

NORTH LODGE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Virtual Meeting of North Lodge Parish Council held on Tuesday 20th April 2021.

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. 21/34 Apologies for Absence

There were no Apologies for Absence.

Item 2. 21/35 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

Item 3. 21/36 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 -

New Leisure Centre Site

Chester-le-Street's new leisure centre will be built on the former Civic Centre site. I've been campaigning to ensure those living near it will not be negatively effected by cars parking outside their homes.

Households on Newcastle Road already have an issue with vehicles parking outside their homes from staff off the Police Station. It is feared that if the new leisure centre charges for parking this will increase the problem.

I've raised this issue directly with the head of service leading on the new leisure centres. The need for the leisure centre to have free parking or provide additional protections for those living in the area.

The head of service noted that generally leisure centres across County Durham have free parking. The current Chester-le-Street leisure centre is the exception to the rule. One of the reasons the former civic centre site has been chosen is because of the ample parking. They believe that this will actually improve the parking situation that is currently occurring.

The location is the only decision that has been made for the new leisure centre. There will be a further consultation in July asking for input on how it will operate and the facilities it will provide. With plans being released in December. I will be encouraging residents to raise their parking concerns through this process.

Seating Entrance to Picktree Lodge

Highways England will soon be leaving their site at Picktree Lodge and restoring everything to how it was before hand. As part of this they intend to put in place some seating at the entrance. I've been speaking to residents regarding their plans. They've informed me that seating use to be their but were removed. This was due to them attracting anti social behaviour. I'm seeking further opinions on whether action needs to be taken to stop them being put in place.

In addition, re the proposed new Leisure Centre, the Chairman considered that the County Council Highways Department should be involved re parking. Re seating at Picktree Lodge, Councillors discussed the offer by Highways England. The County Councillor will write to all residents on the Estate seeking their opinions.

The Chairman thanked the County Councillor for his report.

Item 4. 21/37 Adoption of Minutes of Meeting

The Minutes of the Virtual Meeting of the Parish Council held on Tuesday 16th March 2021, draft copies of which had been previously circulated, were adopted as a true and accurate record of the Meeting and would be duly signed by the Chairman.

Item 5. 21/38 Chairman's Report

Regarding outstanding matters -

- a) Re Minute 21/27 section a). Re parked vehicles at Ambleside Court, the County Council intended to put signs in place. The Chairman advised that a resident of Ambleside Court had raised the matter of overgrowing shrubs at a path from Vigo Lane into Ambleside Court. The Clerk had contacted the developers of the estate to enquire if they were responsible for the shrubs. A reply was awaited.
- b) Re Minute 21/27 section c). Re thinning of woodland alongside the A693, Cllr Caygill advised that there was a considerable amount of debris left from the work. She hoped that the County Council would return to tidy the area.
- c) Re Minute 21/29 section 1). Re possible light pollution, the County Council had advised that they would contact the resident and neighbours as part of an investigation into the resident's complaint.
- d) Re Minute 21/30 section c). Re a noticeboard for Barley Gate, the Chairman advised that a quotation had been received. The Clerk is to contact the County Council Highways Department to agree the site.

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

Chairman's Report 20th April 2021

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It is with deepest sympathy that the Council sends condolences to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II on the death of her beloved husband, Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh.
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I am pleased to report that the area continues to recover from Covid-19 and that the new rules are being observed.

The 2nd phase of the new housing development in Vigo Lane is progressing well, along with the smaller development in Durham Road.

The spring bedding flowers continue to enhance the area. Hopefully, the summer bedding flowers will continue in making the area look picturesque.

It is good to report that the mobile traffic speed monitoring vehicle is attending Blind Lane on a regular basis. The Council awaits a copy of the results from this community initiative. Once again please take care and be safe.

Councillors thanked the Chairman for her report.

Item 6. 21/39 Portfolio Holders' Reports

a) Planning

The Chairman invited Cllr Waugh to give his report which included the following matters - Cllr Waugh advised that he continued to inform Councillors on a weekly basis of any new planning applications in the Parish and also to highlight any concerns. There had been no contentious issues during the last month.

The Chairman thanked Cllr Waugh for his Planning report and invited him to give his Finance report which included the following matters -

b) Finance

Cllr Waugh advised that he had studied the financial information supplied by the Clerk and he confirmed that everything appeared to be in order. The Clerk had supplied Cllr Waugh with draft accounts for the year to 31st March 2021. This year's Precept had now been received and there was therefore a substantial balance at the Bank.

The Chairman thanked Cllr Waugh for his report and invited Cllr May to give her report which included the following matter -

c) Horticulture

Verbal confirmation had been received from the County Council Clean and Green Department that they would undertake the proposed horticultural work in the Parish for the year.

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 -

d) Play Areas

I have inspected both play areas and all play equipment seems to be in working order. At Low Flatts, however, the goal posts are looking a bit rusty and in need of repainting. A gap has been made in the hedging running parallel to the railway. Perhaps this should be filled with bushes.

I reported to DCC that the litter and dog bins were overflowing and very smelly. At the Tupenny bridge exit there are a number of dog bags dumped, despite our notice above the area.

Re the goal posts and the gap in the hedge, the Clerk will arrange for the works to be carried out. Cllr Hall considered that the debris and litter under the Tupenny bridge was appalling. The Clerk will ask the County Council Clean and Green Department to carry out a clean. Councillors were concerned about the untidiness of the pond area at Drum. This matter is to be included in the Agenda for the next Parish Council meeting.

The Chairman thanked Cllr Caygill for her report and invited Cllr Hall to give his report which included the following matter -

e) Policy and Governance

Cllr Hall gave an update re a Court case set to consider if virtual Council meetings could continue beyond the current final date of 6th May. Cllr Hall will advise the Clerk of the decision when it is received.

