

NORTH LODGE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Virtual Meeting of North Lodge Parish Council held at Park View School, Lombard Drive, Chester-le-Street on Tuesday 20th October 2020.

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

The Chairman commenced the meeting by welcoming everyone.

Item 1. 20/67 Apologies for Absence

There were no Apologies for Absence.

Item 2. 20/68 Declarations of Interest

Councillor Margaret Caygill declared an interest as a Governor of Park View School. Councillor John Waugh declared an interest in the planning application for a detached house at Plot 6, site of former Pelaw Grange Cottage.

Item 3. 20/69 Report of the County Councillor

The Chairman invited County Councillor Craig Martin to give his report which included the matters contained in his written report below -

Former Arizona Chemical site Planning Application Approved

Approval has been given to build 83 houses on the site between Ambleside Court and the new Barley Gate development. I have supported this application as there is a need to develop this brown field site to improve the area. Throughout the process I've fought for improvements to our community.

The application was approved using emergency powers to speed up the process, due to Covid. Removing the committee stage and to be approved by a director of Durham County Council under the recommendation of the Chair and Vice-Chair of the committee. To ensure that despite the removal of the democratic process public scrutiny remained I requested that a letter go out to all residents informing them of what's going on. While also involving the parish council heavily to review the report and question it.

Now that the area will be completely residential and we'll be welcoming more families, it is unacceptable that Vigo Lane's speed limit remains at 40mph. Following my efforts and the community's, it has been written into the plans that a full road safety audit will happen. This will occur when all homes are occupied and I will be pushing for Vigo Lane's speed limit to be reduced to 30mph throughout the process.

Myself, along with the Parish Council, have pushed to get a new play area on the site for all the new young people we expect to welcome in the coming years. Sadly we have been unable to deliver this due to the rules and regulations relating to planning applications. Putting in place a play area would have been instead of the developer giving hundreds of thousands of pounds to a local

secondary school to increase capacity. Something that needs to happen considering Park View Academy is oversubscribed and their classrooms urgently need modernising.

In addition, 1) Re area names and postcodes of properties in the Vigo Lane area, the Royal Mail had confirmed that these were allocated according to which sorting office served the area. 2) Re the Sustrans bridge at Low Flatts, the County Cllr advised that Sustrans had secured funding to improve the structure for its long term use. In response to Cllr Caygill's suggestion re the desirability for better access to the cycleway at the bridge, the County Cllr confirmed that he was still pursuing this. 3) Re the potential availability of community funds from the Barley Gate development, the County Cllr agreed to approach Sustrans to explore the possibility of a project to repaint the bridge over North Road.

The Chairman thanked the County Councillor for his report.

Item 4. 20/70 Adoption of Minutes of Meeting

The Minutes of the Virtual Meeting of the Parish Council held on Tuesday 15th September 2020, 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. 20/71 Chairman's Report

Regarding outstanding matters -

- a) Re Minute 20/62. Re barrels being planted by volunteers, this work will now be carried out by the County Council.
- b) Re Minute 20/63. Re a resident's enquiry regarding overhanging trees, a reply from Durham County Council had been forwarded to the resident.
- c) Re Minute 20/63. Re an outstanding donation cheque, this remained outstanding. The Chairman will chase this up.
- d) Re Minute 20/64 section e). Re the proposal for a new seat on North Road in the vicinity of Kingsmere, this is to be held over to a later meeting when more information, including the opinions of residents, should be available.

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

The Council continues to receive Covid 19 information from Durham County Council (DCC) and CDALC.

The four notice boards have arrived and await a date for fixing by our handyman, at the designated locations in the Parish

The notice board at Merlin Drive play area has been replaced. The faulty board awaits collection. Council e-mail addresses. This enquiry is still outstanding with DCC. David, our Parish Council Clerk, has resumed contact with DCC and will update this Council when further information is received.

