

17.05.22.

Minutes of the Meeting of **CLAPHAM PARISH COUNCIL** held on **Tuesday 17th May 2022** in the Methodist Hall

PRESENT: Parish Councillors, Mrs. Simms, (Chair), Mr. Cooper, Mrs. Fraser (part), Mr. Gaskin, Mrs. Hurley, Mr. Keech, Mr. Langley, Mr. Sparrow, Ms. Walker, Borough Councillor Walker the Clerk, Mrs. Paice and 2 members of the public

1. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN:

Proposed by Cllr. Sparrow, seconded by Cllr. Langley that Cllr. Simms be elected as Chairman
Agreed

Cllr. Simms signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office

2. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN:

Proposed by Cllr. Sparrow, seconded by Cllr. Gaskin that Cllr. S. Walker be elected as Vice-Chairman
Agreed

Cllr. S. Walker signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office

3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:- Ms. Dove, Ms. Ornithari, Mrs. Palmer, Mr. Reid,

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:- Cllr. Walker for item 9 as involved with a project linked to East West Rail. Chair for item 16c) as a member of one of the families donating. Cllrs. Cooper, Fraser & Hurley for item 17 as allotment tenants. Cllr. Sparrow for item 20c) as a resident of Green Lane. Cllr. Fraser for item 21a) as a relative of a payee

5. OPEN FORUM:-

Resident was concerned about cycling on the footway, which was illegal and dangerous to pedestrians. She suggested no cycling signs on footways and asking Ursula Taylor School to remind students that it was illegal. Councillors noted that signs were ineffective and not usually put up for activities that were illegal. Chair noted that it would be for the police to enforce and go into schools. She had asked for another Day of Action in Clapham and Council would raise then. Information from the CCTV camera in the High Street was passed to the police and would record any incidents in that part of the village. Cllr. Sparrow noted that e-scooters were also a problem and he had raised with the police at the last police priorities meeting. Resident asked why High Street garages were not being used, if speed cameras were working and whether Riverside Gardens should be closed earlier to prevent vandalism. Chair noted that garages were empty as Council intended to demolish them and replace them with more parking bays and confirmed that cameras were being monitored and fines issued. Cllr. Langley noted that vandals climbed over the railings once Riverside was closed so shutting the gate earlier would not help.

Resident was also concerned about a residents selling plants outside his house and blocking the footway. Cllr. Walker had raised concerns about safety and access with the resident who advised that mobility scooters could pass and that Bedford BC had told him that no special permission was required. Cllr. Cooper noted that it was an offence under the Highways Act to obstruct the footway and Cllr. Walker to pursue with resident.

Resident who had an option on the land adjacent to 35 Oakley Road noted that the PIP stage 1 application had been granted allocating the land for development but the PIP stage 2 application had not been determined in time by Bedford BC so an appeal had been submitted. She asked why Council had objected to the application and Chair responded that the site was not allocated in the Neighbourhood Plan so the additional housing was not needed and Council was supporting neighbours who were against the proposals. Borough Cllr. Walker added that residents had also complained to her as they considered 6 houses was too many and were concerned about the number of additional vehicles using the road. Resident advised that she wanted to work with Council and Chair suggested she provide more information to Council for discussion at the June meeting. Resident noted that comments on the appeal had to be submitted by 27.05.22.

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6. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS:-

The minutes of the meeting held on 19th April 2022, which had been circulated, were approved by those present and signed by the Chair.

7. CLERK'S REPORT:

Maintenance - damaged Bents Close name plate and Anglian Water sign had been reported to Bedford BC and Anglian Water respectively. Potholes in Green Lane had been reported to the Borough officer organising the drainage works and Clerk and Borough Cllr. Walker were pursuing. Green Lane water leak had been reported to Anglian Water and Bedford BC. Highway weed spraying began 25.04.22.

Parking – vehicles constantly parked in the restricted area outside the Post Office had been reported to Parking Services

Entrance sign – Cllr. Keech had repaired the entrance sign and Bedford BC had collected to fix back onto the posts. Council thanked Cllr. Keech

Grass cutting - Clerk had pursued the poor standard of grass cutting with Bedford BC and asked them to carry out an extra cut at the end of the season to compensate. Bedford BC had apologised and advised that a new team was cutting the grass and making mistakes. Team had been back and cut the missed areas and awaiting a decision on an extra cut

Village Hall railings – volunteers had begun painting railings and Council thanked them

Peppercorn Park Bus shelter – still awaiting information from Bedford BC

Cemetery – awaiting a date for repairs to the wall

Bridleways 10 & 33 at Browns Wood – bridleways would be closed 06.06.22. - 01.07.22. for Anglian Water works. Details were on the website and notice boards

Tulip bulbs – Clerk had applied for free bulbs from Bedford BC to be planted in Riverside Gardens.

