

Meeting:	Clapham Parish Council 18 th July 2023 at 7.30pm
Council Members in attendance:	Cllr. Phillipa Simms, Chair (PS) Cllr. Sarah Walker (SW) Cllr. Ian Gaskin (IG) Cllr. John Keech (JK) Cllr. Adrian Langley (AL) Cllr. Allan Prudham (AP) Cllr. Nigel Sparrow (NS)
Apologies received:	Borough Cllr. Jane Walker Cllr. Tamsin Bromley-Rahike (TBR) Cllr Eric Cooper Cllr John Reid (JR) Cllr. Michael Walmsley (MW) Cllr. Charlie Tompkins (CT)
Non-attendance:	Cllr. Dora Ornithari Cllr. Jacky Fraser (JF)
Borough Council Members Present:	Cllr. Jon Abbott (arrived 7:10pm)
Clerk to the Council:	Rosemary Plum (RP)
Public Attendance	3 x Residents 1 x Resident arrive at 19:40hrs

MINUTES OF MEETING

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from:

- Borough Cllr. Jane Walker
- Cllr. Tamsin Bromley-Rahike (TBR)
- Cllr Eric Cooper
- Cllr John Reid (JR)
- Cllr. Michael Walmsley (MW)

2. Declarations of Interest

None to report.

3. Open Forum

a) Local Resident – flooding

- I. Follow up on email already sent to the Parish Council regarding recent flooding in Fetlock Close. Residents wanted an update on any progress with regard to her questions.

- II. Resident has been visited by a Bedford Borough safety engineer and showed evidence of the damage. Drainage sewers in the road were also inspected. The engineer promised to report back to the Borough on his findings.
 - III. On Saturday 24th Anglian water inspected a storm drain and found it was completely dry.
- b) Flooding around 35 Mountpleasant Road
- I. flooding caused by surface water. Insurers not prepared to cover cost and landlord isn't prepared to cover cost of damage to floor and carpets.
- c) General comments
- II. The Parish Council Flood Group Chair was unable to attend this evenings' meeting.
 - III. Residents were invited to join Clapham flood group.
 - IV. Following Clerks intervention, Borough has been emptying gullies. We need these to be cleaned properly and not partially.
 - V. Flood Group have a WhatsApp group for messaging. The Group is also present on Facebook and through the Clapham Action Group.
 - VI. There is a gulley cleaning programme across the Borough and we've been pushing for over a year for the right action at the right time for Clapham.
 - VII. Real pressure has to be put on the Borough as they are responsible for carrying out this gulley work and Cllr Abbot will be taking this on board to ensure it is pursued. **JA**
 - VIII. Residents are advised to make up sandbags when we're not in a flooding period.
 - IX. JA has spoken to Borough Officers regarding the Clapham flooding situation. The drainage system was never designed for the weather and g heavy downpours that now affect us. The water runs into the River or into Anglian Water Authority drains which aren't maintained as well as they could be. Huge investment is required to come to terms with the climate change we're now facing.
 - X. Gulley cleaning is meant to be a 3 year programme. In reality this hasn't happened regularly in the past. The Borough Portfolio Holder for Environmental services has been made aware of the situation in Clapham. **JA**
 - XI. SW has also been putting AWA under pressure. We have concerns about inability of structure being unable to deal with floods, general living and new buildings.
 - XII. Information will be going into the autumn and winter editions of the Village News with pull out information to keep for reference in an emergency. The back page of the magazine gives Councillor details for each area in the Parish. **PS**
- d) Additional Defibrillators

JK advised a person was taken ill at the Horse & Groom public house recently and an ambulance called. As a result, the owners of the Horse & Groom would like to know the criteria for having and maintaining a defibrillator.

RP

4. Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes were agreed as a true reflection of the meeting and signed by the Chair.

PROPOSED BY: Cllr Sarah Walker

SECONDED BY: Cllr Ian Gaskin

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

Nothing to report.

