

## **Bearpark Parish Council**

At a meeting of **Bearpark Parish Council** held on **Wednesday 16 June 2021** at **7.00 p.m.**

**Present:**                   **Councillor M Wilson in the Chair**

Councillors N Anderson, O Edwards, R Kemp, J Peart and J Thompson.

There were no members of the public present.

### **1. Apologies for Absence**

There were no apologies for absence.

### **2. Declarations of Interest**

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

### **3. Minutes**

#### **Resolved**

The minutes of the meeting held on 26 May 2021 were agreed as a correct record.

### **4. Parish Council Cooption's**

The Clerk informed the Council that since the last meeting:

- two persons who had initially expressed an interest in being coopted had withdrawn their interest;
- three persons remained interested but could not attend the meeting; and
- one person interested in being coopted was in attendance.

The Clerk advised the Council that an item could be placed on the agenda for the July meeting to consider further cooption's for those who could not attend and the parish council could proceed to coopt the person who was in attendance at the meeting, if they so wished.

The nomination of Mr C Gallagher was moved by Councillor M Wilson, Seconded by Councillor R Kemp. The parish council then heard from Mr C Gallagher who gave a summary of his background and his motivation for the role.

#### **Resolved**

That Mr C Gallagher be coopted onto Bearpark Parish Council. Mr Gallagher then signed a Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

## **5. Police Report**

There was no report from the police. Councillor M Wilson informed the Council that she had spoken to the PCSO for the area. There had been concerns expressed regarding quad bikes/scrambler bikes which had been noted. Councillor M Wilson was trying to arrange a meeting with the Durham Police and Crime Commissioner to discuss the issue.

## **6. Representations from the Public**

There were no members of the public present and no representations had been received.

## **7. County Council Report**

Councillor M Wilson provided her report to the Council as follows:

- The Charter Trustees for the City of Durham had met and Cllr Arnie Simpson had been elected as Mayor of Durham, with Cllr David Freeman elected Deputy Mayor;
- The Brass Festival would be held between 14-17 July 2021 – all performances to be held outdoors; and
- DCC had entered into a new recycling scheme with partners, whereby small appliances (kettles, toasters etc.) could be recycled at selected venues. The nearest recycling venues for small appliances were located at Sacriston and Belmont.

## **8. Finance Report**

The Clerk provided a copy of the latest accounting records which included all payments for approval, payments made since the last meeting and a bank reconciliation.

### **Resolved**

That the accounting statements be agreed.

## **9. Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2020/21**

The Clerk explained that the purpose of the Annual Governance Statement was for the council to publicly report on its arrangements for ensuring business had been conducted in accordance with the law, regulations and proper practices and that public money was being safeguarded and properly accounted for.

The Annual Governance and Accountability Return was made up of three parts:

- i. The Annual Internal Audit Report had been completed by the authority's internal auditor; and
- ii. Sections one and two had to be completed and approved by the authority (with Section 1, Annual Governance Statement to be approved, before approval of Section 2, Accounting Statements).

Both sections had to be approved and published on the authority website/webpage before 1 July 2021.

- iii. Section 3 would be completed by the external auditor and returned to the authority.

### **Section One**

The return contained a number of statements, known as assertions, to which the Council had to review and agree to. Appropriate evidence was required to support a 'Yes' answer.

### **Resolved**

That the Council agree to the eight assertions and the Annual Governance Statement for 2020/21.

### **Section Two**

The Clerk informed the Council that Section 2 of the AGAR was essentially the statement of accounts in the form of a summary of income and expenditure account and a statement of balances. This was presented to the Council for approval, together with details of income and expenditure for 2020/21, a bank reconciliation and an explanation of variances, which the Clerk summarised for the Council.

### **Resolved**

That the accounting statements for 2020/21 be approved.

## **10. Planning Applications**

The Council noted the following planning application:

- (i) **DM/21/01520/FPA - Demolition of existing buildings and erection of 148no. 2, 3 and 4 bedroom two-storey dwellings with associated works at land to the rear of the old Chapel, Colliery Road, Bearpark DH7 7AU**

The Clerk informed the Council that the application was relatively new and had only appeared on the portal recently. The application, by its very nature, contained a lot of information and it was important that the parish council were in full possession of the plans, layout and potential impact of the site prior to coming to any decision.

### **Resolved**

That the parish council defer making any representations on the application at the current time and that the matter be rescheduled for consideration, once the full impact of the potential development had been understood.

## **11. Report of the Clerk**

The Clerk provided the Council with an update regarding correspondence received which included:

- 2021/2022 CILCA mentoring training

- Reminder of the AGAR submission
- New recommended code of conduct
- Remembering Bearpark Colliery interpretation update and
- Pay negotiations for 2021/22 from 1 April 2021

**Resolved**

- (i) That the update be noted; and
- (ii) That any required follow-up reports be considered at the next meeting.

**12. Village Matters**

**(i) Bearpark Methodist Church Reorganisation**

Councillor R Kemp informed the Council that the Bearpark Methodist Church had been reorganised as part of the west group of churches which included Brandon, Boompark, Esh Winning, New Brancepeth. Services were now being held monthly.

**(ii) Poppies**

Councillor R Kemp informed the Council that around 200 poppies had been knitted for the proposed village displays in 2021

**(iii) Bishops Meadow Estate**

Councillor R Kemp informed the Council that the Neighbourhood Wardens had now been tasked with sorting out some of the 'playtime' issues being experienced in the Bishops Meadow estate.

**Resolved**

That the updates be noted.

**13. Date of next meeting**

The next meeting would be held on Wednesday 21 July 2021 at Bearpark and District Workingmens Club.