

Bearpark Parish Council

At a meeting of **Bearpark Parish Council** held on **Wednesday 16 February 2022** at **7.00 p.m.**

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

Councillors N Anderson, I Cummings, C Gallacher, R Kemp and J Thompson.

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor O Edwards, J Peart.

County Councillor Dan Nicholls had also submitted his apologies.

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 19 January 2022 were agreed as a correct record.

Matters arising

Tree guards had been removed.

4. Police Report

Councillor M Wilson informed the Council that there had been low levels of crime in the area and nothing specific to Bearpark. The PACT meetings were soon to be held in person once again.

5. Representations from the Public

The Clerk informed the Council that he had received an email from residents concerned about the amount of litter in the area. They were undertaking their own litter picks but asked if the Parish Council had any plans to commence regular picks.

6. County Council Report

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

- The current seven day infection was below average. Cases in Deerness and Bearpark fell by 50% over the last week;

- Foster carers achievement awards were soon to be held and the Council were looking for nominations should anyone be aware of any foster parents who they felt ought to be recognised;
- The garden waste scheme was up and running again. First collection would take place on Tuesday 29 March followed by fortnightly collections;
- The City of Culture 2025 memorable moments campaign had commenced which demonstrated how the Council were reconnecting with local areas following the coronavirus pandemic – shared highlights on County Durham 2025 website; and
- An exhibition was to be held on Bishop Auckland Town Hall – 25 February to 24 April celebrating women from all walks of life.

In response to a question from Cllr R Kemp, Councillor M Wilson informed her that the white lines had been reported.

7. Report of the Clerk

Premises. On and off the premises? Café? Lakes. Take away. Clarification.

8. Planning Applications

DM/22/00116/FPA – The Old School House, Colliery Road, Bearpark

Resolved

The Parish Council discussed the application at length and were of the opinion that they had no objection to the proposal which helped towards addressing the shortfall in visitor accommodation within the County, but more specifically the local area.

Concerns were expressed regarding the parking arrangements, which showed parking for six vehicles down the side of the property which was felt acceptable, providing the area was utilised as such. The Old School House was next to Bearpark Primary School just off a slight bend and the area could be quite hazardous at school pick up and drop off times, which the school worked very hard to try and alleviate.

The Parish Council did not wish to see the problem exacerbated with vehicle displacement from the Bed and Breakfast onto Colliery Road.

The parish council also expressed concern that the Old School House appeared to have been operating as a bed and breakfast since July 2021, well before the change of use application was submitted in September 2021 and the site notice dated January 2022.

9. Request for Financial Assistance

The Council considered a request for financial assistance to establish a new community football club in Bearpark. The Clerk informed the Council that a representative of the group was in attendance at the meeting to address the Parish Council following the comments made at the previous meeting.

Mr Hall addressed the Parish Council as follows:

He had lived in the village for 20 years and wanted to give something back to the village. The idea had been floated back in October 2021. Since then helpful discussions had taken place with Cllr M Wilson and the Parish Clerk. Positive discussions had also taken place Langley Park and Bearpark Cricket Club about using the recreation ground, providing that the cricket area was not used or damaged in any way. The pitch fees would cost £550 for the season. The football club very much wanted to be a Community Football Club and wished to get involved within the local community, such as litter picks, community resilience etc. The organisers were very committed. They hoped to support the club. The football team was growing, as were the football kits. Funding would be used towards 10-12 weeks training at the Bobby Robson Centre. The coaches had their FA badges. The Primary School were happy for them to go to the school and undertake some training sessions with the children. The aim was to establish the first team (aged 16+) and then hopefully grow to get younger teams involved. The concept was all about giving back to the village.

Councillor I Cummings referred to the previous meeting and explained that he was very much in favour but wanted the assurance that any worries or concerns in terms of what happened if the enterprise didn't work or fell away. He commented that it was good to see that the group were already fundraising and was encouraging to hear the more long-term aspirations of younger teams etc.

Resolved

The Parish Council were unanimous in terms of the good passionate presentation given and were encouraged about the keenness and enthusiasm shown. It had been well thought out and were very happy to support it. The parish council wished to ensure that a facility to claw back funds was attached to the offer of a donation and agreed to approve a donation of £1200.

10. Queens Jubilee

Councillor M Wilson had brought the item onto the agenda and was seeking interest as to whether the parish council wished to organise any events around the Queens Jubilee and events. Various events such as a street or garden party, church event, jubilee beacon were discussed. Councillor M Wilson was also talking to church and chapel.

Some of the ideas discussed were as follows:

- group on Saturday night at the Workingmens Club;
- An offer to help out the aged miners association with bunting etc;
- Chapel and Church – Tea, coffee cakes, brass band in church. Doesn't get younger people involved;
- Activities involving the school field or recreation ground were not feasible.
- The idea of a beacon was discussed with hot dogs, drinks etc. and an afternoon tea at Beurpaire.

Resolved

It was agreed to bring the item forward to the meeting in March. Councillor I Cummings would look further into the Beacon idea as initial costs from a fabricator stood at around £5000 which was felt to be too expensive.

11. Report of the Clerk

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

- Community help / community resilience which was discussed at the last meeting. This was scheduled to be discussed by the local council's forum and an update be provided to a future meeting.

Resolved

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

13. Village Matters

There were no village matters raised.

14. Date of next meeting

The next meeting would be held a week later than usual on Wednesday 23 March 2022.