

Meeting: Clapham Parish Council
18th April 2023 at 7.35pm

Council Members in attendance: 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. John Keech (JK)
Cllr. Dora Ornithari (late arrival)
Cllr. Nigel Sparrow (NS)

Borough Council Member: Cllr. Jane Walker (JW)

Clerk to the Council: Rosemary Plum (RP)

Public Attendance: Debra Aiken (DA), Good Neighbour Scheme, Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charities (BRCC)
1 x Clapham Resident

MINUTES OF MEETING

1. Apologies for Absence Apologies received from: • Cllr. Adrian Langley • Cllr. Cicely Palmer • Cllr. John Reid • Cllr. Charlie Tomkins Cllr Allan Prudham was not in attendance.	
2. Declarations of Interest The following declarations were recorded: • Cllr Eric Cooper, Allotment plot holder and Member of Allotment Association and Parish Allotment Committees. • Cllr Jacky Fraser, Allotment plot holder.	
3. Open Forum a) Debra Aitken – Good Neighbour Scheme • Explanation from Debra about the scheme which is about support for residents, led by residents.	

- Doesn't involve personal care. Linked with social prescribers for taking people out to open spaces. - Group would need to raise funds to cover insurance and DBS checks will be done by BRCC for volunteers. - Currently talking to various groups in the Village to spread the word and has been advertised in the Village News. Already had interest through the magazine. - EC will discuss at next Allotments Association as there are already some volunteers within plot holders who help look after plots. - There will be one specific phone number for Clapham with a rota of volunteers holding the phone. - NS delighted to see BRCC operating in NE Bedfordshire as the area has been ignored for so long. b) Any other business - Should the Parish Council noticeboard by the shopping parade be updated and put to better use? RP will look into this.	RP
4. Minutes of Previous Meeting The minutes were agreed as a true reflection of the meeting and signed by the Chair. PROPOSED: Cllr John Keech SECONDED: Cllr Ian Gaskin	
5. Matters Arising from the Minutes (for information only)	
6. Clerk's Report (for information only) The following key activities were reported: - Election nominations present to Bedford Borough Council. - Clapham declared an uncontested Parish and we are free to advertise to co-opt. We should however follow a process to ensure we get candidates with 'what the parish needs'. Informal conversations can be had but we should hold a full council vote on the candidates to be co-opted. - If we are lucky enough to have more candidates for co-option than available seats, we need to hold a vote as an iterative process unless we get a majority on the number of seats to be filled. - Added new feature on website homepage tracking roadworks and traffic diversions. - Attendance at Environment and Allotment Committees as well as Borough Hall meeting on Milton Road development site.	

• Continue to report highways and maintenance issues and seeing better engagement with the Borough. • Ordering of signs and materials for maintenance work and getting quotes. • Need to concentrate on the annual accounts and will only be able to deal with urgent matters between now and the next Parish Council meeting.	
7. Police Matters a) <u>Crime Figures</u> - Drug offences listed for the first time. Sadly still lacking in any information on cases brought to court or charges being made. - Address lack of reporting with Police Commissioner and Richard Fuller. We still don't know what the detection rates are. - Request attendance by Police Officer at Parish meeting. - Delighted that police have attended allotments following recent break-ins and community police officer has been in touch today. - Police will regularly patrol the allotments and attend an Association meeting. - More education to be done with plot holders about photographing incidents in case police are unable to attend straight away.	EC
8. Borough Council Report a) <u>Update from Cllr Jane Walker</u> - Voter ID – keep pushing for 4th May elections. - Sunday 3pm – nationwide alert on mobile phones - Green Lane repairs – non-committal response from Highways. They are they are “looking at various options” for Green Lane, its junction with High St and The Baulk. - Desperately trying to contact the responsible officer at the Borough for the Village Green application. The person dealing with it has gone off sick as has the senior solicitor. The persons tasked with taking over has committed to ‘next 2 weeks’ for a consultation to come out. - JW will chase 2wks today. The officer has also committed to contacting the planners to tell them this application will be going through so if they get any planning requests, they will be aware of the situation.	

9. Environment Committee

a) Report from Environment Committee meeting 11/4/23

- I. NS announced that Riverside Gardens has received £100 donation from a resident in memory of her husband. This is to go towards bedding plants and shrubs. NS and JK will go out and get plants in May.
- II. The condition of Green Lane and The Baulk has become a nightmare. 5yrs ago Andrew Prigmore, Borough Highways discussed numerous issues including this and nothing has been done since.
- III. Environment Committee feels this has reached the point where the Parish Council should send a formal letter of complaint to the Borough setting out all the aspects. See minutes of Environment Cttee for all the points to cover in the letter.
- IV. NS spoke with Anglian Water today as a result of another water meter leak in Green Lane. Apparently AWA know what's going on with the burst mains issues in the village but wouldn't answer any questions because it's "too political".
- V. We want a formal meeting after the elections with the Borough and local Councillors to discuss what's happening with Highways and also AWA.
- VI. Work has started on new Solar Farm in Carriage Drive. Green Lane was never built to withstand weight of 40 ton vehicles. This is another issue to be highlighted to the Borough. We need a monitoring survey of commercial vehicles in particular going up the Lane and The Baulk.

