

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 18th April 2023.

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

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting. The Chairman offered commiserations and condolences to Councillor Craig Martin and his family following the recent loss of his father. Councillor Martin thanked Councillors for their messages of support. The Chairman also gave a particular welcome to Councillor Maureen May following her recent illness. Councillor May thanked Councillors for their kind wishes.

Item 1. 23/34 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for Absence were received from Councillor John Waugh.

Item 2. 23/35 Declarations of Interest

Councillor Craig Martin declared interests as a County Councillor and as a Governor of Park View Academy.

Item 3. 23/36 Report of the County Councillor

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

In advance of our coming parish council meeting I don't have anything in particular to report, as county councillor and portfolio holder. Progress remains slow in dealing with the various projects I'm involved in, pushing people to move things forward. Currently awaiting an updated list of S106 funding so we can get an idea of what money we've got left to spend.

In addition, in reply to Councillors Gregory and Brown, the County Cllr outlined aspects of his working relationships with other County Councillors in Chester-le-Street, and of voting controls by some political parties at the County Council.

The Chairman thanked the County Councillor for his report.

Item 4. 23/37 Adoption of Minutes of Meeting

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on Tuesday 21st March 2023, 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. 23/38 Chairman's Report

The Chairman advised that there were no matters to report.
There were no outstanding matters to update.

Item 6. 23/39 Portfolio Holders' Reports

The Chairman invited Cllr Veitch to give his report which included the following matters -

a) Communications and Media Development

Cllr Veitch advised that the Council's Facebook and Twitter pages had received marked increases in viewing figures. Councillors agreed with Cllr Veitch's proposal that there should be "Meet the Councillor" posts. Cllr Veitch gave an update on the production of cyphers and crowns for the forthcoming Coronation. The Chairman thanked Cllr Veitch for all his work on this to date.

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

b) Crime and Community Safety

Crime

No crime reports for North Lodge from 21st March -17th April 2023.

Community Safety

The UK government's new Emergency Alerts system is now live. It will enable people to be contacted via their mobile phone when lives are in danger.

The system will be tested across the UK on the 23rd April 2023.

Police

Theft from Motor Vehicles.

The surrounding areas of Chester-le-Street have seen an increase in theft **from** motor vehicles. Please remove any valuables on show from a vehicle and make sure that the vehicle is securely locked when unattended and stationary.

Theft of Motor Vehicles.

Across the county, there has been an increase in the theft **of** motor vehicles. Predominately, key less vehicles which are then either sold on, stripped for parts or used to commit crime. Residents are advised to take precautions to improve the security of vehicles.

Local Hero.

Please nominate a young person for this award. Have they had a positive impact on the community. Have they supported, given assistance or made a positive difference to your life.

Please contact the Neighbourhood police team for further information.

Durham Constabulary has announced that 13 more Police officers have been trained as Family Liaison Officers.

To contact a Police Officer or PCSO either use an email address if known, to leave a message. If not, contact Durham Police using telephone number 101. The switchboard operators can supply contact details, duty details or send a message for you.

Live chat using the 101 number, which is available 24 hours, 7 days a week, can update on incidents, give general advice with enquiries or can be used to report non urgent issues.

For further information on all articles mentioned, check out all of Chester-le-Street Police and Durham Constabulary's social media accounts including Facebook.

All emergency calls, use telephone number 999

Non emergency calls, use telephone number 101

Co Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Service (CDDFRS)

Smoke Alarms

Reminder to check smoke alarms, to make sure the alarms are working correctly. For further information and help contact the Community Safety team on telephone number 03452234221.

Warmer weather.

CDDFRS along with other community partners have joined together to promote safety when near waterside locations.

For information on all articles mentioned, check out CDDFRS's social media accounts including Facebook.

All emergencies use telephone number 999

The Chairman thanked Cllr Gregory for her report.

c) Finance

In the absence of Cllr Waugh, no report was given.

The Chairman invited Cllr Driscoll to give his report which included the matters contained in his written report below -

d) Highways and Community Assets

The monthly bus shelters inspection was completed on Wednesday the 5th of April 2023. All appeared to be in good condition, with few examples of littering, and seat cleaning chiefly required in those situated in the entrance to Lombard Drive.

Some further bush and foliage trimming was undertaken at the rear of Northlands bus shelter, and all the glass cabinets were checked and given a clean

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

e) Horticulture

SUMMARY

Plinth

Completed. (Jet washed and lettering re painted). Group have asked Stephen Makepeace to make a border around front and sides at bottom of plinth and plant with summer/winter bedding.