8. MATTERS ARISING:- none

9. EAST WEST RAIL (EWR):-

a) BFARE update

BFARE had advised that they would be mustering at 7.00pm at the public event 18.05.22; a second EWR meeting would be held 25.05.22. 2pm - 8pm at Kings House Conference Centre; it had been agreed that the 20.04.22. meeting with EWR should be recorded and the recording made available to the public; Mr. Fuller MP had a meeting with the new CEO, Ms. West 04.05.22; no response had yet been received to the letter to Ms Morton, Minister for Transport and Group would be meeting Ms. West 3pm - 4pm 31.05.22.

b) EWR Representatives' meeting 20.04.22.

Cllr. Walker reported that around 20 representatives attended and the meeting was more productive and constructive than the previous meeting. EWR confirmed the BFARE alignment was 'being looked at' but there were no further details. Attendees agreed that meetings should be recorded. Future topics for discussion included carbon and its relation to the Development Control Order (to be discussed next meeting), the Business case (meeting 4) and environmental impact assessments. Costs would not be given a deep dive session – EWR would publish these with the consultation report and if there were any 'material' cost changes they would provide the back-check on those. EWR was willing to hold in person meetings and would pursue options to recruit an independent facilitator. Cllr. Walker supported this. The agenda, slides, recording and transcript from the meeting were available on the community hub –

<https://communityhub.eastwestrail.co.uk/lrg-bedfordshire>

One to one meetings were being held with land and property owners followed by drop-in sessions for the public. North Bedfordshire event was 18.05.22. and would not be an information event not a consultation.

c) EWR public meeting 18.05.22.

A public drop in was being held at Wyboston Lakes on 18.05.22. from 2.00pm – 8.00pm. A free bus service was available and routes and times were on notice boards and the website. Cllr. Cooper to attend.

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10. POLICE MATTERS:-

Police were reviewing their community engagement model, which would change the way priorities were set so they had decided to extend the current priority of crime and anti-social use associated with vehicles for the period May to July.

There were 15 crimes reported in April, 6 assaults 4 with injury, 2 without, 3 public fear offences, 2 sexual offences, 2 harassments, 1 threat to kill and 1 criminal damage.

Cllr. Sparrow noted that he had tried to call 101 to report the damage in Riverside Gardens but after waiting over 15 minutes had given up. Other residents were experiencing similar delays when trying to report crimes and were also giving up. Cllr. Hurley commented that messenger on the North Bedfordshire Community Policing Facebook page was an effective way to report but Council acknowledged that not everyone had online access. Chair had requested another Day of Action in Clapham and would raise the issue with the police.

Cllr. Hurley noted that the youths responsible for smashing glass in the Playing Field had been identified.

11. BOROUGH COUNCIL REPORT:-

Borough Cllr. Walker reported that the £150 Council Tax rebate was being paid automatically to households who paid by direct debit. Others would need an access code and to complete a form to claim the money. A helpline was available to assist.

A solar panel group buying scheme had been set up by the Borough Council, Central Bedfordshire and Luton Councils. Residents needed to register by 13.06.22. but there was no obligation to pursue.

Lincroft School had been inspected by OFSTED in February and had been judged to require improvement. The school had asked for assistance from Bedford BC as the buildings were inadequate, behaviour was poor and bullying was a problem. CMAT, the Trust now running the school, had committed monies for improvement and Cllr. Walker had asked the Borough School Improvement Team to become involved.

12. ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE:-

Committee discussed railings, a water supply and new picnic benches for Riverside Gardens – see item 16 and the new Allotment Committee – see item 17 and the Green Lane water leak – see item 20c). Committee discussed maintenance of the area of Riverside on the right hand side where the trees had been removed and which was now full of weeds. It was disheartening for volunteers to have to continually weed the same area and a permanent solution was needed. Cllr. Gaskin volunteered to produce a plan for discussion with volunteers and at the June Environment meeting. Committee noted that more volunteers were needed. Volunteers would be planting red, white & blue bedding plants in Riverside using the £100 donation from a resident before the Jubilee.

