

BEARPARK PARISH COUNCIL

At the **Annual meeting** of **Bearpark Parish Council** held on **Wednesday 17 May 2017 at 7.10 p.m.**

Present:

Councillor M Wilson in the Chair.

Councillors N Anderson, O Edwards, E Hull, R Kemp, J Peart, E Wilding and T Wilson.

17/01 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor M Chard.

Apologies for absence were also received from County Councillor J Chaplow.

17/02 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

17/03 ELECTION OF CHAIR

Nominations for the positions of Chair were received for Councillor T Wilson and Councillor R Kemp and duly moved and seconded. Upon a vote being taken it was:

Resolved

That Councillor R Kemp be elected Chairman of the Council for the ensuing year.

Councillor R Kemp in the Chair.

17/04 ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR

Nominations for the position of Vice-Chair were received for Cllr T Wilson and Councillor E Hull and duly moved and seconded. Upon a vote being taken both nominated candidates received equal number of votes. Under Standing Order 3(p), the Chair of Council exercised the right to use a casting vote.

Resolved

That Councillor T Wilson be elected Vice-Chairman of the Council for the ensuing year.

17/05 REPRESENTATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

There were no members of the public present.

17/06 POLICE REPORT

There were no police in attendance and no report had been provided.

17/07 COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

The Chair congratulated Councillors D Bell and M Wilson on their election to Durham County Council. Councillor Bell informed the Council that there was nothing specific to report due to the recent local government elections.

Councillor Anderson referred to the neighbouring planning application relating to a proposed piggery at New Brancepeth and queried an article in the Durham Advertiser newspaper which suggested that the applicant had informed a local resident that they "were considering relocating to another site about half a mile away, so it would be in a valley and more invisible".

Councillor Bell informed the Council that he could not comment on the matter because no alternative sites or proposals had been submitted by the applicant.

16/08 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 19 April 2017 were **Moved** by Councillor M Wilson, **Seconded** by Councillor T Wilson and agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

17/09 REVIEW OF ACTIONS

(a) Future of St. Edmund's Church

The Clerk reminded the Council of a discussion held at the previous meeting regarding the possible closure of St. Edmund's Church and the potential for the Parish Council to register the building as one of community interest. The Clerk informed the Council that the outgoing Chair had contacted a member of the congregation who had confirmed that the diocesan office could only state that the church *may* be closing. It was not definite. A review process would need to be carried out by the diocese and then by the Church commissioners. It was expected that this would take some period of time.

Resolved

That the Parish Council notes the information received from the diocesan office and keep the matter under review. The Council would discuss the matter again should there be any further developments.

17/10 APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES/OUTSIDE BODIES/WORKING GROUPS

The Clerk explained the importance of reviewing its structure each year to ensure that it was fit for purpose. The Clerk advised the Council that he proposed to meet with the Chair and Vice-Chair over the coming weeks to discuss the best way forward to deal with Parish business and a proposal submitted to the meeting in June. Any changes to the structure would need to be agreed at a future Council meeting.

Resolved

That the Council note the latest position and that proposals be brought back to the next meeting.

17/11 APPOINTMENT OF INTERNAL AUDITOR

The Clerk informed the Council that it was important to formally appoint the use of an internal auditor each year. For the benefit of new Councillors the Clerk explained the role of the internal auditor in terms of agreeing the annual governance statement and accounting statements for the financial year. The Clerk explained that the Council currently utilised the services of Mr G Bestford who had provided an excellent internal audit service for a number years.

Resolved

That the Council appoint Mr G Bestford as the internal auditor for the ensuing year.

17/12 INSURANCE ARRANGEMENTS

The Clerk informed the Council that the insurance renewal was due on 1 June 2017. A renewal quote had been received from the Council's current insurers. The Clerk reported that a revised premium was required as the policy needed updating to incorporate the new village noticeboard. The Clerk also commented that the Council had been with the current insurers for a number of years, however, there were a lot more parish insurance providers in the market and suggested that it may be useful to acquire some further quotations.

Resolved

That the Clerk be given delegated authority in consultation with the Chair of the Council to achieve a like-for-like quote and attempt to obtain best value for money for the Council.

17/13 REQUESTS FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Durham CAB

The Council considered a request for financial assistance from Durham Citizens Advice Bureau. A lengthy discussion ensued with views being expressed both for and against making a donation. Councillor Edwards explained that any donation made would be seen as a moral contribution to the service which local parishioners could benefit from. Councillor Anderson felt that money should be spent elsewhere in the village and referred the Parish Council to the funding of a number of sessions at Bearpark Community Centre in 2015 which were quite poorly attended. The Clerk informed the Council that he would contact the CAB to see if they had an data which could assist the Council in making a determination on the request.

Resolved

That the Council defer a decision on making a donation.

17/14 CORRESPONDENCE

The Clerk informed the Council of recent correspondence received from Durham Area Action Partnership. The AAP has a place for a parish council representative who will represent all 9 parish councils in the Durham area. This was a two year appointment.

Resolved

That the Parish Council nominates Cllr M Wilson.

17/15 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.

Payments

Cheque	Supplier	Description	Amount
100564	National Allotment Society	Subscription 2017/18	55.00
100565	Durham County Council	Recreation Improvement Works	635.00
100566	Border Signs and Graphics	Interpretation Board	450.00
100567	CDALC	Subscription 2017/18	265.85
100568	HM Revenue and Customs	PAYE (Period 1)	95.80
100569	Mr M Turnbull	Clerks Salary (May)	383.21

Receipts

None

17/16 PARISH COUNCIL BANKING ARRANGEMENTS

The Clerk reported that the Council would need to review its banking arrangements given that there had been a change in Councillors on the Parish Council. All new and existing Councillors would be required to complete the necessary paperwork to bring the Council's change in membership up-to-date. The Clerk would obtain the necessary paperwork and send to all Councillors in due course.

Resolved

- (i) That the Clerk update the banking arrangements as necessary;
- (ii) That the signing authority remain unchanged, i.e. two members of the Council plus the Clerk.

17/17 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

There were no planning applications for consideration.

17/18 COMMUNITY CENTRE UPDATE

Councillor Hull informed the Council that a meeting was due to take place in the Community Centre on Wednesday 24 May 2017 regarding a proposal to establish a new Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) to take on future management of the Community Centre in Bearpark and to dissolve the existing charity. The meeting was part of the asset transfer process of the Community building. Some Parish Councillors would be in attendance.

Resolved

That the Council note the current position.

17/19 VILLAGE MATTERS

(i) Village Fair and Events

The Chair informed the Council that in non-election years the Parish Council had previously organised the Village Fair and a programme of events for year. Nothing had been arranged for 2017 to date. Having discussed this with the Clerk, this was due to the local elections and the period known as purdah, which takes place from the date that the notice of election is published up until the general election has been held. The Clerks time was also taken up between January-March in setting the Council's budget and finalising the end of year accounts for audit. The Chair signalled her intentions to meet with the Vice-Chair and the Clerk over the coming week to discuss a way forward.

Resolved

That the information be noted.

17/20 PARISH COUNCIL VACANCIES

The Clerk informed the Council that two vacancies existed on the Parish Council following the local elections had today published the required notice seeking interested persons. The date for expressions of interest was 31 May 2017.

Resolved

That the Council note the action taken.

17/21 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Parish Council would take place on Wednesday 21 June 2017 at 7.00 p.m.

The meeting closed at 8.15 p.m.