The Chairman thanked Cllr Hall and invited Cllr Forrester to give her report which included the following matter -

f) Publicity

Cllr Forrester advised there had been no recent AAP meetings during the run up to the elections. The Chairman thanked Cllr Forrester for her report.

g) Highways

Cllr Gregory's report included the following matter -

Cllr Driscoll had kindly inspected the bus shelters and prepared and circulated a report. He would continue to do this each month.

Councillors thanked Cllr Gregory for her report.

h) Crime and Community Safety

Cllr Gregory advised that there were no matters to report.
Councillors thanked Cllr Gregory.

i) Website

Cllr Gregory advised that the website was being kept up-to-date.
Councillors thanked Cllr Gregory for her report.

Item 7. 21/40 Correspondence

- 1) Various planning applications, approvals and refusals from Durham County Council, of which the following were within North Lodge Parish:-
 - a) Application for single storey extension to rear pitched tiled roofs, each pitch has a Velux window (600x600, 4 in total). Bi-fold doors to be fitted to extension. Existing garage roof to be raised. Existing sun lounge to be demolished and new workshop at rear of garage. Garage roof/workshop roof and new extension to have flat roof. Ensuite to be created for bedroom 1, at Izing Lore, Picktree Village.
 - b) Application for T1 - Removal of 1 x sycamore tree due to decay at the base and low amenity value. Request to replace T1 Sycamore with a Sorbus Aucuparia (Rowan) tree. (CLS-1), at 10 North Lodge.
 - c) Application for erection of a light modular portacabin classroom for use as additional training space, at Unit 22, Second Avenue, Drum Industrial Estate.
 - d) Application for erection of 1 no. detached dwellinghouse on Plot 4 (reserved matters application pursuant to DM/19/01917/OUT), at site of former Pelaw Grange Cottage.
 - e) Approval for alterations to detached double garage to increase height by 2m to provide an additional floor, installation of an external stairway and installation of photovoltaic panels & removal/replacement of a single tree, at Garden House, Picktree Village.
 - f) Approval for erection of 1 no. detached dwellinghouse on Plot 1 (reserved matters application pursuant to DM/19/01917/OUT), at site of former Pelaw Grange Cottage.
 - g) Approval for single storey rear extension, two storey front gable extension, first floor extension above garage, increase in roof height to allow loft conversion and amendments to existing fenestration, at Field House, Picktree Village.
 - h) Approval for small extension to office building located on large secure compound, at Unit 34, Third Avenue, Drum Industrial Estate.
 - i) Approval for erection of 6no. new external silos for existing manufacturing plant, at 1 Drum Park, Drum Industrial Estate.

Item 8. 21/41 Items Requested by Councillors

a) Dog waste bins

The Chairman and the County Councillor were of the opinion that as life returned to normal the problem of overflowing bins might reduce. The County Councillor advised that County Council officers were aware of the problem but at present did not have the resources to service the bins to the extent required.

b) The Annual Newsletter

Cllr May kindly agreed to again collate this year's Newsletter. Councillors were asked to send items for inclusion to Cllr May as soon as possible. Cllr Hall suggested that the Council should consider having a presence on social media. This matter is to be included in the Agenda for the next Parish Council meeting.

Item 9. 21/42 Payment of Accounts

TO	AMOUNT	REASON	VAT
Salaries	£ 464.04	Salaries April 2021	
Expenses	£ 90.00	Expenses April 2021	
D. Murrell (via Zoom inc)	£ 14.39	Monthly Subscription	£2.40
UKFast	£ 28.99	Monthly Subscription	£4.83
Co. DhM Assn of Local Councils	£ 10.00	Training Event	

Total Payments £ 607.42

(Resolved - the payments be approved as submitted).

Re the outstanding cheque for £50 to the County of Durham School Benevolent Fund, the Chairman advised that the current contact details for the Fund had now been obtained and the cheque could now be sent there.

Item 10. 21/43 Other Matters for Information

In reply to Cllr Caygill, the County Cllr advised that the only detail decided so far for the new Leisure Centre was the site. A public consultation on other details was expected in July.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 7.43pm.

North Lodge Parish Council

Accounts for the month as submitted to the Meeting of North Lodge Parish Council held on Tuesday 18th May 2021.

TO	AMOUNT	REASON	VAT
Salaries	£	Salaries May 2021	
Expenses	£ 90.00	Expenses May 2021	
D. Murrell (via Zoom inc)	£ 14.39	Monthly Subscription	£2.40
UKFast	£ 28.99	Monthly Subscription	£4.83
Zurich Municipal	£ 705.72	Annual Insurance Premium	

Total Payments £

Balance to 30th April 2021

Balance b/f	£41124.48	Balances at Bank:-	
Deduct Payments - April 2021	<u>£ 607.42</u>	Treasurers Account	£ 2376.68
	£40517.06	Instant Account	<u>£73617.53</u>
		Total	£75994.21
Add Bank Interest Received	<u>£ .37</u>	Deduct cheques not yet presented	<u>£ 60.00</u>
	£40517.43		£75934.21
Add Precept Received	<u>£34068.17</u>		
	£74585.60		
Add Vat Refund Received	<u>£ 1348.61</u>		
Balance c/f	£75934.21		£75934.21

Two cheques not yet presented -

- 1) £50.00 cheque number 1436 dated 16/03/21 for a donation payable to County of Durham School Benevolent Fund. This cheque replaced cheque number 1401 dated 2/09/20 which is now out-of-date and which in turn replaced cheque number 1375 dated 21/01/20 also now out-of-date.
- 2) £10 cheque number 1438 dated 20/04/21 for a training event fee payable to County Durham Association of Local Councils.