report attached (Appendix 5).

The Chairman thanked Cllrs. May and Walton for their report and invited Cllr. David Snaith to give his report.

e) Planning

Cllr. Snaith advised that there were no matters to report.

The Chairman thanked Cllr. Snaith and invited Cllr. Margaret Caygill to give her report.

f) Play Areas

Cllr. Caygill's report included the following matters.

- 1) At Merlin Drive play area, the equipment appeared to be in order. The County Council was looking for a design of litter bin with a cover. Many daffodil bulbs had been planted by residents, schoolchildren and Cllr. Caygill.
- 2) At Low Flatts play area, the equipment appeared to be in order. Cllr. Caygill had discussed with the County Council Officer the muddy access area to the play equipment section. Councillors agreed that a concrete plinth should be laid down. Cllr. Caygill and the Clerk will arrange this. Cllr. Caygill had agreed with the County Council Officer the design for the required replacement sign. Cllr. Caygill will obtain a quote for the purchase of the sign. There were some daffodil bulbs to be planted.

The Chairman thanked Cllr. Caygill for her report.

g) Publicity

Cllr. Forrester advised that all publicity matters had been contained in her Chairman's Report earlier.

Councillors thanked the Chairman.

Item 8. 16/114 Correspondence

1) From the Police, Crime and Victims' Commissioner
Letter re Police, Crime and Victims Plan 2016-2021

2) From County Durham Association of Local Councils

- a) Email re Elections May 4th 2017.
- b) Email re CDALC AGM.
- c) Agenda for Smaller Councils Forum meeting to be held on Friday 18th November 2016.
- d) Invitation to Neighbourhood Plan Working Group meeting to be held on Thursday 1st December 2016.
- e) Email re attendance at a Royal Garden Party 2017.

Councillors agreed to nominate Cllr. Colin Noble-Nesbitt and his wife to attend a Royal Garden Party.

3) From Durham County Council

- a) Email re temporary road closure, Drum Road.
- b) Email re Tree Week 2016.
- c) Email re Chester-le-Street TRO proposals.
- d) Email re Local Government Pension Scheme.
- e) Email re RHS in Bloom entries.
- f) Email re speed signs, Picktree Village.

The County Council was unable to replace the current 30mph signs with actual speed indication signs. Also, the activation speed of the current signs could not be reduced due to Department for Transport guidelines.

During consideration of planning application a) below, Cllr. Maureen May and County Cllr. Peter May left the room.

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

- a) Application for works to 12 no. trees protected by a TPO, at Hollydene, North Lodge.
- b) Approval to fell 1no. Beech and stump ground out (covered by TPO CLS-1 North Lodge), at 18 North Lodge.

Item 9. 16/115 Requests for Donations

Councillors agreed that the total amount for Donations in the year 2016 / 2017 would be £250. Councillors discussed the outstanding requests and agreed to make a donation of £50 to each of the following -

Great North Air Ambulance, County of Durham School Benevolent Fund, Citizens Advice County Durham, The Children's Foundation.

Item 10. 16/116 Payment of Accounts

TO	AMOUNT	REASON	VAT
Salaries	£680.02	Salaries November 2016	
Expenses	£ 80.00	Expenses November 2016	
Durham County Pension Fund	£210.72	Pensions November 2016	
Pot-It-On	£322.47	Horticulture November 2016	
Pot-It-On	£140.00	Environment Care November 2016	
G. Caygill (via Pity Me Nursery)	£ 10.00	Plants	£ 0.38
Hirst Signs Ltd	£231.00	Signs for Bus Shelters	£38.50

(Resolved - the payments be approved as submitted).

Item 11. 16/117 Other Matters for Information

There were no other matters raised.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 7.36pm wishing everyone a very Happy Christmas.

North Lodge Parish Council

Accounts for the month as submitted to the Meeting of North Lodge Parish Council held on Tuesday 17th January 2017.