Through Zoom, I have attended two of the Clerk's training sessions delivered by staff from CDALC. Both sessions were very informative. The third session is scheduled for Tuesday, 27th October. I cannot stress enough, the importance for Councillors to attend any training sessions offered by CDALC.

On Remembrance Sunday, I will place a wreath on behalf of the Parish Council, at the Chester-le-Street memorial. I shall assess the safe guarding measures at the area on the day.

As well as holding the position of Chairman, I am the Council's portfolio holder (PH) for Crime and Community Safety. As Chairman, I am most concerned that there appears to be an increase in car crime on the Barley Gate Estate spilling over into the North Lodge Estate. My PH report will update Councillors of the present situation.

I again, thank Councillor's for their continued community work whilst dealing with the current situation relating to Covid 19. I must stress, take care and follow the Government guidelines.

Councillors thanked the Chairman for her report.

Item 6. 20/72 Portfolio Holders' Reports

The Chairman invited Cllr Waugh to give his Finance report.

a) Finance

Cllr Waugh advised that he had received the most recent financial information and was satisfied that the Council's finances were in order.

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

b) Horticulture

NORTH LODGE PARISH COUNCIL

Report to Council 20 October 2020

Subject: Raised Shrub Beds North Road

Portfolio: HORTICULTURE -

Prepared by: Maureen May

Sent to Clerk on: 20 October 2020

SUMMARY

1.1 A quotation was received by the Parish Council from Durham County Council for works to be carried out on 2 shrub beds in North Road (maintenance etc.).

2 DETAIL

2.1 *Background:* Unfortunately the Vat. was omitted from the Quotation which has now been added to the Invoice for the work.

2.2 *Key Issues.* The Invoice does not equate with the Quotation

2.3 *Conclusions:* To date, this work has not yet been carried out. Martin Briscoe (DCC) has been contacted who has stated that the County Council will do the work approximately within the next two weeks.

3 RECOMMENDATIONS (Select as appropriate)

To agree above proposed documents

For decision and to consider the following recommended actions:

* *For information only*

4.0. IMPLICATIONS (*Select as appropriate & give details*)

4.1 Financial, Precept or Procurement implications:

4.2 Staff or Other Resource implications:

4.3 Consultations with others:

4.4 Risk Assessment:

4.5 Other Identified Implications:

NORTH LODGE PARISH COUNCIL

Report to Council 20 October 2020

Subject: Winter Bedding

Portfolio: HORTICULTURE -

Prepared by: Maureen May

Sent to Clerk on: 20 October 2020

SUMMARY

1.1. The Parish Clerk has accepted a quote from Martin Briscoe Durham County Council for planting of designated Winter Bedding

2 DETAIL

2.1 *Background:* All Parish Councillors agreed with quote.

2.2 *Key Issues.* A little late in season for planting bedding

2.3 *Conclusions:* To date, this work has not yet been carried out. Martin Briscoe (DCC) has been contacted who has stated that the County Council will do the work approximately within the next two weeks.

RECOMMENDATIONS (*Select as appropriate*)

To agree above proposed documents

For decision and to consider the following recommended actions:

** For information only*

4.0. IMPLICATIONS *(Select as appropriate & give details)*

4.1 Financial, Precept or Procurement implications:

4.2 Staff or Other Resource implications:

4.3 Consultations with others:

4.4 Risk Assessment:

4.5 Other Identified Implications:

NORTH LODGE PARISH COUNCIL

Report to Council 20 October 2020

Subject: Christmas tree – Picktree Village

Portfolio: HORTICULTURE -

Prepared by: Maureen May

Sent to Clerk on: 20 October 2020

SUMMARY

1.1. The policy on Erection of Decoration and Seasonal Lighting has now been completed – very complex and appears to apply to electrical street lighting

2 DETAIL

2.1 *Background:* Jeff Stephenson is looking into our requirements.