6. Clerk's Report (for information only)

The Clerk provided an update on the following areas of work:

- Good Neighbours Scheme
- Request from a resident for a rubbish bin in Fetlock Close opposite the playing green
- Insurance Policy renewal with Hiscox
- Lawns on Lanchester Close are privately owned and the Borough should not be cutting the grass here.
- Further confirmation of the Borough grass cutting contract

7. Police Matters

a) Crime Figures

- Report circulated to Councillors. Only 2 weeks' data available this month.

8. Borough Council Report

a) Update from Borough Councillors -Cllr Jon Abbott

- Wyboston by-election increases the number of Borough Councillors by 6 seats compared to the previous term of office.
- Only 1 minor change with a Labour/Conservative swap on the Scrutiny Committee.
- JA has been re-elected as Chair of the Borough Planning Committee.
- £2.3m deficit in Borough budget which was anticipated. Provisions were put in place to mitigate the overspend although no decisions have been announced yet on where it will be spent.
- Summer of SEND has begun
- Bedfringe 20-30th July
- Solar Together has been relaunched. This could be promoted by the Environment Committee.
- Milton Road development unlikely to come before the Planning Committee before the end of this year. JA has re-iterated the Parish Council concerns about the lack of footpaths for Highfield Road.
- £2 bus fare scheme extended to October.

NS

- Second round of local plan examination happening in September
- Fusion Contract up for renewal in January 2023 for Borough leisure centres
- Pressure washing going on in town centre and Borough is trying to tidy bus station area to make it more inviting.
- Rural affairs committee has been abolished. There may be a new plan in its place. NS was saddened to hear of the abolishing of the rural affairs committee. JA is confident the Mayor will replace it with something as he's made a huge commitment to rural areas.
- Paula Radcliffe Way work starts in 6 weeks. The by-pass was built by the County Council on behalf of Highways England and will cost £9m to repair as it is no longer fit for purpose.

9. Environment Committee

a) Report from Environment Committee meeting 11/7/23

- I. The Minutes don't reflect the length of debate held at the last Environment Committee.
- II. Grass cutting – there has been great improvement since the start of the season but we will need to review standards constantly. **RP**

b) Update - Meeting with Andrew Prigmore, Bedford Borough Council 11/7/23

- I. The Parish Council had been pursuing for a very long time a meeting with Mr Prigmore. He advised he only deals with road markings and not highways matters. Iain Booth is managing Highways for the Borough Council..
- II. The Parish Council Chair, Clerk, NS and JA found themselves waiting for a 2.30 agreed meeting in Clapham which has been solicited on numerous occasions. However, Mr. Prigmore appeared to have forgotten the appointment, arriving some 30 minutes late after a reminder phone call from Cllr Abbott.
- III. Members of the Parish Council present felt it was a wasted afternoon as no concrete decisions were offered. Green Lane roadworks have now moved to a priority category and Mr Prigmore advised renewal of yellow and white lines in the road is pointless until road works completed.
- IV. See also Item 10 on this Agenda.

b) Parking on the road outside the Medical Centre in The Glebe

- I. The Parish will speak to the Medical Centre, asking them to encourage patients to utilise the car park.

c) Road signs in the Village

- I. Concern expressed about the condition of the signs in the village. RP to speak to the Borough about cleaning them asap.

- d) Flood group
 - I. As discussed earlier this evening, JR is following up the numerous issues.

- e) Pruning of Coronation Tree on corner of Green Lane and High Street
Proposal: To accept tender from contractor JDT for £630as the Coronation Tree is overgrown and in need of pruning.
PROPOSED: Cllr Nigel Sparrow
SECONDED: Cllr Phillipa Simms
VOTE: Unanimously agreed

- f) Litter picking
 - I. Overall state of litter in village is not good. Litter regularly accumulates on the ground in Riverside Gardens. Other badly affected areas include The Close, parts of Mountpleasant Road and roads in and out of the village.
 - II. Should we resurrect the P3 group? We have the litter picking equipment available.
 - III. Oakley Parish employs a paid litter picker – is this a consideration for Clapham? RP
 - IV. Could be involved as part of DoE award?
 - V. Milton Road ditch has litter and is overgrown. We need to ask the Borough to clear this.
 - VI. The Parish Council should identify the gentleman who’s been picking litter in the village for years and write to thank him. RP
 - VII. Brambles over cycle path to Bedford – Clerk has reported.

