

WALDRIDGE PARISH COUNCIL

**Minutes of a Meeting of the Waldridge
Parish Council held on
8 January 2019 at 7.00pm**



Present: Councillors - Bell, Corner, Foster, Harding, Hollingsworth, Howie, Sexton and Warren.

Also in attendance – Sarah Wilson - Parish Clerk, Brian Laidler - Caretaker, and 3 members of the public

1. **Welcome:**

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. **Apologies for Absence:**

Cllr Davies submitted his apologies.

3. **Disclosable Pecuniary Interests**

No members declared an interest.

4. **Questions from members of the public:**

No questions raised.

5. **Police Report:**

PCSO Donnelly did not attend. The Clerk read out the Police Report – one burglary on Hauxley Drive, and one theft on Lesbury Close.

6. **Minutes of Council finance and budget meeting – 4 December 2018:**

Resolved: *The minutes of the finance and budget meeting held on 4th December 2018 were approved as a true record and were signed by the Chairman.*

7. **Minutes of Council meeting – 11 December 2018:**

Resolved: *The minutes of the meeting held on 11th December 2018 were approved as a true record and were signed by the Chairman.*

8. Parish matters and ongoing items

a) **County Councillors report**

Cllr Bainbridge submitted his apologies. Cllr Sexton informed the Council that he and Cllr Bainbridge are looking into the possibility of funding a coal tub which would be sited in the Parish. Cllr Foster mentioned the possibility of a trip to the Pitman's Parliament, where the Parish Council sponsor a seat.

Resolved: *Report noted.*

b) **Waldrige Parish in Bloom working group**

Cllr Sexton gave an update and informed the Council that a meeting between Martin Briscoe of Durham County Council Clean and Green Team, and the Waldrige Parish in Bloom working group was being arranged, so that a plan for planting can be put in place. It was mentioned that it may be beneficial to remove some of the smallest beds, and to enlarge some of the existing beds to create a bigger impact. Cllr Sexton also informed the Council that the Northumbria in Bloom entry is now complete and confirmed.

Resolved: *Report noted.*

c) **Working Group**

Possible dates for the Easter event were discussed, and Sunday 14th of April was agreed upon. Cllr Harding gave an update on the Ecobricks campaign and informed the Council that she will be meeting staff at the Hermitage Academy soon to discuss their possible involvement. Cllr Harding stated that while there are plans to get to the point of the bricks being created, it needs to be decided how then to use them. Cllr Bell suggested that they could possibly be used to create/border a flower bed. Cllr Foster questioned the practicalities of getting the bricks made, collecting and storing them, and Cllr Harding stated that she was happy to create Ecobricks kits, and drop them off to interested residents.

Resolved: *Date for Easter event agreed – Sunday 14th April (unanimous). Update on Ecobricks campaign noted. Ecobricks to be placed on next agenda for further discussion.*

d) **Updates from Facebook**

A discussion as to whether political posts should be allowed on the Facebook group took place. Cllr Howie stated that as the Parish Council is non-political, the Facebook group should also be non-political. Cllr Sexton asked where the line should be drawn and gave the example of a resident asking a question about procedure. It was agreed that any questions that are related to procedure should be allowed and will be answered. Cllr Foster mentioned that at the last meeting, it was agreed not to respond to a leaflet by one of the candidates in the forthcoming election, and that despite this, Cllr Sexton had posted a response in the Facebook group. Cllr Sexton stated that the response posted was in his capacity as a County Councillor, and that both he and Cllr Bainbridge felt that a response was required. However, Cllr Sexton also stated that when it was mentioned that the post may not be appropriate, that he then removed the post. The possibility of posting Councillor profiles on the Facebook group was then discussed. Cllr Howie stated that she did not feel comfortable with her profile being posted. It was agreed that Councillors could opt out if they did not want to have their profile shared.

Resolved: *It was agreed that political posts would not be allowed on the Facebook group, in accordance with the current rules, with the exception of questions relating to procedure only (unanimous). It was agreed that Councillor profiles should be posted on the Facebook group, and that Councillors could choose to opt out if they wished (In favour: Cllrs Bell, Corner, Foster, Harding, Hollingsworth, Sexton and Warren. Against: Cllr Howie).*

e) **Millennium Green Subcommittee**

The Caretaker gave a verbal report. No problems to report, and all equipment has been inspected and no issues identified. The Caretaker had obtained a further quote for maintenance of all of the shrubbery on the green. The Clerk will contact further companies to arrange an additional quote, with the Caretaker meeting them to show what is required. The importance of the maintenance being carried out as soon as possible was discussed. To be placed on next agenda for further discussion.

Resolved: *Report noted.*

f) **Caretaker Hours**

Due to its sensitive nature, this item was discussed in private at the end of the meeting.

