

Meeting	Clapham Parish Council 15 th November 2022 immediately after Playing Field Trust Meeting.
Parish Council Members:	Cllr. Phillipa Simms, Chair (PS) Cllr. Sarah Walker, Vice Chair (SW) Cllr. Eric Cooper (EC) Cllr. Jacky Fraser (JF) Cllr. Ian Gaskin (IG) Cllr. Paula Hurley (PH) (late arrival) Cllr. Dora Ornithari (DO) Cllr. Cicely Palmer (CP) Cllr. Alan Prudham (AP) Cllr. Nigel Sparrow (NS) Cllr. John Keech (JK) Cllr. Charlie Tomkins (CT) (late arrival)
Borough Council Member:	Cllr. Jane Walker (JW)
Apologies Received:	Cllr. Adrian Langley (AL) Cllr. John Reid (JR)
Clerk to the Council:	Rosemary Plum (RP)

MEETING MINUTES

1) Apologies for Absence

- a) Apologies were received as noted above.
- b) PS thanked former Cllr. Ali Dove who resigned from the Council due to her employment workload.
- c) PS advised the options of advertising the vacancy for a Councillor or the co-option could be considered. RP to seek confirmation of suitable actions in view of Elections in 2023.

RP

2) Declarations of Interest

- a) JF & EC declared they are allotment tenants.
- b) SW declared she is no longer working with EWR.

3) Open Forum

- a) ID Cards for Councillors
 - The option of issuing all Councillors with ID cards was deferred to after the Council Elections in May 2023.
- b) Other Comments:
 - Comments re the 'wonderful effect' of the crocheted poppy display in Oakley. PS to suggest something similar for Clapham to our WI and School for Seniors.
 - Footpaths in Cody Road starting to look really nice. Council have appear to have made good an area that doesn't belong to them. Need to monitor.
 - Gulleys outside Henmans were completely blocked this afternoon. They were cleaned at the weekend so Borough needs to look into the cause of the problem. RP to report to Borough.

PS

RP

4) Minutes of Previous Meeting

Proposed: Cllr. Cicely Palmer
Seconded: Cllr. John Keech JK

5) Matters Arising from the Minutes *(for information only)*

None reported.

6) Clerk's Report

The Clerk reported as follows:

- Extremely busy month with lots going on in daily admin plus support for both the Environment Committee and Events Group. It is great to see so much moving forward.
- Remembrance Sunday caused issues with the police withdrawing their support 10 days before the event. Borough Council did eventually agree to support for closing the road and the Community Policing team relented and sent 2 officers on the day to police the road closures. This decision was made at 10am on the Sunday itself.
- Very busy with burials this month.
- Allotments database is now complete and in service with invoices and new tenancy agreements going out.
- HSBC Bank has continued to cause headaches and additional management issues with cleaner and caretaker not being paid for 3 months due to cheques being returned and the standing order for Methodist Church room hire cancelled without notification or explanation. RP and PS met with Bank and new mandates have been signed and returned to the bank. These must now be authorized by the HSBC Legal Team.
- A lot of time being spent phoning Bedford Borough to get action on the many highways issues reported and not actioned despite months of chasing.
- RP and JW meeting with Rickie Dawkes from the Highways Department on 17/11/22.
- RP has received a list of organisations, activities and contact details of those in attendance at the Borough Council marketplace event in September.
- Parish Council office has been given a complete makeover and deep clean and is now back in use as a fit for purpose office with a meeting area for up to 4 people.

7) East-West Raila) Update on latest developments

- EWR Chief Executive did walked the proposed route and heard concerns from local stakeholders. Questions were answered at the end of the walk. Clapham representatives were able to point out key features and issues should the project go ahead, including impact to the village and environmental damage with woodland and trees a very hot topic at the moment and a reminder of flooding issues.
- Richard Fuller MP hopes for cancellation due to national lack of funding.
- Need to keep conversations open.

8) Police Mattersa) Crime Figures

- Monthly data was circulated.
- We're not getting any information on outcomes of crimes. Would be reassuring to know if anyone has been caught or prosecuted. RP will try to get more information.

RP

- Resident saw someone breaking into allotment sheds. Called 191 and got recorded message advising of 3hrs wait time.
- Reminder of Have Your Say online survey to Councillors.
- PCC & Ward/Council Cluster Meetings cancelled for 2023 due to very low turnouts from ward/parish/town Councillors.

9) Borough Council Report

a) Update from Cllr Jane Walker

- Not a lot happening at Borough. Preparing budgets for next year. 2% cap may be lifted on 17th November which could make a big difference.
- Voter ID for next elections. People need to check online for what they will need.
- Borough taking on graduates on a management training scheme from autumn 2023 for 2 years.
- Notification this morning from Right Move that a piece of Borough land in Fetlock Close has been put up for auction. Borough Solicitor confirmed it's Crown Land and not Borough and developer owns the roads although they are adopted highways. Auction will take place on 5th December with guide price £5k. Residents are upset that it may not be maintained when sold or may be built on. Planners have said it's very unlikely to get planning permission. Can it be registered as a public interest area?