PROPOSAL: Formal request to write to the Chief Executive of Bedford Borough Council, Laura Church about the condition of the roads in Clapham.

PROPOSED: Cllr Nigel Sparrow

SECONDED: Cllr John Keech

VOTE: Unanimously in favour

PS/RP

b) Riverside Gardens wall repair

- I. RP outline the current situation which was notified to her and PS on 25/3/23 regarding loose coping stones, damage to brick wall, necessary repairs and getting quotes.
- II. The damage is caused by weather so we can't claim on our insurance policy.
- III. RP has spoken at length with our maintenance person who will prepare a quote to undertake all the repair work including bricklaying unless we're able to secure the services of another bricklayer.

PROPOSAL: FOR MAINTENANCE PERSON TO GO AHEAD WITH EXTENSIVE REPAIRS TO RIVERSIDE GARDENS FRONT WALL AND RAILINGS. PROPOSED: Cllr John Keech SECONDED: Cllr Sarah Walker VOTE: Unanimously agreed	
10. Milton Road Development a) <u>Report from meeting at Borough Hall 22/3/23</u> I. In attendance: Andrew Prigmore, (AP) Highways Manager Bedford Borough, Kim Healy (KH) Team Leader Highways Development Control, Cllr Jane Walker, Borough Councillor, PS, EC, RP and Cllr. Pat Olney, Oakley Parish Council. II. A meeting report from KH has been circulated. III. Meeting was agreed in response to our objection to the development and to find out more about our concerns. IV. Quite informative, Borough took on board quite a few of our objections and argued against them. V. We've asked for examples of areas where a number of the proposed 'arrangements' can work. VI. Borough wants to make Clapham more 'villagey' and because we have the old A6 trunk road, they want to slow down traffic and stop people coming through the village. In certain areas, they want to narrow the road. VII. We didn't really feel they were listening and just wanted to put forward their counter arguments. VIII. The current proposed measures are an outline design subject to detailed plans. We need to ensure we can comment on final design. IX. Biggest disappointment is they know there's a hazard at Highfield Field if they don't create a footpath. They said they are happy to monitor the amount of usage after the building of the development is complete. X. We need to translate the report from KH into a revised response from our Parish Council. XI. We should be asked to be allowed to attend the final planning committee. Highfield Road, Schools issues, pressure on infrastructure all creating concerns. We need to ensure the detail is considered. XII. JW has requested a planning meeting with Greg Logan who says it is 'highly unusual'. She is awaiting response but will be advised when the application is going to planning meeting. XIII. EC to draft response to the minutes and response to planning application in May.	EC

XIV. Disappointed with what they're planning for Lovell Road and not making the improvements originally implied including not intending to raise footpath under the bridge. XV. Lincroft doesn't have capacity for additional secondary school provision. The Borough suggests looking at increasing capacity at Biddenham as well as looking at feasibility of increasing Lincroft.	
11. East West Rail a) <u>Update on latest developments</u> No updated. Waiting for decisions anticipated in May.	
12. Planning Committee a) <u>Applications Decided</u> None to report to 18/4.23 b) Current Applications Extension to front of 11 Queens Crescent, Clapham.	
13. Communication a) <u>Coronation Events</u> - Details in Village News and discussed last meeting. - Coronation will be shown on a big screen in Riverside Gardens and is expected to start at 11am. Bring a picnic. - Not a lot of interest from stakeholders in the Village. - Fetlock Close residents are interested to know what is happening in RG. - PR Banner going up in next few days. The event has been promoted on Facebook and COPS.	
14. Collaboration with other Parishes Deferred until after May elections	
15. Allotment Committee a) <u>Report from Allotment Committee meeting 12/4/23</u> - First Committee meeting with new Association Chair and Secretary went very well, very constructive. - Association and Committee agreed to a number of procedures. - Plot holders are signed up to and active with national allotment association.	