Resolved: *It was agreed that the Caretaker's hours should continue to be fixed at 8 per week. It was agreed that the Caretaker may work additional hours when required, and that timesheets should continue to be submitted to the Clerk. It was agreed that the Caretaker's additional hours since April 2018 would be paid, and that these would be added to his next payment. All votes unanimous.*

g) **Events**

Cllr Corner raised the issue that sometimes events have appeared on Facebook that the Council have not been aware of and suggested that the Council should be made aware of - and should agree upon - any events in advance of them being advertised. Cllr Howie suggested that a plan of events should be made at the beginning of each year. Cllr Warren stated that a skeleton plan had been created and that it would now be discussed further. Cllr Bell mentioned the need for a breakdown of the events budget into subsections for each event, to ensure that each event was adequately budgeted for, and so that overspend does not occur. Dates for each event were then discussed and set where possible. Cllr Sexton agreed to find out Northumbria in Bloom judging dates, so that the planned litter picks/Big Spring Clean can be scheduled accordingly. Cllr Warren to further develop the event schedule for the year, and this to be placed back on the agenda for further discussion/development at the next meeting. As votes on the scheduling of events were not taken, this also to be placed back on the agenda for the next meeting.

Resolved: *Dates and plan for events in 2019 noted.*

h) **Parish Council Surgeries**

Cllr Harding proposed the possibility of holding Parish Council surgeries, to allow Councillors to get to know residents, and to encourage community engagement. Cllrs Foster and Howie both agreed that this would be a good idea, and both volunteered to hold the first surgery. The possibly frequency of surgeries was discussed, and it was decided to begin monthly, and then adjust the frequency according to demand. Potential dates and times were discussed, and it was agreed that Saturday mornings between 10:00 and 12:00 would be used to begin with, with residents being able to drop in, or make an appointment if they wish. A start date of February 16th was agreed. This to be placed on the agenda as a regular item.

Resolved: *It was agreed to hold Parish Council surgeries, and that these should take place monthly to begin with, on the third Saturday of the month, between 10:00 and 12:00. A start date of the 16th of February was agreed, with Cllr Foster and Cllr Howie agreeing to hold the first surgery. All votes unanimous.*

i) **Clippings**

Publishing dates for the Clippings were discussed, and it was agreed that the Clerk should set the dates, with an issue being published approximately once every three months, to try to coincide with as many events as possible. The Clerk had previously distributed the Winter Clippings via email, and it was agreed to go to print with this issue as soon as possible. The Clerk mentioned the concern expressed by Cllr Davies that the section containing contact details are each individual Councillor had been removed. It was agreed that the Clippings should be printed without the contact details, as they take up a large amount of space. Cllr Warren stated that it was more important to have additional content in the Clippings, and that contact details for individual Councillors can be obtained via the Clerk and are also available on the website. Cllr Harding suggested that if space is available in a more quiet issue of the Clippings, that a 'cut out and keep' section of contact details could be included. The distribution list for the Clippings was discussed. As one volunteer is no longer able to deliver the Clippings, it was agreed that the new Councillor, when elected, would be allocated this section of the distribution list.

Resolved: *It was agreed that the Clerk should set the publishing dates for the Clippings. It was agreed to go to print with the Winter Clippings. It was agreed that the new Councillor would be allocated the section of the distribution list left unallocated by the departure of one of the volunteers. All votes unanimous.*

j) **Second key safe and Parish Rooms keys**

Cllr Warren stated that the new key safe had been installed for use by room hirers, and that the intention was to have the code changed regularly, so that previous hirers would no longer have unnecessary access to the rooms. The first key safe is intended to be used by Councillors, the Clerk and the Caretaker, with the code remaining constant. A discussion of how many key holders are required and who these should be took place, and it was agreed that there would be three key holders: the Caretaker; the Clerk; and Cllr Foster. It was agreed that these three key holders should hold keys for both the front and back doors. It was discovered that there are not currently enough keys, and it was agreed that the Clerk should have additional keys cut as necessary. Cllr Warren questioned whether the alarm should be set up to notify someone when it goes off, as it may become a nuisance to residents, and the Clerk agreed to look at options for both this, and the possibility of a security camera that can be checked remotely. Cllr Warren also requested that the Clerk create an instruction sheet for both room hirers and Councillors, giving instructions on how to arm/disarm the alarm.

Resolved: *It was agreed that the second key safe should be used for room hirers, and that the code should be changed regularly. It was agreed that there should be three key holders: the Clerk; the Caretaker; and Cllr Foster. It was agreed that the Clerk should have additional keys cut as necessary, to ensure that there are enough for each key holder and for both key safes. All votes unanimous.*

k) **Allotment hedge**

The Clerk read out three quotes for the trimming of the allotment hedge. It was agreed to have the hedge trimmed, and that the work should be carried out by M Forrester Landscapes. The Clerk to contact the supplier to arrange for the work to be carried out.

