

West Auckland Parish Council

Minutes of Meeting held Monday, 10th July 2023 at 7.00 pm,
Parish Community Room, Monteith Close, West Auckland

Present: Cllr G Smith, Chairman
Cllr E Farrer, Deputy Chairman
Cllr K Bolton
Cllr J Curl
Cllr M Roberts
Cllr J Pattison
Cllr W Robinson
Cllr N Simpson
Cllr C Smith

23.61 To ACCEPT APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllr L Adamson, Cllr T Horsman & Cllr H Stott.

23.62 DECLARATION OF INTEREST IN ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

There were no declarations of interest in agenda items.

23.63 To CONFIRM MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the previous meeting were agreed and signed accordingly.

23.64 To INVITE ANY COMMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

- A resident advised that DCC have cleaned the drains on the A68 but have not yet cleaned the 30mph sign; Cllr G Smith to raise concerns about cleanliness and position of the road signs.
- A resident raised concern about the poor state of the APTEC perimeter fence and the railings of the adjacent cemetery cottage; it was advised that both are private and the Parish Council are unaware of who is responsible. Cllr Farrer agreed to enquire about a contact so a letter requesting improvement can be sent.
- It was highlighted by a resident that the Manor House have canvas advertising and it was resolved that advertising rights should be confirmed; Clerk to write to Susan Porter to enquire about this and also the sign advertising Bernadette's Keep Fit on a road sign towards Spring Gardens.

23.65 To RECEIVE CHAIRPERSON/COUNCILLORS REPORT

- It was reported that everything is in order on a routine inspection of the allotments. There is a gate in poor repair which will be checked in the next few weeks.
- It was advised that there is a proposal to cease the Area Action Partnership (AAP) in its current state. A proposal to replace it with a forum is being considered by DCC.

Chairman's Signature..... Date.....

23.66 CLERK'S TABLING OF CORRESPONDENCE/ENDORISING OF INVOICE CHEQUES

Correspondence received was tabled and payments endorsed as follows:

Receipt Payment

T I Mowers - lawnmower repair - N Simpson		£24.00
Lawnmower petrol - 2 months - N Simpson		£17.74
BT first wifi payment		£72.53
Toilet handle and cistern		£123.73
Eon Next		£45.49
Eon Next		£20.62
Playgroup hire	£15.00	
Clerk's Wage		£1,200.00
Monteith Cleaning		£112.50
Bank charges		£8.00
Memorial Hall Roof materials-Trav Perk		£1,319.54
Memorial Roof Contribution	£1,055.63	
Blachere- Christmas illuminations		£1,211.52
Amberol - stone trough planters x 2		£658.68
Viking Stationery- paper, envelopes & postits		£104.85

- The quarter end bank reconciliation was approved.
- It was advised that HMRC request for overdue payment has been taken to a formal dispute as the Clerk has been unable to resolve the 2017-2018 system error between the various HMRC department she has liaised with over recent months; the outcome is awaited prior to any payment being made. It was reiterated that the overdue payment is the responsibility of the Parish Council not the Clerk personally; to the best of her knowledge the Clerk indicated there should be no overdue payment requirement as all HMRC PAYE and wage payments have been set as Direct Debits for many years.
- It was advised that DCC LCTRS grant could possibly be reduced by 50%; this is currently being considered and the Clerk has circulated the document to Parish Councillors.
- The Clerk advised that any additional Christmas lights will need to be ordered in the coming weeks. Ex-hire Christmas present illuminations costing £227.40 plus VAT are currently available. It was advised that the lights have a 2 year warranty and any lights not working should be returned for replacement/repair. It was resolved that, while stock of matching colours to existing lights are available, 4 are to be ordered.
- The Women's Institute (WI) have requested use of the Parish Room with effect from January 2024 and indicated that they will require storage for their monthly meeting. It was resolved that Cllr Bolton would check on their requirements and report back at the September meeting.
- It was highlighted that the Parish Council are invited to the official opening of the new Oakleaf shop on Saturday, 15th July 2023 at 11.00 am.
- An update was provided on progress with the renovation of the Memorial Hall. Neil and Billy were thanked for their assistance recently. It was resolved that if the application to Believe Housing for table tennis tables is unsuccessful, the Parish Council agreed in principle to approve £1,000 funding; this will be confirmed at the September 2023 meeting.

Chairman's Signature..... Date.....

23.67 RECEIVE ENVIRONMENT/PLANNING WORKING GROUP UPDATE

- To receive an update on the Stockton & Darlington Railway washeries woodland planting

A brief update was provided on the project and a further update will be provided at the September 2023 meeting.

23.68 TO RECEIVE FINANCE WORKING GROUP UPDATE

- To consider the purchase of two planters to be positioned at the three seats near the Pant slip-road

It was resolved that two stone troughs be purchased and the Village in Bloom kindly offered to provide the plants providing the Parish Council purchase 10 bags of compost.

23.69 TO CONSIDER LOCAL PLANNING ISSUES

There were various planning issues discussed by no current plans for formal consideration.

23.70 AGENDA ITEMS - NEXT MEETING MONDAY, 11TH SEPTEMBER 2023

- To consider options for Women's Institute (WI) storage
- To receive Memorial Hall update and consideration of provision of table tennis tables
- To receive an update on the Stockton & Darlington Railway washeries woodland planting
- To consider woodland planting
- To consider a commemorative of King Charles' Coronation

Chairman's Signature..... Date.....