2.2 *Key Issues.* Christmas tree and planting arrangements will need to be ordered soon.

2.3 *Conclusions:* Councillor will closely monitor situation.

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS *(Select as appropriate)*

To agree above proposed documents

For decision and to consider the following recommended actions:

* *For information only*

4.0. IMPLICATIONS *(Select as appropriate & give details)*

4.1 Financial, Precept or Procurement implications:

4.2 Staff or Other Resource implications:

4.3 Consultations with others:

4.4 Risk Assessment:

4.5 Other Identified Implications:

NORTH LODGE PARISH COUNCIL

Report to Council 20 October 2020

Subject: North Lodge Entrance

Portfolio: HORTICULTURE -

Prepared by: Maureen May

Sent to Clerk on: 20 October 2020

SUMMARY

1.1. Site requires attention.

2 DETAIL

2.1 Background: This site suffers due to fallen leaves from October to December.

2.2 *Key Issues.* The grass is very much affected and needs much attention

2.3 *Conclusion* Martin Briscoe (DCC) has sent a proposal of design which needs to be discussed. Alternatively – Leave entrance as it is until a Parish Gardener is appointed.

3 RECOMMENDATIONS *(Select as appropriate)*

To agree above proposed documents

For decision and to consider the following recommended actions:

4.0. IMPLICATIONS *(Select as appropriate & give details)*

4.1 Financial, Precept or Procurement implications:

4.2 Staff or Other Resource implications:

4.3 Consultations with others:

4.4 Risk Assessment:

4.5 Other Identified Implications:

NORTH LODGE PARISH COUNCIL

Report to Council 20 October 2020

Subject: Bill Board Site - Wheatsheaf

Portfolio: HORTICULTURE -

Prepared by: Maureen May

Sent to Clerk on: 20 October 2020

SUMMARY

1.1 Site requires attention.

2.0 DETAIL

2.1 Background:

2.2 *Key Issues.* Site is unsightly.

2.3 *Conclusion* Martin Briscoe (DCC) has sent a proposal of design which needs to be discussed. Alternatively – Have site cleared of all debris, cultivated and planted with wild flowers.

3 RECOMMENDATIONS *(Select as appropriate)*

To agree above proposed documents

For decision and to consider the following recommended actions:

4.0. IMPLICATIONS *(Select as appropriate & give details)*

4.1 Financial, Precept or Procurement implications:

4.2 Staff or Other Resource implications:

4.3 Consultations with others:

4.4 Risk Assessment:

4.5 Other Identified Implications:

1) Councillors discussed the overgrown “Billboard site - Wheatsheaf” on North Road at the Sustrans bridge and agreed that the planting of wildflowers would be preferable. Cllr May is to liaise with Durham County Council on this. 2) Re the need to appoint a new Gardener and an Environment Caretaker, Cllr May is to liaise with Councillors to produce proposals in readiness for when the current pandemic eases and an appointment process can then be instigated. The Chairman thanked Cllr May for her report and invited Cllr Caygill to give her report which included the matters contained in her written report below -

c) Play Areas

MERLIN DRIVE

All equipment appears to be in good order. The weeds at the edge have not been removed as requested. A more up to date Covid notice is in place.

LOW FLATTS

All equipment appears to be in good order. There is not a Covid notice in place and I have asked for one. The prickly weeds at the perimeter are still intruding on the fenced play area. We asked DCC to cut these, but no response. Can we pay someone to cut them?

Re the weeds at Low Flatts, a quote is to be obtained for approval by Councillors. The Chairman thanked Cllr Caygill for her report and invited Cllr Forrester to give her report.

d) Publicity

Cllr Forrester advised that the Agenda, Minutes and Reports from the September meeting of the AAP were awaited. Cllr Forrester and Cllr May had attended a virtual meeting that had included a presentation on the Government's "Planning for the Future" consultation. Cllr Forrester outlined the main points and Cllr Hall advised that he considered the proposals immensely significant for communities, and that there was much opposition nationwide to the proposals.

