

West Auckland Parish Council

Minutes of Meeting held Monday, 8th April 2024 at 7.00 pm,
Parish Community Room, Monteith Close, West Auckland

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

24.31 To ACCEPT APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllr J Curl and Cllr H Stott.

24.32 DECLARATION OF INTEREST IN ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

There were no expressions of interest received.

24.33 To CONFIRM MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

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

24.34 To INVITE ANY COMMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

- A resident advised that a quad bike has ploughed the green with mud sprayed covering footpaths. Cllr Smith advised that DCC are dealing with the damage.
- Diane Wood, Veterans' representative, attended to present an update on the D-Day Commemoration and advises she is still awaiting confirmation from Oakley Cross and St Helens schools; Copeland Road has confirmed attendance. Costs are estimated at approximately £750. The Clerk suggested that any change from the Parish Council's donation of £1,000 be allocated towards cups for the Memorial Hall; this was agreed.

24.35 To RECEIVE CHAIRPERSON/COUNCILLORS REPORT

- Cllr Smith provided an update on reports from a resident about management of his perception of anti-social behaviour in the area. General issues in the area were discussed and the Clerk will record the resident's concerns under Clerk's correspondence.
- Cllr Roberts recently met Rob George, DCC to consider tree planting on a proposed woodland area near the old pit heaps site. It was advised that DCC have allocated funding and George Henderson has ear-marked the lower-level area for a football

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

pitch. It was highlighted that there there is a reported shortage of football pitches in the County Durham area; therefore, any tree planting will be confined to higher levels.

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

Correspondence received was tabled and payments endorsed as follows:

	Income	Expenses
Clerk's Wage		£1,200.00
Telephone & broadband		£30.00
Cllr Simpson - King's Coronation trees		£113.30
DCC Precept & LCTSS Grant	£26,641.97	
Monteith Cleaning		£90.00
CDALC Subscription		£361.51
Internal Audit - B Stout		£100.00
Bus shetler cleaning - B McGregor		£150.00
Donation to Ferryhill Town Band		£500.00
Donation to D-Day Commemoration		£1,000.00
Donation to Hidden Story		£1,000.00

- To review and approve 2023-2024 accounts in readiness for External Audit.

The accounts were reviewed, approved and will be submitted to Mazars for external audit.

- Requests for donation were considered and approved for Ferryhill Town Band and local Hidden Story Book Festival.
- To provide resident's report of Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)

Further to a resident's concerns about ASB being circulated prior to the meeting, the following points were discussed and the Parish Council, whilst they sympathise with the situation, agreed that they do not have the authority to deal with anti-social behaviour and any incidents need to be reported to the police. The resident perceives that there has been "a rise in ASB in West Auckland with youths causing damage to the village green, planted areas and vehicles with youngsters seen riding scooters and dirt bikes in public areas." The resident indicated that he has experienced ASB and harassment from youths wearing balaclavas who have damaged and painted vulgar graffiti on his property.

The resident is keen to have CCTV re-sited near his property. It was highlighted that when the CCTV was purchased from s106 funds in 2021, it was for the benefit of the whole village and not intended as a permanent fixture at any single location. The Parish Council had agreed to service the CCTV for 2 years; that time has now expired and ownership and future management need to be agreed with DCC. It was highlighted that there is no allocated funding to repair the CCTV and the cost of the lift to install the camera is now £400.

The Chairman commented that this is the first resident's complaint to the Parish Council about ASB.

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

24.37 To RECEIVE ENVIRONMENT/PLANNING WORKING GROUP UPDATE

- To consider removal of the garage at the corner of Oakley Grange.

The Clerk advised that Mr Wall's solicitor had made contact with the Parish Council's solicitor to advise that his client claims to own a piece of land currently owned by the Parish Council. The Clerk requested that the Parish Council's solicitor take no action at this stage as Mr Wall has not produced the Deeds previously requested by the Parish Council for the land he claims to own.

It was resolved that informal DCC legal advice will be sought prior to contacting Mr Wall with regard to removing the unsafe corrugated metal garage.

24.38 To RECEIVE FINANCE WORKING GROUP UPDATE

No agenda items.

24.39 To CONSIDER LOCAL PLANNING ISSUES

There were no planning applications for consideration.

24.40 AGM & PUBLIC MEETING MONDAY, 13TH MAY 2024 – NO AGENDA ITEMS

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