Large Shrub Beds (2) North Road

Stephen will formulate a planting plan with costings for us to consider. Councillors have also given Stephen some suggestions of plants.

Wheatsheaf Area Project

Confirmation received from Lambton Estates that they do not own the said piece of land. Councillor Gregory is still awaiting to hear from Sustrans re ownership

Raised Flower Beds throughout Parish

As there will be only 18 flower beds left in the Parish, Stephen will revisit these flower beds, measure and re-evaluate the costings for planting, maintenance, feeding, weeding and watering twice a year.

Daffodils

More daffodils will be planted around the parish later in the year.

In addition, a) Cllr Gregory is to accompany Stephen Makepeace to view and measure the raised flower beds, b) Cllr Gregory had weeded the flower beds in Blind Lane which looked much better after that and after the County Council had cut the grass there, c) Re the North Road shrub beds, the County Cllr confirmed that he would be happy to consider a request for funding once costings are available, d) Cllr Brown advised that she was impressed with the service provided by Makepeace Landscapes.

The Chairman thanked Cllr May for her report and invited Cllr Forrester to give her report which included the matters below -

f) Meetings of Partnership Organisations

Cllr Forrester advised that there had been no meetings of the AAP since the last Parish Council meeting. Cllr Forrester also advised of the forthcoming Emergency Alerts system test and of the new requirement for voters to provide ID. The County Cllr advised that, as an alternative to showing ID, it was possible to apply beforehand for a Voter Authority Certificate.

The Chairman thanked Cllr Forrester for her report.

g) Planning

In the absence of Cllr Waugh, no report was given.

The Chairman invited Cllr Caygill to give her report which included the matters contained in her written report below -

h) Play Areas

MERLIN DRIVE

All equipment appears to be in good order.

Further discussion regarding a seat for this area is on the Agenda for Tuesday..

Also, the daffodil planting needs to be discussed.

LOW FLATTS

All equipment appears to be in good order.

The replacement hedging seems to be finally filling the gaps in the perimeter.

The goalposts are starting to look rusty at the bases and should be painted before they get any worse.

Seats for this area need to be discussed.

No news yet of the refurbishment.

In addition, a) at Merlin Drive, the County Council had sprayed weedkiller in areas where there were daffodils. The Clerk will contact the County Council to ask that this isn't repeated, b) at Merlin Drive, the old play area sign hasn't yet been replaced. The Clerk is to contact the County Council to expedite this, c) at Low Flatts, the Clerk is to organise the re-painting of the goal posts.

The Chairman thanked Cllr Caygill for her report.

i) Policy and Governance

Cllr Hall advised that here were no matters to report.

The Chairman invited Cllr Martin to give his report.

j) Project Development, Business and External Relations

Cllr Martin advised that he had no matters to report.

The Chairman thanked Cllr Martin.

Item 7. 23/40 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 garage extension to the side, at 11 Blind Lane.
 - b) Application for single storey rear extension to replace existing conservatory, at 62 Lombard Drive.
 - c) Application for felling of one horse chestnut, at The Croft, North Road.
 - d) Application for installation of a bench information board, two metal sculptures and associated surfacing adjacent to the existing tarmac multi-user path, at land at North Road.

Item 8. 23/41 Proposals, Reports and Requests for Consideration

a) Additional Public Seating

Councillors agreed with Cllr Caygill's proposals for new seats at Low Flatts and Merlin Drive, and the re-siting of a seat at Low Flatts. An application for funding from the County Councillor's Neighbourhood Budget will be made, initially for the Merlin Drive seat only, with the Low Flatts seat waiting for the refurbishment to take place there. Cllr Driscoll advised that he had received a request from a resident for a new seat near to the entrance to Picktree Lodge. Councillors discussed this but declined to approve the request. Re a new Coronation seat, Councillors were asked to consider possible sites.

b) Litter and Dog Waste

Councillors discussed the increasing prevalence of litter and dog waste in the Parish. The County Councillor agreed to arrange a site meeting at Low Flatts with the Neighbourhood Wardens with a view to joint working on this issue between the Wardens and the Parish Council. Councillors considered that it was important to involve the community in any actions to tackle these problems. This item is to be included in the Agenda for the next Council meeting.

c) Wheatsheaf Area Project

Cllr Brown had ascertained from Lambton Estates that they did not own the land in question. Cllr Gregory is to ask Sustrans if they are the owners. This item is to be included in the Agenda for the next meeting of the Council.

d) Planning Applications

Re planning application DM/23/00756/FPA, Councillors welcomed this application by Sustrans, particularly as there was provision for a new seat in an area that was presently without one. Re planning application DM/23/00567/FPA, Councillors discussed the revised plan submitted to the Planning Department and agreed that the Council's previous remarks should be sent again to the Planning Manager.

e) The Annual Newsletter

Cllr May outlined some initial ideas for the Newsletter and asked that Councillors send to her items for consideration for inclusion.

