

BEARPARK PARISH COUNCIL

At a meeting of **Bearpark Parish Council** held on **Wednesday 21 June 2017 at 7.00 p.m.**

Present:

Councillor R Kemp in the Chair.

Councillors N Anderson, O Edwards, M Chard, E Hull, J Peart, E Wilding and T Wilson.

17/22 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

17/23 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor M Wilson declared an interest in relation to Item No. 17/ (i) , a request for financial assistance from the Mayor of Durham, as a Charter Trustee for the City of Durham.

17/24 PARISH COUNCIL COOPTION

The Clerk informed the Council that the two vacancies on the Parish Council had been advertised since the previous meeting. Two expressions of interest had been received, however, one person had chosen to withdraw prior to the meeting. The remaining vacancy would be advertised in the hope that the position could be filled in the future.

he Clerk then introduced Mr Matthew Wright to the Parish Council. Mr Wright provided with Council with a short supporting statement together with the reasons why he wished to be co-opted. It was moved and seconded and unanimously agreed.

Resolved

That Mr Matthew Wright be co-opted as a Councillor on Bearpark Parish Council. Mr Wright signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office in the presence of the Proper Officer.

17/25 REPRESENTATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

The Clerk introduced Dr Ian Leslie to the meeting. Ian was attending the meeting as a representative of Bearpark Community Partnership. Ian provided a brief overview of the aims and aspirations of the Partnership, together with a summary of what they Partnership had achieved so far in the village.

Made representations to Durham County Council following a village walkabout for some additional bin provision in the area. This had followed on from a previous joint walkabout with the Partnership and Clerk to the Parish Council where this issue had been discussed initially.

The Partnership were running a collaborative project with Durham County Council's Civic Pride Team and Bearpark Primary School which would see the Primary School designing posters supporting the Partnership's activities. This would be preceded by a litter assembly. Winning entries will be chosen by the Partnership and presented to the school. Artwork from the event will also be displayed in the Community Centre meeting room.

This would be followed up with a 'Litter to Art' event being held on 12 July and would be run in collaboration with Durham Constabulary, Durham County Council Civic Pride Team, Bearpark Artists Cooperative. The Partnership extended an invitation for the Parish Council to be involved. The event would start with a litter pick/clean-up of open space between 9 and 10 a.m. Bearpark Artists Cooperative would then facilitate an art event using collected litter. Other events would continue into the future. These included plans for a community garden, community leaf gathering session and further Primary School assembly in the September term to continue the 'Litter to Art' theme.

Councillor Wright commended the Partnership for their work to date and wondered if it was worthwhile in approaching local businesses to scope their interest in providing some funds or support to help the Partnership further their work. The Partnership would potentially look at this suggestion at a later stage of their work and wanted to focus on the engaging people at the present time.

Councillor Edwards also thanked the Partnership for their excellent work and would look to provide some assistance to the group during one of their future volunteer sessions.

Resolved

That the Council place on record their appreciation of the work of the Partnership to date and that the Clerk scope interest for a Councillor(s) to assist at one of the litter sessions in July.

17/26 POLICE REPORT

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

17/27 COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

Councillor Bell provided a general update from Durham County Council since the local government elections, as follows:

- Annual Council appointments and Civic Appointments had been made. The Chairman and Mayor was Bill Kellett from Sherburn. The Vice-Chairman was John Lethbridge from Woodhouse Close. The Deputy Mayor was Katie Corrigan from Belmont and her consort was former County Councillor, Bill Moir;
- The temporary Bailey Bridge at the River Deerness would remain in situ and work was due to commence on a permanent structure in due course;

- Upgrading of the traffic lights and resurfacing works would soon be taking place at Neville's Cross. Work was due to commence in July and would last till 18 August. Temporary road closures would be in place between 8pm and 6am which would see the potential for more traffic travelling through Bearpark during these times; and
- Finally, the County Council had agreed a process which would see Teaching Assistants offered a new proposal and a ballot undertaken by their representative trade unions. The dispute had been ongoing for well over a year and the Council had worked hard in drawing up a revised set of proposals.

Councillor M Wilson then provided an update on those issues relating to Bearpark as follows:

- Councillor Wilson had attended a site visit with representatives from the County Council Highways Service, Durham Constabulary Traffic Section, Bearpark Primary School. The Parish Clerk attended on behalf of the Bearpark Parish Council. The site visit had been held following concerns expressed by parents and members of the public about the speeding along Colliery Road and about the number of parked cars outside the Primary School at peak hours. The area wasn't viable for a 20mph scheme given its location. It was acknowledged at the site meeting that the road markings were faded and needed to be refreshed (both the centre lines and the roadside marking). Areas to extend the white lines were also discussed. The possibility of the introduction of some 'Keep Clear' markings was also discussed. A speed survey would also take place prior to the end of the school term and it was hoped that some engagement work would take place with the school from September 2017.
- Residents had raised parking issues in Taylor Avenue, which had been referred to Durham City Homes for their attention. No feedback had been received to date.
- Concerns of alcohol and drug related anti-social behaviour had been raised in different areas of Bearpark. The woodland area was experiencing high volumes of youngsters during weekends as well as the Stile Road area.
- Representations had been made with Durham County Council's Community Engagement Team regarding the possibility of having Bearpark transferred to the Mid-Durham Area Action Partnership area. This had been something the Parish Council had made representations previously in 2015, however, the County Council were not prepared to undertake a review at the time. Councillor Wilson felt that Durham City AAP was too city centric and the views of local people were more aligned to villages that made up the mid-Durham area. It was felt that the Mid Durham was much more progressive and would better suit the needs of Bearpark.

