

BEARPARK PARISH COUNCIL

At a **meeting** of **Bearpark Parish Council** held on **Wednesday 18 April 2018** at **7.00 p.m.**

Present:

Councillor M Wright in the Chair.

Councillors E Hull, M Chard, E Wilding, T Wilson and M Wilson; and
County Councillor D Bell.

17/121 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor O Edwards.

17/122 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest in relation to any items of business on the agenda.

17/123 REPRESENTATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

A resident was welcomed to the meeting. The resident asked the Parish Council how they had been consulted on the proposed development at Colliery Road and what the Parish Council's emerging views were at the present time.

The Chair of the Council explained that the Parish Council had met with Planning Officers from Durham County Council and the developer at the pre-application stage to learn of the emerging proposals being put forward by the developer for the area.

An open, drop-in style event was then held for the wider community at Bearpark Community Centre. The people who attended the drop-in session were generally supportive of the proposed development. General concerns had been expressed about traffic and loss of privacy for those houses that abutted the development site. The Parish Council had also expressed general concerns regarding Highways, the walking distance to a local bus stop, the loss of employment land and suitability of housing.

The resident was not opposed to further development in the village. However, the increased traffic associated with the development was of concern. The resident felt that the opening up of the Hilltop Road area for vehicle access was unnecessary.

The initial views expressed by the Parish Council regarding this was that whilst pedestrian and cycle access would be advantageous, it was appreciated that some residents would be unhappy with it being opened up for vehicular access. Councillor Chard agreed with comments made by the Chair and also explained that there was a danger that people would travel down Aldin Grange Terrace.

The Chair explained the Council would be unlikely to hold any special meetings that focussed solely on the development and urged the resident to send his representations to Durham County Council. This message was being conveyed to all residents. The Parish Council would be engaging in the same process. The Chair thanked the resident for attending and for raising his concerns.

17/124 POLICE REPORT

There were no representatives from the police present and no report had been provided.

17/125 COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

Councillor D Bell and M Wilson provided a general update, as follows:

- Durham County Council had announced further £700,000 of council funding to repair potholes caused by the severe winter conditions. More than 15,500 potholes had been repaired across the County since January. The Council had spent more on gritting which had been taken from reserves;
- Surface dressing to Colliery Road would take place in the first quarter of this year;
- The recent PACT meeting held at the Community Centre had been well attended;
- The Head of Direct Services had approached Councillor Wilson with a view to Bearpark taking part in a pilot scheme to deter dog fouling. This would involve stencilling. Durham County Council would purchase and pay for the stencil and administer the exercise in conjunction with Councillor Wilson;
- Councillor Wilson informed the Council that a competition had taken place at Bearpark Primary School. This involved children designing dog fouling stickers. The local PCSO had judged the entries, the winning entries were laminated and would be displayed around the village.
- Councillor M Wilson had held a site meeting with County Council official at the Pavillion. Councillor Wilson explained the background to the request whereby the football club had queried if any works could be done inside the Pavillion to resolve the problems with dampness. The site inspection revealed that the building had rising damp, there was no heating and no ventilation. It was proposed to put more ventilation into the walls and doors to assist air flow. Guttering was also to be installed on the outside of the property. Councillor Wilson had posed some questions regarding possible asset transfer of the building and was due to meet with Council representatives to discuss this further. In the meantime, the works would be carried out to the building as referenced. Health and Safety have passed the building as being 'safe'.

Some members of the Council felt that there was no appetite to look at asset transfer and that support should be gained before any such discussion took place. Councillor Wilson disagreed and explained that at some point, someone, somewhere had to take a risk, as there was a real danger that the facility could one day, be lost, which would potentially mean the loss of the football team, then the field.

Councillor Hull asked Councillor Wilson if the Parish Council could appeal to local businesses for assistance and if the Parish Council could conduct its own survey into the building to see how much it would cost to bring up to standard. Councillor Hull felt that expressed support was vital for any project or initiative for the area.

17/126 MINUTES

The minutes of the meetings held on 21 March 2018 were **Moved** by Councillor M Wilson, **Seconded** by Councillor R Kemp and agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

17/127 FINANCE REPORT

The Council considered the monthly financial report which detailed the current bank balances, payments made since the last meeting and payments to be made. The Clerk informed the Council that the pay settlement for local government employees had now been resolved, therefore the new salary scales would apply from 1 April 2018. The Clerk would move incrementally up the scale to SCP24.

Payments

Cheque	Supplier	Description	Amount
100614	Bearpark Community Assoc	Room Hire	100.00
100615	HM Revenue and Customs	PAYE	100.91
100616	Mr M Turnbull	Clerks Salary (April)	403.62
100617	CDALC	Subscription	267.57
100618	The Design Hub	Newsletter Design & Print	510.00

17/128 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

There were no applications for consideration.

17/129 EVENTS WORKING GROUP UPDATE

The Clerk provided an update to the Council following the meeting of the Events Working Group held on 4 April 2018 which included an update on the folk concert taking place on Saturday 28 April 2018 at the Methodist Chapel.

Resolved

That the update be noted.

17/130 VILLAGE MATTERS

Bearpark Pride

Councillor Hull informed the Council that the village pride group were seeking funding towards a pictorial record of Beapark. Further information would be forthcoming at a future meeting.

17/131 PARISH COUNCIL BANKING ARRANGEMENTS

The Council considered a report of the Clerk regarding banking arrangements for the Parish Council. The Clerk explained that difficulties were being experienced with the current bankers and it was becoming increasingly time consuming to resolve such issues. Cheques were incurring processing charges, per each cheque cashed. Furthermore, many suppliers in 2017/18 were not accepting cheques for payment which meant that the Clerk was having to pay certain suppliers using his own credit/debit card and seeking reimbursement from the Council.

The Parish Council could, if it were minded, make the move to internet banking and informal enquiries with other Parish Clerks indicated that an increasing number of Parishes now use this method of payment. A comparison with other Parish Council's indicated that the sector had moved to the Unity Trust Bank. The Unity Trust operated with a system whereby a Clerk could set up a payment which at least two Councillors could then authorise. Users could be given various levels of access depending on how the Council operated.

No other high street banks operated a system offering on-line banking and the separation of the person setting up the transaction, and the person(s) authorising it. There would be a fixed fee of £6 per month for a Unity Trust Current Account , however, the move to online banking would save on postage, cheque processing fees, envelopes and deliver a more efficient and effective payment system.

Resolved

- (i) That the recommendation to approve the new banking arrangements with the Unity Trust be agreed and that the Clerk compile the application form;
- (ii) That the signing agreement remain the same, i.e. 2 Councillors plus the Clerk; and
- (iii) That the Council's standing orders be updated to reflect the new arrangements.

17/132 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Parish Council would take place on Wednesday 16 May 2018 at 7.00 p.m.

The meeting closed at 8.30 p.m.