10) Environment Committee

- a) Review of Environment Committee meeting 8th November.
- b) Proposal received from the Borough for Green Canopy scheme from Browns Wood to Burial ground. The Environment Committee has unanimously agreed to meeting with the Borough for further discussions.
Proposed: Cllr. Phillipa Sims
Seconded: Cllr. John Keech
- c) The Clerk continues to react to numerous Highways issues. Road signs in Green Lane have been removed. Other issues will be discussed by RP and JW at meeting with Highways representatives.
- d) Contractors are undertaking tree clearance work in Riverside Gardens on 30th November/ 1st December.
- e) Consider tabling a question to Mayor asking what steps have the Borough taken with regard to the severe flooding forecast from Met Office in January. Our flood group needs to be made aware and we will work with the Borough.
- f) Call to all councillors to consider maintenance requirements in their areas for inclusion in precept discussion.

11) Maintenance Report

- a) Report of work completed this month was reviewed.

12) Planning Committee

- a) Applications Decided were noted.
- b) Current Applications were discussed where required.

13) Publicity Report

a) Update from Events Meeting 10/11/22

- PS summarized meeting.
- Christmas lights are being set up by a commercial provider

- There will be local group participation and a Safer Streets Team present at the xmas lights event.

b) Cost of Living Crisis

- It was agreed to include A5 flyer in Village News, add information to our Facebook page and the allotment notice board about the warm homes initiative supported by JK.

14) Allotments

a) Creation of Council Allotment sub committee

- Thanks were given to the four Councillors who joined the visit to the allotments. There were divided views amongst Councillors over the future of the allotments.
- Thanks given to EC for his work and research in preparation of discussions.
- We now have keys to the Trading Hut.
- Letter has gone out with rent invoices inviting plot holders to come to meeting on 5th December to set up a new Tenants Association. This is an opportunity for both sides to get together and decide how best to move forward in the future.
- Parish Council, as landlords, to set down guidelines as we are responsible for the collection and spending of money.
- Proposal to move forward with a Standing Allotment Sub Committee:
Proposed: Cllr. Phillipa Simms
Seconder: Cllr. Ian Gaskin
Abstentions: Cllrs. Eric Cooper & Jacky Fraser.
- IG, CT and EC volunteered as Allotment sub-committee members.

15) Cemetery & Burial Ground

a) Marking of reserved plots

- RP raised the issue of burial and ashes plots being reserved but remaining unmarked in the burial grounds. This causes confusion to grave diggers. She suggested the purchase of formal 'Reserved' marker stones to be placed on plots.
- Proposal to purchase an initial 10 stones at approx. £15 + VAT each.
Proposed: Cllr. Alan Prudham
Seconded: Cllr. Sarah Walker

16) Highways

a) Updates

- Corner Highbury Grove – drain needs cleaning
- Water standing near Fox & Hounds today
- Ditch next to Ford is blocked
- Roundabout near Sainsbury is working well, traffic situation improving but the traffic lights are causing delays. System still on a 6 month trial.

17) Finance

a) Payment of Accounts

Proposed: Cllr. Sarah Walker
Seconded: Cllr. John Keech

b) Mandate - Bank Accounts

- PS updated Committee on situation with HSBC. New mandate has now been signed and returned to bank for approval by their Legal Team.

c) Office furniture

- PS advised the office chair is broken and no longer serviceable. A suitable replacement in line with employer duty of care ranges in cost from £300 - £1,300.
- PS advised that Pavenham Parish Council is keen to share resources with Clapham Parish Council. This will be discussed further and formalised in due course
- Proposal is to allocate sum of £350 + VAT to the purchase of a new office chair and see what Pavenham Parish Council will contribute towards the expenditure.
Proposed: Cllr. Sarah Walker
Seconded: Cllr. Jacky Fraser

d) Key cabinet

- We have a need to purchase a suitable and secure key cabinet for the management and storage of all office buildings and garage keys.
- Proposal to allocate the sum of £90+VAT to the purchase of a suitable cabinet.
Proposed: Cllr. Phillipa Simms
Seconded: Cllr. Alan Prudham

e) Electrician

- RP asked for contact names for a qualified electrician to carry out electrical maintenance in the Parish Council office. RP to contact nominations in due course.

f) Rural Grants

- Suggestions were requested for the possible application for a Rural Grant to benefit the village with further improvements. Suggestions included:
 - A slope/ramp and hand rail for the War Memorial
 - Creation of a proper gateway for the village entrance to include planting pots and bulbs/plants
- Members were asked to send their Ideas to RP who will pursue the opportunity for funding.

RP

18) Correspondence

- A correspondence list was distributed to all members prior to the meeting.

19) Date of Next Meeting

Parish Council Meeting: Tuesday 20th December 2022 at 7.00pm in the Methodist Church Hall

Precept meeting: Tuesday, 10th January 2023 at 7.00pm in the Committee Room, Clapham Village Hall.

The meeting closed 9:35pm