IV. Some concerns about security. Association have been asked to check on other allotments and come back to Parish Committee with proposals. If we need to escalate further, we will discuss further. V. Request from Association for consideration of toilet facilities. Asked Association to come up with proposals. Mile Road apparently funded by Borough Council, Lottery Grant. Consider Bedford Rural Community Charities for grant as a possible funding source. VI. Generally impressed at the amount of work the Association have already done and they understand the Parish Council hasn't got endless funds to spend in future. VII. EC attends Allotments Committee meetings as liaison between committees. VIII. Going to be having an inspection in coming weeks. Process still needs to be agreed with the Parish Council. Initial evidence gathering could be done by Association and "eviction" by the landlord (Parish Council). IX. Trading Hut is gathering pace and becoming successful. X. Association meeting minutes will be posted by RP on website. XI. Few rents still outstanding and a lot of new enquiries to take up new plots. XII. We can look at working with BRCC for disabled plots. RP will pass on contact details to Association Chair and Secretary.	RP
16. Burial Ground a) <u>Update</u> I. The area is now looking great in the spring and much more established. II. Stone marker at the entrance is looking very weathered. Spoke to stonemason a while ago but he didn't agree to coating the stone. Continue to monitor for a few months and then speak to stonemason again for further advice.	
17. Garages & Parking Spaces a) <u>Update</u> I. RP awaiting date from Bedford Borough for tarmac although invoice received.	
18. Highways	

a) <u>Updates</u> I. A number of jobs requested have been done. II. New business people at the former Wests Garage site being reminded about the no parking on the road. They don't deal with car transporters but they have been reminded of our village guidelines. III. Milton Road – work ongoing tonight following new wter leak. IV. Thanks to JR for following the roadworks and keeping us posted regularly. V. Need to pin down AWA and Borough for serious discussions about the mains situation in preparation for 500 houses being built in future. Need to start raising awareness now. VI. We need to formulate an official complaint from the Parish Council to AWA on behalf of village about the failing infrastructure. Check NDP for AWA involvement and any statements regarding new development infrastructure. VII. Borough have finally replaced rotten wooden bollards on the green at The Glebe (they don't match the others!) and finally repaired the kerb stones opposite number 99. VIII. Borough have removed a number of objects from the ditch near number 9 Milton Road. Someone has since thrown a chair leg in there. Ironically, the objects removed from the ditch were the old kerb stones taken from the part repaired by the Borough.	
19. Bus Shelter a) <u>Shelter outside Fox & Hounds – update</u> PROPOSAL TO REPLACE EXISTING BUS SHELTER WITH NEW ONE PROPOSED: Cllr Phillipa Simms SECONDED: Cllr Paula Hurley VOTE: Unanimously agreed	
20. Village Hall 21. a) <u>Management Proposal</u> I. PS/RP/PH attended meeting the April committee meeting of the Village and the committee is dissolving at the next committee meeting 2nd May 2023. II. Cllr Cicely Palmer has agreed to being temporary treasurer. Chair and Vice Chair positions can probably be filled. Urgently need to find a Secretary who will also be responsible for bookings. III. RP speaking with Bedfordshire Association of Town & Parish Councils (BATPC) and BRCC who will be happy to try and support and	

advise us wherever possible. Both Association have experience of the situation in which Clapham Village Hall finds itself. IV. Informal conversations will be circulated to other Parish Clerks as many Parishes find themselves in this situation. V. We could create a paid management post for Vilalge Hall (not trustee) as a split post funded by both Vilalge Hall and Parish Council. VI. Village Hall has healthy bank account but could achieve more as there are currently a number of limitations with regard to bookings. VII. We could take advice and support from BATPC and BRCC in transition period and build towards self-funding post and longer-term strategy of a new village hall. PROPOSAL: TO START LOOKING FOR A SUITABLE CANDIDATE IMMEDIATELY FOR AN INITIAL 6 MONTH PAID ROLE AS SECRETARY & BOOKINGS CLERK. PROPOSED: Cllr Jacky Fraser SECONDED: Cllr John Keech VOTE: Unanimously agreed.	
22. Finance a) <u>Payment of Accounts</u> The accounts as presented were approved. PROPOSED: Cllr Sarah Walker SCONDED: Cllr Ian Gaskin	
23. Correspondence I. Residents have complained about parking in the Village Hall car park. II. Vans parking overnight along the sides and back of houses. III. Residents complaining about 'strange activities' late at night in the new car showroom (former Renault). Driving and revving performance vehicles out of the building at high speed along the High Street.	
24. Date of Next Meeting Tuesday, 16th May 2023 in the Methodist Church Hall The Parish Council meeting will follow the Annual Parish Meeting and Playing Field Trust Meeting at approx. 7.45pm	

The meeting was closed by the Chair at 9.40pm

Signed as a true reflection of the meeting:

Signed	
Dated	<i>Chair</i>