- g) Riverside Gardens
 - I. Maintenance continues to progress well thanks to the volunteers who are growing in number. RP
 - II. The wall has been repaired. It was suggested we should paint the brickwork white with black railings. RP
 - III. We should trial not locking the gates to prevent further damage to the neighbours fence. RP
 - IV. Formal thanks were given to those involved with the recovery of the litter bins from the river. RP
 - V. The Parish Council is keen for Sgt Perri from Riseley Police to attend a meeting and discuss the many ASB issues we sre faced with.

- h) Burial ground
 - I. The environment committee will start planning autumn maintenance.

- i) General comments
 - I. The Environment Committee would like to see the preparation of a 4-year strategic plan by the Parish Council for village maintenance.

- II. Member of the Environment Committee have been asked to put forward proposals at their recent committee meeting. All Parish Councillors were asked to think about this during recess in order to budget properly.

10. Meeting with Andrew Prigmore, Manager for Traffic Operations, Bedford Borough Council

- a) AP asked councillors to consider the possibility of removing yellow lines in the village to tie in with Milton Road development.
- b) PS and RP have reviewed the number of yellow lines on village roads and there are not very many. It is doubted their removal will make any difference or add any benefit to traffic through the village.
- c) AP wants to identify a scheme to slow down traffic. Speed cameras are one option. AP quoted the example of Barton-le-Clay that used to have the A6 trunk road running through the village in the same way that Clapham does. Barton can now be considered fully rural following the traffic measures put in place.
- d) The Borough grand scheme is that of trying to slow down speed. Whilst the Parish Council acknowledges there are certain pinch points within the village with yellow lines that could be removed. Dangerous junctions must be taken into consideration as well.
- e) AP will create a proposal being for debate by the Parish Council and ensuing acceptance or rejection.
- f) When the proposal is discussed by Parish and Borough Councils, the proposed development on Milton Road will be incorporated into the strategy. This development will increase traffic coming into the village centre from Milton Road. As part of the development, the Borough should include installation of speed cameras as a condition of planning.
- g) Closure of the by-pass will cause increased traffic in the summer months.
- h) On enquiring about the possibility of installing parking meters, AP advised this is not an option. Under current legislation, the Parish Council would have to pay for purchase and installation but central Government would receive all the revenue.
- i) Traffic lights at the A6/Sainburys roundabout were designed to be part time with a view to changing them if necessary. These should be subject to a traffic review in the coming months. Lane markings are due to be changed.
- j) Line painting at the junction of Highbury Grove and the High Street needs to be renewed to prevent cars and vans parking and blocking the bus turning into the roads.
- k) Road marking at the Highbury Grove bus shelter lines still not done.

11. East West Rail

- a) Update on latest developments
Nothing to report.

12. Planning Committee

a) Applications Decided

- Planning decisions were reviewed with no further comment.

b) Current Applications

- Planning applications were reviewed with no further comment.

c) Bents Close Resident

- d) Complaint from a resident will be investigated by Cllr Bromley-Rahike who will contact the resident for further details.

e) Concern regarding building in rear garden of 29, High Street Clapham

- Planning Enforcement Officer confirmed the owner has ceased all works on site. The site will be tidied, perhaps adding some gravel to the top of the footings, but no further works will take place.
- It is understood the owners intend to now submit a pre-application to explore their intentions prior to submitting a full application for further building.

13. Communication

a) Update - Clapham Fete, 8th July 2023

- Thanks given to all who braved the torrential rain, including volunteers who always turn up and assist.
- Stalls had positive trading, Raffle raised £280, Scouts raised £350.
- Formal thanks will be given to the new Mayor for attending.
- Next year will be the Clapham Show in September.

RP

b) Areas of Responsibility

There were not enough Councillors in attendance to review and discuss this item. The Chair will therefore consider the requirements and redistribute Areas of Responsibility as best suited.