Councillor Hull felt that the suggestion was sensible and added that it would be much better for the three County Councillors to work together in the same area, rather than one Councillor working remotely in another AAP area.

Councillor Chard commented that there was a large amount of litter being left in the woodland areas which had been coinciding with the anti-social behaviour that was taking place.

Councillor Hull queried if the police had outreach workers to deal with the situations being experienced and felt that those involved needed more information around the dangers of alcohol, drugs and sexual health rather than punishment. In response, Councillor Bell informed the Council that a large amount of work was carried out in secondary schools with by both the school and the police.

Councillor Kemp raised concerns about the 40mph speed limit in Ushaw Moor near the new Wimpey development. Whilst this was not located within the Parish of Bearpark, Councillor Kemp felt that representations should be made given the proximity and felt that it posed a danger to school children and residents who lived and regularly walked the area. Concerns were also expressed about the location of the school crossing patrol in the area.

Councillor Bell informed the Parish Council that the speed limit had been increased from 30mph to 40mph sometime ago. Local County Councillors had objected to the increase at the time. The Clerk also informed the Council that the increase in speed limit was made because of the make-up of the area at the time, however, there were open fields on either side of the road because the development had only taken place within the last couple of years.

17/28 MINUTES AND ACTION POINTS

- (a) The minutes of the meeting held on 17 May 2017 were **Moved** by Councillor M Wilson, **Seconded** by Councillor T Wilson and agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.
- (b) A list of action points from issues determined at previous meetings was noted (for copy see file of minutes).

17/29 COMMITTEES/OUTSIDE BODIES/WORKING GROUPS

The Clerk referred to the meeting of the Council in June whereby the importance of reviewing the Parish Council structure each year was explained to ensure that it was fit for purpose. The Clerk had met with the Chair and Vice-Chair and a report had been circulated to the Council for discussion.

Councillor Edwards felt that the idea of working groups would be useful and would concentrate on specific areas, allowing for greater transparency in terms of monitoring and reviewing all aspects of the Parish Council's work.

The Parish Council collectively would have the final decision to make.

Resolved

That the Council formally sets up working groups for the following:

- Events Working Group – Councillors R Kemp, T Wilson and M Wilson

- Communications and Engagement Working Group – Councillors Chard, Edwards and Hull
- Finance, Governance and Audit Working Group – Councillors Edwards, T E Wilding, T Wilson and M Wright

17/30 REQUESTS FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Prior to consideration of the first request for financial assistance, Councillor M Wilson left the meeting as a Charter Trustee for the City of Durham.

(i) **Mayors Appeal – Great North Air Ambulance Service**

The Clerk informed the Council that a letter had been received from the Mayor of the City of Durham seeking support from the Parish Council to support the Mayor's Charity Appeal.

Resolved

That the Council donate £50.00 direct to the Great North Air Ambulance Service.

Councillor M Wilson re-joined the meeting.

(ii) **Durham CAB**

The Clerk informed the Council that no further information had been provided by Durham Citizens Advice Bureau since the previous meeting.

Resolved

That the Council take no further action.

(iii) **Durham Lumiere – Cllr M Wilson**

Councillor M Wilson approached the Parish Council in her role as a County Councillor seeking support for a 'Moon' lighting installation for the Lumiere event taking place in Durham this year. The installation would see images projected onto Durham Castle. The Lumiere artist would gather images from the public. Photographic portraits would then be digitally face tracked to map movement. Imagery would then be overlaid onto a moon avatar to mirror the original face movements. The moon would appear and disappear to the audience as sight lines to the Castle change. The four films would be projected for one night each over the festival. If the Parish Council supported the event, residents from Bearpark would be able participate in the project, providing there was interest. The community would see themselves star in the artwork.

Councillor Hull felt that a decision could not be made until the Council had a better idea of how much it was being asked to contribute to the project.

Councillor Edwards echoed similar comments and commented that he may consider supporting a contribution towards the project, providing that the village was interested in participating in the event.

Councillor M Wilson informed the Council that Councillors Bell and Chaplow had been approached to see if they would also be interested in providing funding

towards the project. The request to the Parish Council was to seek agreement in principle.