Committee was very concerned about the poor standard of grass cutting throughout the village and Clerk had pursued with Bedford BC. Clerk would also ask Bedford BC to clear the alleyway between The Close and The Slade and investigate the removal of grass and laying of hardstanding behind the bus stop in Milton Road.

Bedford BC had advised that Highbury Grove, Mount Pleasant Road, George Street and Milton Road roundabout had been identified as potential locations to be considered for a grant application for trees. Clerk had responded that Council was previously refused permission to put a living Christmas tree on the roundabout because of the Anglian Water pipes that run underneath and that the area in front of Shire Road where there are no trees would be preferable. Committee was awaiting a plan for a tree planting scheme adjacent to Burial Ground from Bedford BC.

Cllr. Sparrow noted that residents had commented on how much they appreciated the work of the volunteers and he thanked Cllrs. Cooper, Gaskin, Keech and Reid for their help. Council thanked the Committee members for their efforts in Riverside.

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13. PLANNING COMMITTEE:-

Applications Decided:

22/00624/FUL - erection of detached garage with hobby room over following demolition of existing garage at 201 High Street. Refused 03.05.22. on the grounds that the height, scale and siting of the proposed development, would be out of keeping with the character and context of the area and would have an adverse effect on neighbours at no 203 High Street and no 100 Folly Park.

22/00620/FUL - single storey rear extension following demolition of existing conservatory at 3 Dennis Close. Granted 11.05.22.

22/00652/FUL - Single storey side/front extension at 172 Highbury Grove. Granted 12.05.22.

22/00616/TPO – various tree works at Woodland Manor. Granted 17.05.22.

Clerk noted that an appeal had been lodged against non-determination of 21/02080/FULTDC - Technical Details Consent following grant of Permission in Principle (LPA Ref 19/00838/PIP) for six unit residential development, access, landscaping and other associated works at land adjacent to 35 Oakley Road

Applications Received:

a) **22/00894/FUL** - new pitched roof to existing flat roof garage at Leyside Green Lane. No objections

b) **22/00888/FUL** - conversion of garage to annexe at Fairlawn 130A Milton Road. No objections

c) **22/00971/FUL** - erection of replacement detached dwelling with detached garage to front at site of 132A Milton Road. No objections

d) **22/01047/FUL** - single storey side and rear extension following demolition of existing garage at 14 Queens Crescent. No objections

14. NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN (NDP):- referendum

Referendum would be held on 09.06.22. in the Village Hall and Bedford BC had issued polling cards.

Referendum notices and an explanation of the purpose of the referendum had been posted on the website and Facebook.

15. PUBLICITY REPORT:-

Jubilee Events

Trumpeter due to play at the event was no longer available but Clerk had identified an alternative and Oakley PC would pay the £20 fee. Cllr. Cooper had advised that guitarist and his band was available to play from 8.45pm – 9.30pm at the Beacon event at a cost of £320 but a generator would be needed

Proposed by Chair, seconded by Cllr. Gaskin that quotation for £320 be accepted

Agreed

Posters and banners had been put up around the village and fliers about the art competition circulated via the School and Pre-School. Gates would be open from 10.00am on 05.06.22. and help was needed to set up and clear away the fete. St. John's Ambulance had confirmed that they would not be able to cover the Jubilee event but a qualified first aider from the Scouts and two paramedics would attend. The Village Hall music licence would not cover a TV to show live events in London. Cllr. Langley suggested these could be streamed via iPlayer by running an Ethernet cable from the BT hub in the office to the stage. The maximum feasible length was 100m. Cllr. Cooper confirmed that the fee for streaming live events had been waived so a licence would not be needed.

Resident had requested a craft stall and asked about pitch fees. Munch Munch Bus had been asked for a donation so

Proposed by Chair, seconded by Cllr. Walker that stall holders be asked for a donation

Agreed

Clerk had requested copies of insurance documents from participants and prepared risk assessments for the events.

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16. RIVERSIDE GARDENS: -

a) railings for Jubilee Tree

Volunteers had planting bedding around the Jubilee tree on 14.05.22. but unfortunately it had been snapped off by vandals later that day. Cllr. Keech had tried to tape it back together and a resident had cleared bottles and debris left on the site. Council thanked them. Chair had reported to police and Clerk had asked PCSO & PC to pursue. Volunteers were understandably upset and Cllr. Keech suggested installing CCTV cameras on site.

