

Bearpark Parish Council

At a meeting of **Bearpark Parish Council** held on **Wednesday 20 April 2022** at **7.00 p.m.**

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

Councillors I Cummings, O Edwards and C Gallacher.

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors R Kemp and J Thompson.

County Councillor Dan Nicholls had also submitted his apologies.

2. Cooption of Councillor

An expression of interest had been received for a cooption to the Council. The person expressing the interest would be invited to attend the meeting in May.

3. Declarations of Interest

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

4. Minutes

Resolved

The minutes of the meeting held on 23 March 2022 were agreed.

5. Police Report

Councillor M Wilson informed the Council that once again there were very low levels of crime. Nothing major had been reported at the last PACT meeting other than very low levels of anti-social behavior.

6. Representations from the Public

There were no representations from the public.

7. County Council Report

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

- The Brass Festival would be held from 10 to 17 July 2022;
- The Future of the newly built County Council Offices was to be determined by Cabinet. A proposal to sell the building to Durham University for use as a business school was to be considered by the Cabinet;
- The Council's apprenticeship programme was to be launched once again; and
- Bishop Auckland Food Festival was being held over the coming weekend.

8. Report of the Clerk

The Clerk provided an update regarding up and coming training sessions being organised by the County Durham Association of Local Councils. Details of the next meeting of the Smaller Local Council's Forum taking place at Shildon Town Council Offices starting at 14:00 on the 19 May.

Resolved

That the information be noted.

9. Planning Applications

DM/22/00947/FPA - Single storey front and rear extensions - 3 Woodland Close Bearpark, Durham, DH7 7EB

DM/22/00483/RM - Details of access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale for single dwelling approved under DM/21/00350/OUT - Aldin Grange Farm, Bearpark, Durham, DH7 7AR

Resolved

That the planning applications be noted. There were no objections or comments to be made regarding either application.

10. Request for Financial Assistance

The Clerk informed the Council that there were no requests for financial assistance for the meeting.

11. Queens Jubilee

Since the last meeting, Councillor M Wilson had spoken to Beaurepaire Community Hub. They had discussed the idea of holding an event between Church, Hub the Chapel and the parish council. Ideas discussed included some sideshow type of activities in and around the Hub. Councillor C Gallacher felt that all groups were struggling for ideas as there was no longer a focal point in the village which all Councillors agreed with. Councillor M Wilson explained that the Church were going to hold a proms style event on Saturday afternoon but had been unable to source a band.

Councillor I Cummings felt that the discussions with the Hub sounded promising and asked if the parish council could respond and help support the hub with the project and potentially help towards financing some of the activities. Councillor I Cummings felt that it was essential to try and do something to get the village back together.

The Clerk updated the Parish Council with regard to the jubilee beacon proposal and unfortunately due to insurance requirements, this would be no longer a feasible proposal. Councillor M Wilson had suggested that a flagpole be sited in the village on the parish land and passed details to the Clerk regarding where and when planning permission was or wasn't required for flagpoles. The Clerk would seek out

some costings for flagpole which would be used initially for the Queens Jubilee, but could then be used for future events.

Resolved

That the update be noted.

12. Village Matters

Councillor M Wilson informed the Council that the bollards by the shops had all been painted. They all required new reflective tape. The County Council had offered to paint the Bearpark Colliery sign but a U-turn of events resulted in them coming back and stating that they were unable to because it is was on private land and did not have insurance to paint on private land. There had also been some mixed messages regarding consulting with conservation team at the County Council.

Councillor I Cummings informed the Council that the sign was rusting and it was important that it was preserved. The Clerk would contact conservation at the County Council.

Councillor M Wilson informed the Council that Bearpark was going to be considered for improvement works under the towns and villages scheme. Councillor Wilson asked Councillors to forward ideas to her if there were areas in Bearpark that could be tidied up. Areas of unadopted land had been mentioned previously and were notorious areas for fly tipping.

Councillor C Gallacher explained that one of the two benches at the top of Bearpark could not be used because of the thorns from the tree on the garden next to it. The Clerk informed the Council that consideration would be given to moving the seat if it was not practicable being placed where it was currently.

Councillor I Cummings informed the Council about the various levels of abuse being directed to Councillor M Wilson on the Council's Facebook page. The comments related to housing development and the community centre and were felt to be unfair. The Parish Council discussed whether they needed to make any sort of position statement regarding the development at Colliery Road and the Community Centre but it was felt sensible to leave it for the present time. Councillor O Edwards commented that the Parish Council had always supported keeping the Community Centre open and had no power over it. The Parish Council lobbied hard over several years, they had provided finance towards the running of the centre, however, the bottom line was that CISWO owned the building and Durham County Council were the functional landlord.

Resolved

That the matters be noted and actioned where required.

13. Date of next meeting

The next meeting would be held on Wednesday 18 May 2022.