Resolved: *It was agreed that the allotment hedge should be trimmed, and that the work should be carried out by M Forrester Landscapes at a cost of £140.*

l) **Quarterly Accounts**

This item was deferred to allow the Clerk to distribute the Quarterly Accounts to Councillors via email. To be placed on the agenda for the next meeting.

Resolved: *It was agreed to defer the decision on this item until the next meeting.*

m) **Action Plan**

The Clerk gave a report on the 2018/19 Action Plan and advised the Council that the majority of items on the plan had already been achieved, with some of the remaining items still scheduled to be completed before the end of the financial year. The Clerk suggested that at the end of each year, she would write a report detailing how the Council have delivered on the Action Plan, to allow residents to see what has been achieved.

Resolved: *Update noted.*

n) **Three-year budget**

The Clerk distributed the draft three-year budget. It was agreed that the Clerk should prepare the 'essential items' section of the budget, and that the rest of the budget would be discussed and set by the Council at a later date. It was noted that the toilet flooring and accessories had not been budgeted for in the 2019/20 budget. The Clerk agreed to obtain quotes for the toilet flooring in preparation for a decision to be made on how to fund this. Cllr Sexton agreed to pay for the toilet accessories himself.

Resolved: *It was agreed to defer the setting of the three-year budget to a later meeting (unanimous).*

o) **Policy review**

- Safeguarding Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults

Resolved: *Safeguarding Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults policy adopted.*

p) **Timetable of training events**

The Council discussed the possibility of the Clerk attending the SLCC New Clerk Event.

Resolved: *It was agreed that the Clerk should attend the SLCC New Clerk Event at a cost of £10+VAT (unanimous).*

q) **Grants / fundraising**

The Clerk informed the Council of the possibility of 'Pocket Parks' funding, that could be used to improve the Millennium Green. Cllr Warren mentioned the recent donation of Christmas decorations received from LCA Community Charity, and it was agreed the Clerk should send a letter of thanks. It was further suggested that the Council could possibly help to fundraise for LCA Community Charity as a gesture of thanks for their kind donation. Cllr Warren put forward the idea of the Council having a 'Charity of the Year' each year, with collections being made at each event.

Resolved: *It was agreed that the Clerk should look further into the possibility of Pocket Parks funding.*

r) **Planning Applications**

- None received.

Resolved: *No decisions needed.*

s) **To consider any planning applications received after the agenda was published**

- None received.

Resolved: *No decisions needed.*

t) **Correspondence received**

- None received.

Resolved: *No decisions needed.*

u) **Correspondence received after agenda published (to note only)**

- Email from resident requesting further information on the candidates currently standing for election.

Resolved: *The Clerk informed the resident that under Purdah rules, the Council is not allowed to provide information on the candidates beyond what is published in the Statement of Persons Nominated, and that it up to the candidates themselves whether they choose to publish any information.*

v) **Clerks Report / Action Log**

The Clerk gave an update on all items on the Action Log from the December meeting.

w) **Urgent issues for noting (Clerk to use delegated powers if necessary) and any items Councillors wish to agenda for next meeting**

- No issues to note.

10. **Financial Matters**

	(a) <u>Payments</u>	
<u>Resolved:</u> That the following payments be agreed:		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) (2) (3) (4) (5) (6) (7) (8) (9) (10) (11) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> That the sum of £957.53 be paid to Miss S Wilson (December 2018 wage) That the sum of £220.94 be paid to Mr B Laidler (December 2018 wage) That the sum of £509.65 be paid to HMRC (PAYE) That the sum of £22.40 be paid to Miss S Wilson (awards eve refreshments) That the sum of £92.00 be paid to E.ON (gas and electricity) That the sum of £22.74 be paid to XLN Telecom (broadband) That the sum of £325.36 be paid to Wave Water (allotment water) That the sum of £14.57 be paid to K Warren (carol concert refreshments) That the sum of £25.00 be paid to K Warren (best decorated house prize) That the sum of £136.00 be paid to SLCC (Clerk's annual membership) That the sum of £468.00 be paid to Charleton Fencing (re-erect welcome sign/millennium green sleepers & footbridge boards)
	(b) <u>Receipts</u>	<p><u>Resolved:</u> That the following receipts be noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) That the sum of £3,000.00 was received from Durham County Council (play area funding) (2) That the sum of £68.00 was received from Riverside Musical Theatre Company (room hire)
<p>11. <u>Date of Next Meeting</u></p> <p>12 February to commence at 7.00pm.</p> <p>The meeting terminated at 8.50 pm</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Chairman Date</p>		