PS

14. Allotment Committee

a) Report from Allotment Committee meeting, 4th July 2023

- I. The meeting was positive and minutes have been circulated. Recognition was given to the Allotment Association Committee, the Parish Clerk and Cllr Eric Cooper for their efforts over the past year.
- II. It was agreed the standard of the allotments and the whole area has progressed considerably and that anyone visiting the area will see the improvements.
- III. Any issues that arise from time to time will be brought to the Parish Council through the Parish Council Allotments Committee.
- IV. All Councillors were asked to support and become involved with the allotment opportunities as the site moves ahead in a positive manner.

- V. The Association are setting up a community disability plot.
- VI. NHS highlighted that we now have a waiting list for plots and there are a lot of land areas that need to be prepared on the site. **RP**
- VII. RP advised that JDT Consultants will be quoting to tidy up overgrown areas. **RP**
- VIII. The Allotment Association members are very willing to undertake work themselves but can only operate in line with their capabilities.
- IX. Footpath 14 badly needs tidying and maintenance. RP to speak with Borough Footpaths Inspector.

15. Burial Ground

- a) Update
Reserved plots will be marked with fit for purpose plaques this week. **RP**

16. Highways

- a) Request for crossing opposite Puddleducks Nursery, Bedford Road, Clapham.
 - I. The request for a crossing has been forwarded by a local resident. Allocation will be made for this in Milton Road development plans. **PS**
 - II. The Parish Council is currently awaiting next iteration of the scheme. If the crossing is not dealt with at that point, an additional request will be made by the Parish Council.
- b) Other Highways matters
 - I. New tenants of Motorhouse, High Street continue to allow/encourage parking of vehicles on the double yellow lines outside their showroom.
 - II. Parking Enforcement have been advised by the Parish Council and the camera van has attended to discuss with the tenants and issue parking tickets. All cars were subsequently removed.
 - III. The Parish Council is aware there is little appetite for compliance with parking regulations from the Motorhouse staff. PS and JW have visited the tenants and spoken at length with them.
 - IV. All Councillors and residents are now advised to take photographs of any cars parked in contravention of the rules and send them to the Borough Enforcement Team at enforcement.team@bedford.gov.uk or 01234 718359. Or text only enforcement requests to 07553895403.
 - V. There is no limit to the number of times enforcement officers will attend.
 - VI. Pathway between The Slade and The Close is again badly overgrown and the lid is missing on the dog bin. RP to advise the Borough. **RP**
 - VII. Planting at 6 Cody Rod is overgrown out of their front garden and encroaching on the path. Parish Council will write to them and ask if they need help in cutting back the growth and clearing the public footpath. **RP**

17. Village Halla) Update

- I. A number of changes have taken place and the running of the Village Hall is progressing well under the new Facilities Manager.
- II. Several new classes have started including Senior Fitizens which is well attended, Movement and team building for children. 'Taster' session have been offered for these classes which, if successful will continue beyond the initial 6-week programme with paid for classes. Monthly meditation sessions are also available for a small fee.
- III. A number of maintenance issues are being successfully dealt with.

18. Financea) Contribution to purchase of updated Arnold Baker Guide (33.3%)

RP

PROPOSAL: to contribute to one third of the cost of purchase of the updated Arnold Baker Guide for Local Government. The full cost of £164.99 will be shared between Clapham, Pavenham and Stevington Parish Councils.

PROPOSED: Cllr. Allan Prudham

SECONDED: Cllr. Sarah Walker

b) Payment of Accounts

The accounts as circulated prior to the meeting were approved.

PROPOSED: Cllr Ian Gaskin

SCONDED: Cllr Sarah Walker

19. Correspondence

A list of correspondence was circulated to Councillor prior to the meeting.

20. Date of Next Meeting

Tuesday, 19th September 2023 in the Methodist Church Hall

The meeting was closed by the Chair at 9.15pm

Signed as a true reflection of the meeting:

Signed	
Dated	22 nd August 2023

Chair