The Chairman thanked Cllr Forrester for her report and invited Cllr Hall to give his report.

e) Policy and Governance

Cllr Hall advised that there were no matters to report but he did welcome back the Clerk after his illness.

The Chairman thanked Cllr Hall.

f) Crime and Community Safety

Cllr Gregory gave her report which included the matters contained in her written report below -

NORTH LODGE PARISH COUNCIL

Report to Council on 20th October 2020

Subject: Crime figures and community issues

Portfolio: Crime and Community Safety

Prepared by: Jackie Gregory

Sent to Clerk on: 21st October 2020

1.0 **SUMMARY** *(Type brief details in 2/3 lines here)*

Monthly crime figure and community issues.

2.0 **DETAIL** *(Type fullest relevant information here)*

2.1. *Background:* Inform Councillors and residents monthly, of crime incidents/trends for North Lodge. Crime prevention initiatives.

National Police web-site.

2.2. *Key Issues:* Insufficient details included on the Police web-site

Car Crime on the Barley Gate Estate spilling over on to the North Lodge Estate.

Parish Council were made aware of this due through social media, not Police..

2.3. Contacted Police, there is an operation taking place. Council to receive regular updates.

2.4. *Conclusions:*

Again another breakdown in communication between the Police and the Council.

3.0 **RECOMMENDATIONS** *(Select as appropriate)*

To note or

x For decision and to consider the following recommended actions:

(Specify below)

If Council agree then the Council make a request for the Police representative to join the Council meeting via Zoom to discuss this problem. To discuss the breakdown in communications. The discussion to remind the Police of the Council responsibilities and the need to promote working together for the betterment of residents and area.

4.0 IMPLICATIONS

Car crime increases

Residents may lose faith in the Parish Council

4.1 Financial, Precept or Procurement implications: X

May be a need to print and distribute Crime Prevention leaflets.

4.2 Staff or Other Resource implications:

4.3 Consultations with others: X See section 3.0

4.4 Risk Assessment: X Distribution implications due to Covid 19

4.5 Other Identified Implications:

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS OR APPENDICES:

Section 17 of the **Crime and Disorder Act 1998** states that all relevant authorities – which includes **town and parish councils** – have a duty to consider the impact of all their functions and decisions on **crime and disorder** in their local area.

(Select as appropriate & give details)

In addition, 1) re car crime, Councillors agreed that Cllr Gregory should invite the Police to join a virtual meeting of the Council. 2) Cllr May had concerns re the planning application for Plot 6, site of former Pelaw Grange Cottage. Cllr May is to liaise with the Clerk on this matter.

Councillors thanked Cllr Gregory for her report.

g) Highways and Website

Cllr Gregory advised that there were no matters to report.

The Chairman invited Cllr Waugh to give his Planning report.

h) Planning

Cllr Waugh outlined his method of presenting planning applications to Councillors who confirmed their agreement to receiving weekly comments.

Item 7. 20/73 Correspondence

- 1) From Mazars
Notification of completion of Audit.
- 2) From County Durham Association of Local Councils
email re Remembrance Sunday.
- 3) From Lloyds Bank
Letter re Online for Business application for delegate access.
- 4) Various planning applications, approvals and refusals from Durham County Council, of which the following were within North Lodge Parish:-
 - a) Application for removal of 1 x conifer (T1 on plan), at 10 North Lodge.
 - b) Application for erection of detached house at Plot 6, site of former Pelaw Grange Cottage, North Road.
 - c) Approval for single storey rear and side extension, at 4 Vigo Lane.
 - d) Approval for pruning of branches of 10 trees, at 5 North Lodge.
 - e) Approval for erection of 83 dwellings, at site of former Arizona Chemical, Vigo Lane.

