

Gainford & Langton

MINUTES OF PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

WEDNESDAY 7 FEBRUARY 2024

COUNCILLORS: Wilkinson, Platten, Hannan, Jackson & Van Mourik.

Visitors: Teesdale Mercury, C. Squires (Allotments)

With the agreement of members item 6 on the agenda (allotments) was heard at this point. Recorded in the minutes below.

1. Acceptance, or otherwise of apologies

None

Resolved – That the submitted apologies be approved.

2. Declarations of Interest:

Members are asked to consider whether they might have a personal or a pecuniary interest in any matter included on the agenda for this meeting. If so, it is requested that any such interest be declared now. If subsequently during the consideration of any matter, it becomes apparent to any member that he/she does, indeed, have an interest, it should then be declared immediately.

Resolved – No personal or pecuniary declarations were made.

3. Minutes

The minutes of the ordinary Council meeting held on 7 February 2024.

Resolved - That the minutes of the ordinary Council Meeting of the 7 February 2024 be approved.

4. Clerks Report

The Clerk updated members on:

- Actions taken with the Diocese and solicitors to ensure the lease is finalised prior to the end of February deadline for funding.

5. Finance

5.1 February meeting reconciliation and payments.

Additional invoices:

Ruttle Plant - £750 (Allotment rent)

M. Clark - £6.00 (Land Registry search fee)

Resolved – That the February payments and reconciliation be approved.

5.2 Grant application from Parish News (submitted)

Representatives from the Parish News were unable to attend.

Following a conversation with the Chair, it was agreed they review their application and re-submit.

Separate from the application for grant funding being re-submitted, it was agreed to have a page in the Parish News for Parish Council news and information which it would pay for.

Resolved – That the Parish Council agree to have a paid page in the future editions of the Parish News.

5.3 Gainford Baby and Toddler Group

The group wishes to extend its thanks to the Parish Council for the award of the grant to help them continue thriving as a group in the village.

6. Allotments

C Squires requested some small changes be made to the current Tenancy Agreement for the allotment plots at St Peter's.

To combine points 1 and 3 to clarify

1 - use at least 75% of the allotment to produce soft fruit, vegetables, flowers, the keeping of hens or bees (any combination) for consumption of themselves or their family.

3 -keep the whole of the allotment weed free (but not by using carpet) and tidy and to notify the Working Party (via the given email address) if for any reason this is proving difficult.

Amend into point 1 – To cultivate the majority (75%+) of the allotment to produce soft fruit, vegetable, flowers, the keeping of hens or bees* (any combination) for the consumption for themselves or their family. To keep the whole of the allotment weed free (but not by using carpet) and tidy and to notify the Working Party (via the given email address) if for any reason this is proving difficult.

* Bee keeping will require the written consent of the landlord.

Resolved – That the combined points 1 and 3 of the Tenancy Agreement be amend as above.

To request the council amend the number of hens allowed to be kept on a single allotment from 4 (four) to 6 (six).

Resolved – That the number of hens allowed on a single plot be increased to 6 (six)

2 vacant plot clearances are being organised through the village handyman. A skip will be ordered. It has been reported that one plot allegedly could be breeding cockerels. This is against the law and is breaking the Tenancy Agreement. There are a small number of uncultivated plots.

Resolved - It was agreed that the other issues are referred directly to the Clerk to action.

7. Village Issues/Maintenance

7.1 Non parish council land – The Clerk and Chair referred to the request from Gainford in Bloom volunteers to have trees inspected in the area of land by Piggy Lane and High Green. This was not council land, and it cannot carry out any work on land that it does not own, or manager.

Reference had been made from a resident that the parish council would be liable should any tree in the parish fall and injure a resident. The Clerk informed members that this statement was inaccurate.

A Land Registry search had been conducted but with no conclusive answers on ownership. It was agreed that the residents should carry out some local detective work in order to find out about ownership.

Resolved – That the information be received and noted.

8. GAP Development

1. Cllr Wilkinson advised members that following discussions with the agreed contractor (Playdale) that if the development work is done over 4 phases the cost would be £67,000, which wouldn't be an option. The revised costs from the project plan originally looked at would be £52,000 (within budget). This would leave the slide and the Birds Nest Swing in situ, remove, and replace all the safety surfaces and install the new equipment.

2. We are still awaiting a response from the Diocese on access and storage locations put to them.

3. It was agreed to look at the wooden fencing around the GAP to ensure it is fit for purpose.

4. The lease document was then signed by the Clerk and Cllr Wilkinson as Chair. The lease will be returned to the Diocese solicitors to obtain their counter signing.

Resolved – That the information be received and noted.

9. Correspondence

Submitted – Details of correspondence received.

None	
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Resolved – That the information be noted.

10. Planning

None

Applications can be viewed online via Durham County Council's Planning Application System: <http://publicaccess.durham.gov.uk/online-applications/>

11. Date & time of next meeting

Wednesday 6 March 2024, 7pm

Meeting closed.