TO	AMOUNT	REASON	VAT
Salaries	£ 487.60	Salaries December 2016	
Expenses	£ 80.00	Expenses December 2016	
Durham County Pension Fund	£ 141.51	Pensions December 2016	
Pot-It-On	£ 266.00	Horticulture December 2016	
Pot-It-On	£ 140.00	Environment Care November 2016	
D. Murrell (via JAK HQ Ltd)	£ 28.80	ID Badges	£ 4.80
HM Revenue & Customs	£ 299.73	PAYE	
St. Astier Ltd	£3521.81	Renovation of Bus Shelter	£586.97
Durham County Council	£2742.68	Flower Beds	£457.11
Great North Air Ambulance	£ 50.00	Donation	
Co. Dharm School Benevolent Fund	£ 50.00	Donation	
Citizen's Advice County Durham	£ 50.00	Donation	
The Children's Foundation	£ 50.00	Donation	
E. Forrester	£ 150.00	Chair's Allowance	
Society of Local Council Clerks	£ 108.00	Annual Membership Fee	
Association of Local Council Clerks	£ 10.00	Annual Membership Fee	
Salaries		Salaries January 2017	
Expenses	£ 80.00	Expenses January 2017	
Durham County Pension Fund	£ 141.51	Pensions January 2017	
Npower Northern Ltd	£ 23.57	Power for Tree Lights	£ 1.12
Pot-It-On		Horticulture January 2017	
Pot-It-On		Environment Care January 2017	

Balance to 30th November 2016

Balance b/f	£36902.30	Balances at Bank:-	
Deduct Payments - November 16	<u>£ 1674.21</u>		Current £ 356.88
	£35228.09		30 Day <u>£34921.21</u>
			Total <u>£35278.09</u>
		Deduct cheques not yet presented	<u>£ 50.00</u>
Balance c/f	£35228.09		£35228.09

North Lodge Parish Council
November 2016 Report
County Councillor Peter May

Neighbourhood Budget Application – Ref No: 16NB-CHES028 Park View School North Lodge Part Time 20mph

Equipment has been ordered and the expected start is November

North Lodge in Bloom

I am no longer secretary as I believe it may have lead to a conflict of interest.

Warning lights at Picktree Lodge not illuminated

This has been checked and confirmed and I am awaiting confirmation of when they will be repaired.

20mph speed limit for Picktree Village

I have had discussions with David Battensby of DCC regarding this issue. The Councils response is that the road was 40 mph and due to pressure from Myself the Parish Council and Resident's Association it was dropped to 30mph. They believe that speeds are more or less the same now as they were before the introduction of the 30mph limit. Recent speed checks indicate that there does not appear to be a problem generally although there will still be motorists who do exceed 30mph.

I have asked for an explanation that can be given to residents.

Coveris noise

The Council are in the process of installing noise monitoring equipment in the houses of two residents.

The Council believes that the noise has now reduced to an acceptable level which is contested by residents.

First indications from the home checks would appear to support the residents claims.

I have given my support to contacting the Ombudsman but this cannot be done until the residents complaint to the Council regarding questionable practice has been dealt with.

I have had a personal meeting with Terry Collins the CEO of DCC who has asked me to supply a full list of residents' complaints this matter. He will then meet with the Director of Adults and Health and the Head of Environment, Health and Consumer Protection at the Council to discuss this matter.

We will then have a meeting with the Directors to discuss their findings and to share information.

I have tried to keep Coveris and noise complains low key to avoid bad publicity for the area. (just as I did with the Picktree Lodge dust and noise issue which has now dissapeared)

Unfortunately Mr Martin appears not to care and has used the issue for his own publicity.

Inaccurate Political information from Mr Craig Martin of the Liberal Democrats

I have received comments from residents that the information contained in the proliferation of leaflets from Mr Martin is somewhat questionable and inaccurate. Mr Martin is entitled to his opinions but unfortunately he tends not give the full information as it will not be in his interest to do so.

I will be sending out my own literature in due course but just to put the record straight on a couple of points:

He has called me an ineffective Councillor. I find that a very arrogant remark and insulting not only to me but to everyone who helps to make North Lodge a good place to live in.

He has called into question the money spent on the Northlands Roundabout which cost £1.8m. (As if the Council paid everything) I am told that £1.3m of the £1.8m total costs came from the Transit15 pot, so only £0.5m came from the Council's own capital programme. So actually the Council got a good deal – but he didn't tell you all of this.

He is pushing for road safety and indicating that what is in place is not effective especially the flashing speed visors. Of course improvements can always be made and irrespective of what measures are in place some drivers will speed.

Mr Martin told residents a deliberate lie to gain attention – stating that another flashing speed warning light had just appeared on North Road – its been there 4 years.

Some areas do have actual speed displays but these are having to be modified as drivers are trying to drive fast to see if they are accurate or how fast their car is - negating any effectiveness.