Item 8. 20/74 Items Requested by Councillors

a) Application by North Lodge Remembrance Group for a donation of £100

The Group had provided supporting information and this had been previously circulated by the Clerk to Councillors. The application was discussed and approved unanimously by Councillors who felt that this was a very worthwhile project. The Clerk is to advise the Group that the Council would welcome a greater and earlier involvement should the project continue in future years.

b) Review of the use of a template for Portfolio Holders' reports

Cllr Hall outlined the reasons for the introduction of the template. Councillors discussed its usage and Cllr Hall asked for suggestions to amend the form to simplify it. Usage of the form is to be reviewed again in February 2021.

c) A draft donation policy

Some Councillors had been unable to open the email attachment containing supporting information sent by the Clerk. Therefore, this item is now to be discussed at the next Council meeting.

Councillors wished to consider making a donation to the Poppy Appeal in return for a wreath to be laid on Remembrance Sunday. Cllr Driscoll proposed that a donation of £100 should be made and this was agreed by Councillors. Cllr Forrester is to source the wreath.

d) A draft management policy

The Chairman had kindly drafted a policy to cover circumstances where a Clerk might be unable to carry out his/her duties due to, for instance, illness. The Clerk had previously circulated this document to Councillors who discussed it and agreed to its adoption.

e) Laptops for Councillors

Some Councillors had been unable to open the email attachment containing supporting information sent by the Clerk. Therefore, this item is now to be discussed at the next Council meeting.

Item 9. 20/75 Payment of Accounts

TO	AMOUNT	REASON	VAT
Salaries	£ 463.84	Salaries October 2020	
Expenses	£ 90.00	Expenses October 2020	
DSJ Property Services	£ 250.00	Removal of Noticeboard	
Greenbarnes Ltd	£2878.46	Purchase of Four Noticeboards	£ 479.74
D. Murrell (via Zoom inc)	£ 14.39	Monthly Subscription	£ 2.40
D. Murrell (via Magnet Expert Ltd)	£ 11.08	Magnetic Discs for Noticeboards	£ 1.85
North Lodge Remembrance Group	£ 100.00	Donation	
Poppy Appeal	£ 100.00	Donation	

Total Payments £3907.77

(Resolved - the payments be approved as submitted).

Item 10. 20/76 Other Matters for Information

Cllr Caygill advised that next month she would retire as a Governor of Park View School although she would retain a role in liaising between the School and the local community.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 8.15pm.

North Lodge Parish Council

Accounts for the month as submitted to the Meeting of North Lodge Parish Council held on Tuesday 17th November 2020.

TO	AMOUNT	REASON	VAT
Salaries	£	Salaries November 2020	
Expenses	£ 90.00	Expenses November 2020	
DSJ Property Services	£ 570.00	Installation of Noticeboards	
D. Murrell (via Zoom inc)	£ 14.39	Monthly Subscription	£ 2.40
D. Murrell (via Internet-Ink.com)	£ 17.99	Printer Ink Cartridges	£ 3.00
Cty Dhm Assn of Local Councils	£ 45.00	Training Fee	
Total Payments	£		

Balance to 31st October 2020

Balance b/f	£55463.51	Balances at Bank:-	
Deduct Payments - October 2020	<u>£ 3907.77</u>	Treasurers Account	£ 2937.59
	£51555.74	Instant Account	<u>£51547.06</u>
		Total	£54484.65
Add Bank Interest Received	<u>£ .45</u>	Deduct cheques not yet presented	<u>£ 2928.46</u>
	£51556.19		£51556.19
Balance c/f	£51556.19		£51556.19

Two cheques not yet presented -

- 1) £50 cheque number 1401 dated 2/09/20 for a donation payable to County of Durham School Benevolent Fund. This cheque replaced cheque number 1375 dated 21/01/20 which is now out-of-date.
- 2) £2878.46 cheque number 1407 dated 20/10/20 payable to Greenbarnes Ltd for purchase of four noticeboards.