

## **Bearpark Parish Council**

At a meeting of **Bearpark Parish Council** held on **Wednesday 20 March 2024** at **7:00pm** at **Beaurepaire Community Hub**.

**Present:** Cllr M Wilson (Chair)      Cllr N Anderson      Cllr J Baker  
                 Cllr I Cummings            Cllr O Edwards      Cllr J Peart  
                 Cllr J Thompson            Cllr P Wilson

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

No apologies were received

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

Cllr I Cummings declared an interest in the planning application DM/23/03853/TPO

### **Resolved**

That Cllr I Cummings would temporarily leave the meeting during the discussion regarding application DM/23/03853/TPO.

### **3. Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 21 February 2024 were agreed as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

### **4. Representations from the Public**

There were no representations from the public.

### **5. Police Report**

Cllr M Wilson advised that no issues had been reported at the latest PACT meeting. However, the former community centre building had been broken into recently and youths were found inside by Police. It was determined that the youths were not the culprits who broke in but they entered the building once they had seen it was open. There was no damage inside or anything taken.

### **Resolved**

That the information be noted

### **6. County Councillors Report**

Cllr M Wilson provided an update to the Council as follows:

- DCC have been awarded £2.94million from the Department for Transport's (DfT) Safer Roads Fund for a series of improvements on the A690 between Crook and Neville's Cross in Durham City.
- An album which tells the story of the rise and fall of coal mining is to be performed in full at Durham Cathedral, as Durham Brass Music Festival returns between 5-13 July.
- DCC have confirmed that The Story, based at Mount Oswald in Durham City, is scheduled to open to the public from Friday 14 June. The Story will be the new home for the Durham register office and will offer an elegant wedding

and civil ceremony location. The Story will also be the permanent home for the whole DLI Collection, reuniting it with the DLI Archive for the first time since 1998.

### **Resolved**

That the information be noted

### **7. Report of the Clerk**

The Clerk provided an update to the Council as follows:

- The Clerk had contacted DCC regarding extra Neighbourhood Warden provision for part of the year rather than the whole year. No response had been received as yet. To update at a future meeting.
- The overgrown vegetation at Cook Avenue had been reported to DCC and a secondary enforcement letter had been sent.
- The Clerk had contacted DCC regarding the listed sign. No response had been received as yet. To update at a future meeting.
- The clerk reminded all Councillors to submit their register of interest forms ASAP.
- Upcoming training opportunities included:
  - Reconnecting Communities through Community Transport – 27 March 12-13:15, online
  - Emerging Trends in Local Government Finance – 24 April 12-13:15, online.
- A Facebook member had been warned and subsequently banned from using unacceptable language on the parish page.
- Last month's electricity bill had been paid twice due to a crossover of payment being made and the direct debit being set up. This will be taken from the next bill.
- National Allotment Society Northern Region Branch OGM would take place on Saturday 23 March at 10:30, Belmont Social Club.
- The Clerk would be on annual leave between 2 – 11 April.

### **Resolved**

That the information be noted and relevant action taken by the Clerk.

### **8. Finance Report**

The Clerk circulated a report which detailed all recent and upcoming expenditure.

### **Resolved**

That all costs be approved by the Council

### **9. Planning Applications**

Details of planning applications DM/23/03853/TPO and DM/23/03418/VOC had been circulated for comments.

*Cllr I Cummings temporarily left the meeting.*

### **Resolved**

In relation to application DM/23/03853/TPO, as long as the trees were to remain in a healthy condition and the works would not have a significant impact on the natural landscape, no comments were to be made.

*Cllr I Cummings re-joined the meeting.*

### **Resolved**

In relation to application DM/23/03418/VOC there were no comments.

## **10. Allotments**

Cllr N Anderson advised that activity on the allotments had improved recently. The Clerk requested further information on plot numbers in order to send out the new tenancy agreements.

A discussion was held regarding the creation of more allotments by halving the bigger plots. Current plot holders to be consulted on this with agreement to charge a smaller fee for a smaller plot. Another suggestion was made to extend the allotments onto adjacent Land. The waiting list would need to be updated so that any new plots could be assigned fairly.

### **Resolved**

That Cllr N Anderson send a drawing detailing plot numbers and holders to the Clerk.

That a new fee of £70 be charged for larger plots.

That the Clerk draft a letter to current plot holders asking if they would be willing to half their larger plot for the smaller fee of £35.

That the new tenancy agreements reflect the new plot size/cost/fee.

That the Clerk make enquiries with DCC regarding extension of the allotments onto adjacent land.

That Cllr N Anderson send details of the current waiting list to the Clerk with any known updates and the Clerk keep the waiting list up to date moving forward.

## **11.40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Closure of Bearpark Colliery**

Arrangements had been made for the service to take place at St Edmund's Church and refreshments to be served at the Methodist Church. A discussion was held regarding a donation to each Church.

### **Resolved**

That a donation of £200 be made to St Edmunds Church and a donation of £100 be made to the Methodist Church. The Clerk to make the arrangements.

## **12.106 Money Consultation Event**

The consultation event would be held before the next Parish Council Meeting.

### **Resolved**

That the Clerk advertise on the Facebook page and website and look into possible advertising on Durham Air and in the Northern Echo.

That the Clerk purchase flipchart paper and sticky notes for the event for ideas to be put forward.

That the Clerk find out more information on the 106 process from DCC.

**13. Summer Fair/D-Day 80**

Cllr M Wilson advised that the date of Sunday 9 June had been agreed.

**Resolved**

That the Clerk make the necessary arrangements

**14. Play Areas**

Cllr M Wilson advised that she had been in contact with DCC regarding an accessible swing to be added to the play area. This was to be funded by Cllr M Wilson's County Councillor's Neighbourhood Budget. There was some funding left over which could be used on other additions to the play area.

**Resolved**

That Cllr M Wilson put forward some ideas for other additions and report back to a future meeting.

**15. Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting would take place on **Wednesday 17 April 7:00pm** at **Beaurepaire Community Hub**.

**Signed.....(Chair)**

**Date.....**