Before the next Item, the following resolution was passed -

That in the view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, it is advisable in the public interest that the public and press be temporarily excluded and they are instructed to withdraw.

The Clerk also left the room for the duration of this Item.

CONFIDENTIAL ITEM

Item 9. 23/42 The Clerk's Annual Appraisal

The Chairman and Clerk had carried out the Annual Appraisal and the Chairman had produced a Report which had been previously circulated. Councillors agreed to the Chairman's recommendation to note the Report.

Item 10. 23/43 Payment of Accounts

TO	AMOUNT	REASON	VAT
Salaries	£ 570.74	Salaries April 2023	
Expenses	£ 100.00	Expenses April 2023	
Zoom inc	£ 15.59	Monthly Subscription - April 2023	£ 2.60
ANS Group Ltd	£ 46.25	Monthly Subscription - April 2023	£ 7.71
Makepeace Landscapes	£1022.40	Horticulture	£ 170.40
Makepeace Landscapes	£ 426.00	Cleaning of Plinth	£ 71.00
Cty DhM Assn of Local Councils	£ 403.08	Annual Subscription	
Npower Commercial Gas	£ 408.48	Power for Tree Lights	£ 19.45
Durham County Council	£3847.52	Clearing North Road Shrub Beds	£ 641.25
C. Veitch (via Maxwell's)	£ 24.00	Wood for Coronation Project	
C. Veitch (via Wash'ton Waterjet)	£ 96.00	Logos for Coronation Project	£ 16.00
Total of Above Payments	£6960.06		

Payments Made by Debit Card

TO	AMOUNT	REASON	VAT
Sainsbury's	£ 26.40	Postage Stamps	
Tor Coatings Ltd	£ 90.00	Paint for Coronation Project	£ 15.00
Total Card Payments	£ 116.40		

(Resolved - the payments be approved as submitted).

Item 11. 23/44 Other Matters for Information

Cllr May advised that the battery lights for the Picktree Village Christmas Tree were with a resident of the Village.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 8.26pm.

North Lodge Parish Council

Accounts for the month as submitted to the Meeting of North Lodge Parish Council held on Tuesday 16th May 2023.

TO	AMOUNT	REASON	VAT
Salaries	£	Salaries May 2023	
Expenses	£ 100.00	Expenses May 2023	
Zurich Municipal	£ 811.08	Annual Insurance Premium	
DSJ Property Services	£ 260.00	Painting Goal Posts	
Makepeace Landscapes	£	Horticulture	£
First Prize Winner	£ 150.00	Community Arts Awards	
Second Prize Winner	£ 100.00	Community Arts Awards	
Third Prize Winner	£ 50.00	Community Arts Awards	
Total of Above Payments	£		

Payments Made by Debit Card and Direct Debit

TO	AMOUNT	REASON	VAT
Zoom inc	£ 15.59	Monthly Subscription - May 2023	£ 2.60
ANS Group Ltd	£ 46.25	Monthly Subscription - May 2023	£ 7.71
Cash Withdrawal	£ 160.00	Prizes for Community Arts Awards	
Total Card and D/D Payments	£ 221.84		

Balance to 30th April 2023

Balance b/f	£47568.95	Balances at Bank:-	
Deduct Payments - April 2023	<u>£ 6960.06</u>	Treasurers Account	£ 4457.50
	£40608.89	Instant Account	<u>£76378.91</u>
Deduct Card and D/D Payments	<u>£ 116.40</u>	Total	£80836.41
	£40492.49		
Add Bank Interest Received	<u>£ 35.14</u>	Deduct cheques not yet presented	£ NIL
	£40527.63		
Add Precept Received	<u>£36149.15</u>		
	£76676.78		
Add VAT Refund Received	<u>£ 4159.63</u>		
Balance c/f	£80836.41		£80836.41