Clerk had received quotations for £3995.00 + VAT for 1m black, galvanised and powder coated railings in a circle to match those at the front and including a gate and £1,800.00 +VAT for 900mm black bow top railings to make a 2.5m square including a hand gate. Company noted that a square would be cheaper as it as a standard size whereas circular railings would be bespoke. Cllr. Keech/volunteers had reduced the size of the bed around the tree and Clerk had requested pictures of square railings and a quotation for a smaller square. Awaiting receipt. Another contractor made a site visit 12.05.22. and awaiting a quotation.

b) water supply

Volunteers had suggested installing a water supply and Clerk had made an application as this was the only way to obtain a quotation. Anglian Water had surveyed the site and quoted £2,473.00 + VAT for a connection, which would need to be installed along the line they specified. Council would need to pay by bacs in the first instance and then lay pipes. A stop valve and double check valve must be installed in an accessible chamber as close as possible to the highway boundary and Council would be required to fit a raised service box, a service valve at the inlet, which must have an air gap to prevent backflow, pipework must be securely attached to a fixed post or structure, must be adequately boxed in for protection and be insulated. Anglian Water would then inspect the pipe work and plumbing and fittings Environment Committee was concerned about the cost of a new supply and had discussed a barrel on wheels and approaching the car wash for assistance.

Cllr. Walker noted that as the landowner Council could take water from the river and Cllrs. Langley & Gaskin suggested a pump in a locked box for protection.

c) picnic tables

Two families had offered to donate monies to purchase disabled access Marmax picnic benches for the lower level. Both families would organise their own memorial plaque and Proposed by Cllr. Walker, seconded by Cllr. Keech that Clerk be authorised to order two picnic tables at a cost of £1,254.00 + VAT

Agreed

17. ALLOTMENTS:-

new Management Committee

Five tenants had volunteered to form a new Committee and were arranging their first meeting. They hoped to report back to the June Council. Council thanked Cllr. Hurley for her work on the allotments.

18. APPOINTMENT OF NEW CLERK:-

Interview had been arranged for 20.05.22.

Council discussed trying to recruit younger councillors and volunteers and agreed to put articles in the Village News prior to the 2023 election.

19. NEW VILLAGE HALL COMMITTEE:-

Councillors and users of the Hall had met 11.05.22. to discuss a new building Cllr. Simms volunteered to chair and Cllr. Palmer to act as Treasurer. Committee had asked Clapham Sports to provide a secretary and Cllr. Langley had volunteered. Committee agreed that separate fund raising and planning experts would also be helpful. Committee considered the plans that were drawn up previously but users were concerned that there were insufficient toilets and safeguarding issues if more than one group was using the complex.

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The original plan was to demolish the existing building and build a new one behind it on the Playing Field and use the site of the current premises for additional parking. However, the Charity Commission would require new land to be added to the Playing Field to compensate for the loss. Committee agreed that it would be more expensive to try and retrofit the existing building than to demolish and rebuild and retrofitting would not resolve the lack of parking. Village Hall representative suggested that the building should be managed centrally by a paid administrator and there should be one meter only for each utility. Committee discussed funding. CIL money would be available and Council had approached EWR about a legacy fund. Grants might be available from Bedford BC Rural Grants Fund, National Lottery and the Harpur Trust. The current Village Hall lease expired in 2030 and currently they were not looking to renew. The 500 new homes at Milton Hill would also be built by then so Committee agreed to work to this date. Next meeting would be held on 13.07.22. Chair advised that she had approached Towers for professional advice and Cllr. Langley noted that the FA might provide grants as Clapham Sports were involved in the project.

19. HIGHWAYS:-

a) Bedford BC Social Value Project Bids

Clerk had submitted bids for clearing Cody Road garages, repairing the fence along footpath 14 and repairing the Millennium Park path edging and Bedford BC had asked which bid was Council's preferred option

Council agreed that clearing the Cody Road garages was the preferred option.

b) temporary road closures for Clapham Road roundabout resurfacing

Temporary road closures would be in force between 16.05.22. and 22.06.22. for resurfacing around Clapham Road and Manton Lane roundabouts. Details on the website www.clapham-pc.gov.uk

c) Green Lane water leak

Cllr. Sparrow was very concerned that drainage works had been completed by Bedford BC but water was again leaking outside Darrocott and by the lower traffic calming and the road was breaking up. Anglian Water had inspected the water leak by Darrocott and advised that the water was tested and was not chlorinated so was not a leak from their pipes. They were working on the leak by the traffic calming. There was also now a leak further up the road outside Park Farm. Bedford BC had not responded to reports of the leak and Clerk and Borough Cllr. Walker had pursued. Borough Cllr. Walker advised that Bedford BC did not believe that the leak was not from Anglian Water pipes as it was over their main and would be digging four trial holes to test whether or not it was Anglian Water or a Borough issue.