Resolved

That the Parish Council note the information presented and that a further request for funding be made once all the financial details had been ascertained.

(iv) **It's Your Neighbourhood – Village Planter Scheme**

The Clerk informed the Council that a request had been received from Bearpark Community Partnership to take over the maintenance of the four 'planters' in the village. The Partnership would draw up plans for seasonal displays that would change three times per annum.

The Clerk informed the Council that the planters were not being attended to properly, with many of them overgrown with weeds. The planter outside the Aged Miners Homes had not been attended to for almost a year. In addition to this, one of planters, provided by Durham County Council as part of the Delivering Differently scheme needed to be tidied up as part of the conditions of the scheme.

The Clerk advised that the Parish Council had been successful in receiving £500 from Durham County Council as part of the 'It's Your Neighbourhood' scheme. The first part of the project was delivered in 2016 which saw trees planted in Mullin Close, Beaurepaire and Taylor Avenue. The Council had spent £464.75 to date. A further £525.35 had to be committed to the scheme. The Clerk explained that the core principles of the scheme would continue to be met by the proposal from the Partnership and felt that it would complement the work already carried out.

Resolved

That the Council donate the element of the remaining match fund (£535.25) to Bearpark Community Partnership to enable them to continue with the scheme.

17/31 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2016/17

The Clerk informed the Council that the Annual Governance Statement circulated with the papers was to demonstrate that the Council operated with good governance and a sound system of internal control.

Resolved

That the Annual Governance Statement for 2016/17 be agreed.

17/32 ACCOUNTING STATEMENTS 2016/17

The Clerk informed the Council that Section 2 of the Annual Audit dealt with the accounting statements for the relevant financial year.

Resolved

That the Accounting Statements for 2017/18 be approved.

17/33 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
100573	Mr G Bestford	Subscription 2017/18	100.00
100575	Bearpark Community P'ship	It's Your Neighbourhood funds	535.25
100574	Great North Air Ambulance	Donation	50.00
100572	Came and Company	Insurance	378.00
100570	HMRC	PAYE (Period 3)	95.80
100571	Mr M Turnbull	Clerks Salary (June)	383.21

Receipts

None

17/34 COMMUNITY CENTRE UPDATE

The Clerk informed the Council that an email had been sent providing the Parish Council with an update on the latest position concerning the Community Centre. However, the email had only been received in the moments prior to the meeting. The Clerk read out the contents of the email to the meeting. Copies of the accounts had been provided with the email but it was too late to be able to provide copies to the Council.

The Parish Council noted the situation regarding the legal structure and the current position. It was disappointing to learn of the cash deficit which had been attributed to the breakdown of the boiler during the winter. This had forced some user groups to use alternative premises. Most of the groups had returned to the Centre once work had been completed, however, some groups had chosen not to. The costs of running the temporary fan heaters had also been factored into the deficit.

The Parish Council noted that some new trustees had been recruited to the Committee and had been requested to nominate a representative to serve on the Committee.

Information regarding room hire charges and membership were also noted. Generally, the Parish Council understood the need for the Association to adopt a more business-like approach, including the setting of hire charges, however, no detail had been provided as to how the Association had decided on the fees and whether they would be charged across the board to all users.

In terms of the request for financial assistance contained within the email, the Clerk advised the Council that the late receipt of information, the lack of an opportunity to have sight of all relevant details, including the completed financial analysis, latest accounts and exact deficit figure, meant that it would be highly inappropriate for the Council to make any decision on the matter until all of the relevant facts had been presented to the Council. Councillors felt that it was imperative that this information

was provided as soon as possible so an informed, open and transparent decision could be made.

The Clerk also advised the Council that the Parish Council set a budget at the beginning of the year and raised precept to support the budget. The Parish Council's budget was to cover the day to day running costs of the Council and fund their own projects and work in Bearpark, work that is of benefit to Bearpark and its residents. Whilst money was set aside to support local groups and organisations, it was not set aside to fund ongoing running costs of other organisations or indeed to meet shortfalls in revenue.

Resolved

- i. That the Council note the information provided;
- ii. That a decision regarding the request for financial assistance be deferred until all appropriate supporting documentation and explanation of queries was provided;
- iii. That the Council nominate Councillor E Wilding to serve on the Trustees;
- iv. That the Clerk convey the views of the Parish Council to Christine Pearce at Durham County Council.

17/35 VILLAGE MATTERS

(i) Community Centre Play Area

Councillor M Wilson a project to discuss proposals for a new play area once the lease for the Community Centre had been resolved and would bring further information back to the Parish Council in due course.

(ii) Repositioning of a Dog Bin

Councillor E Hull passed on information regarding the repositioning of a dog bin in the village.

Resolved

That the information be noted and that the Clerk pass details of the dog bin relocation request onto Durham County Council.

17/36 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Parish Council would take place on Wednesday 19 July 2017 at 7.00 p.m.

The meeting closed at 9.00 p.m.