We decided not to have resitable signs because it would have cost the Parish Council approx. £1200 per year to maintain. Fixed signs were more affordable and still do the job with the help of the occasional speed awareness campaign or Police radar .

My responsibility is to protect the residents and the area . The speed signs at the time were the option that we could afford and were erected with the advice from the Police and Council. They were discussed at the North Lodge Residents meetings, Parish Council meetings and funded jointly by The Parish Council and me through my Neighbourhood budget. They were the best we could afford. They have made a difference.

It is very disturbing that only during an election year do we get this sort of criticism and lack of appreciation for at least trying. **20mph limits cannot be installed “willy nilly”** there is a strict protocol the Council must follow which includes speed checks. In North Lodge there is probably only one area that will be acceptable and that is Broadway as it is used as a rat run . It has speed bumps which will also help slow traffic.

Waldridge also has a 20mph zone and also has Speed bumps – would you like speed humps on your estate.

How do I vote at the Council budget setting meetings?

Firstly I am an Independent Councillor and my priority is to consider all information and make an informed decision on what I believe is the best way forward for my residents.

At least a week prior to the vote I am given the leading parties proposals. I can then discuss with the Councils Officers any issues that I am concerned about.

Only at the Council meeting itself do The Liberal Democrats give their proposals giving me no time to study them. I am then expected to debate a proposal I know nothing about. If their proposals are so good then why not share them earlier?

Finally we live in a really nice area and I don't like people like Mr Martin making it sound like there are issues on every corner and running down the area.

North Lodge Parish Council

Crime and Community Safety Report: Tuesday, 15th November 2016

Current

Picktree Lodge: Recent burglaries- Three people arrested and bailed, pending further investigations.

Lambton Park: Two motorbikes found hidden in a hedge row, property from a burglary from outside this area.

Park Road North: Males stating they were ex-offenders, going door to door in an attempt to sell over priced goods.

Vehicle abandoned on the pavement leading from the Blind Lane roundabout to Picktree Village has been removed.

Large mobile advertising board (damaged) removed from the grass verge opposite the Blind Lane roundabout.

Crime and Community Safety Forum.

Speaker from Age UK: **Beat the Scammers**, interesting and very informative talk.
Street Lighting: Durham County Council's policy is not to turn lights off. The lights can be dimmed. If a light is not illuminated during the hours of darkness, then it needs to be reported to the Council. The ID number shown on the pole will be required.

Neighbourhood Watch: No current information available.

**HORTICULTURE REPORT
NORTH LODGE PARISH COUNCIL
15 November 2016**

County Councils Responsibilities

- Flower Beds Installed by Durham County Council. - All the flower beds have now been planted up with winter bedding - total 16.

- Area opposite plinth at Picktree Lodge – Still waiting for some tidying etc. to be done. Martin Briscoe to be contacted re progress.

- Small Roundabout in second cul-de-sac at Picktree Lodge. - A local Resident has requested that this roundabout be tidied up etc. Although this is no longer the Parish Council's responsibility, I have contacted Martin Briscoe who said he would attend to this issue during the winter. The resident was informed.

Parish Gardener Responsibilities

- General winter maintenance and tidying continues around the parish.

The following flower/shrub beds have now been planted completely and will be maintained by Parish Gardener.

- Flower Bed at entrance to Longdean Park
- Flower Bed around plinth at entrance to Picktree Lodge
- Millennium Flower Bed at entrance to Lombard Drive
- Tubs at Lambton Park entrance

Three Shrub/Flower Beds in Picktree Village. The gardener has removed old plants and trimmed shrubs. Mr & Mrs Kirkup have kindly planted Daffodils in beds

- Heather Bed at Picktree Village on-going. Requires tidying. Maintenance is done once or twice per year.

- Three Flower tubs have now been placed at Northlands end of North Road and have been planted up. These tubs will be maintained by Councillor Caygill and local Residents.

- Northlands Shrub bed. The parish gardener has weeded and removed leaves, particularly from areas which will be planted up with spring bulbs. More weeding and edging will be done at a later date.
- Hawthorn Hedge at Low Flatts Play area. A site meeting has taken place between Parish Gardener and Portfolio Holders. The gardener will make a boarder approximately 15 inches depth and clear the area between the two posts, to hopefully to allow hawthorn saplings to grow more effectively.

In Bloom

- A small group of Residents have now formed and are all sharing roles and responsibilities. We will shortly be arranging next meeting when we will be officially applying to Northumbria in Bloom for entrance to competition.

C Walton/M May