21. FINANCE:-

a) accounts to pay

Proposed by Chair, seconded by Cllr. Gaskin that the May accounts listed below be paid.

Agreed

Payee	Work Carried Out	Amount Paid	Inc. VAT
J. Burnage	Riverside Security & Allotment		
	Caretaker May	121.92	
BATPC	Affiliation fee 2022/23	893.00	
Bedford BC	CCTV monitoring 2022/23	600.00	100.00
Fraser	Jet washing Village Hall railings	250.00	
Riches	Internal audit	135.00	
Methodist Church	Hire of hall 17.05.22. & 24.05.22.	130.00	
A. E. Paice	Bouncy castle deposit	25.00	
A. E. Paice	Salary May	1,838.01	
	TOTAL	3,992.93	100.00

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Accounts already paid

HMRC	VAT payment	180.59	
Dean Security	CCTV repairs	270.00	45.00
Bedford BC	Quarterly Burial Ground rent	770.75	
SBSUK	Quarterly photocopier charge	83.42	13.90
HSBC	Account maintenance charge	8.36	
Nest	Employer & employee pension contributions May	130.76	
	TOTAL	5,436.81	158.90

Statement of Account at 30.04.22.

Current Account £6,000.00 Business Reserve £143,257.34 Hampshire Bank £10,229.87

Balance Brought Forward at 31.03.22.	£124,413.60
Add Income	£ 36,811.88
	£ 35,300.00 precept - first half
	£ 1,500.00 garage rent
	£ 6.88 allotment rent
	£ 5.00 rent
Less Expenditure	£ 9,291.88
Balance at 30.04.22.	£151,933.60

Neighbourhood Plan monies held by Parish Council

Statement of Account at 30.04.22.

Balance at 31.03.22.	£2,792.54
Income	£ NIL
Expenditure	£ NIL
Balance at 30.04.22.	£2,792.54

b) review of Internal Audit procedures

Clerk had circulated draft Audit Plan for 2022/23. Terms of Reference were unchanged.

Proposed by Cllr. Fraser, seconded by Cllr. Walker that it be adopted.

Agreed

c) review of Risk Assessment

Clerk had circulated draft policy which was unchanged apart from deletion of remote meetings now Covid 19 restrictions had been lifted.

Proposed by Cllr. Langley, seconded by Cllr. Gaskin that policy be adopted

Agreed

d) internal audit report

Internal audit had been completed and auditor had recommended supporting documents are filed in date order and reconciled to electronic records each period and financial statements. Clerk noted that a bank reconciliation was produced each month on the bank statements reconciled to payment and receipt spreadsheets and auditor had asked for these to be printed out each month. Auditor had signed the audit return. Council thanked Clerk.

e) Annual Governance Review

Council considered the Annual Governance Statement and proposed by Cllr. Langley, seconded by Cllr. Gaskin that Annual Governance Statement be approved.

Agreed

Clerk and Chair signed section 1 of the audit return.

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f) 2021/22 Accounts

Clerk had circulated end of year accounts.

Proposed by Cllr. Gaskin, seconded by Cllr. Langley that accounts be approved

Agreed

Clerk & Chair signed bank reconciliation (including asset register) & receipts & payments documents.

Clerk had signed section 2 of the audit return. Chair signed section 2 of the audit return.

g) review of direct debits and Zoom subscription

Council reviewed payments for the burial ground rent, telephone, Nest pension, photocopying and allotment water

Proposed by Cllr. Langley, seconded by Cllr. Walker that Council continue to make these direct debit payments

Agreed

Oakley PC had agreed not to continue with the joint Zoom subscription.

Proposed by Cllr. Langley, seconded by Chair that Council no longer needed a Zoom subscription

Agreed

h) Clerk's expenses

Proposed by Cllr. Fraser, seconded by Cllr. Langley that expenses of £45.25 be paid for the period January - May 2022.

Agreed

22. CORRESPONDENCE:- none

23. DATE OF NEXT MEETING:- Tuesday 21st June 2022

Signed.....

Dated.....