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|--------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Meeting:                       | CLAPHAM PARISH COUNCIL<br>19 <sup>th</sup> November 2024 at 7.25pm                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Council Members in attendance: | Cllr. Phillipa Simms, Chair (PS)<br>Cllr. Eric Cooper (EC)<br>Cllr. Ian Gaskin (IG)<br>Cllr. John Keech (JK)<br>Cllr. Adrian Langley (AL)<br>Cllr. Michael Walmsley (MW)<br>Cllr. John Reid (JR)<br>Cllr. Sarah Walker (SW)<br>Cllr. Ali Dove (AD)<br>Cllr. Allan Prudham (AP)<br>Cllr. Charlie Tompkins (CT) – arrived at 19.50 |
| Apologies received:            | Cllr. Jacky Fraser (JF)<br>Cllr. Tamsin Bromley-Rahike (TBR)<br>Cllr. Nigel Sparrow (NS)<br>Cllr. James Petrides (JP)                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Non-attendance:                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Borough Council Member:        | Cllr. Jane Walker (JW)<br>Cllr. Jon Abbott (JA)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Clerk to the Council:          | Rosemary Plum (RP)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Public Attendance              | None                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |

## MINUTES OF MEETING

### 1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from:

- Cllr. Jacky Fraser (JF)
- Cllr. Tamsin Bromley-Rahike (TBR)
- Cllr. Nigel Sparrow (NS)
- Cllr. James Petrides (JP)

### 2. Declarations of Interest

Declarations were received from:

- Cllr. Eric Cooper – Allotment plot holder
- Cllr. Phillipa Simms – Chair of Village Hall Committee

### 3. Open Forum

- I. Vote of thanks and appreciation received from British Legion for the display of handmade poppies around the village.
- II. Dog bin on FP14 at Highbury Grove end needs emptying and has black sack hanging off it.

**RP**

- III. Resident at 77 Highbury Grove wants trees at Cody Road garages overhanging their property to be cut down. AP will cut back trees.

AP

#### 4. Minutes of Previous Meeting

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

PROPOSED: Cllr. Ian Gaskin

SECONDED: Cllr. Eric Cooper

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

Nothing to report.

#### 6. Clerk's Report (for information only)

- a) RP attended Bedfordshire Association of Town and Parish Councils AGM. Presentation on Borough Planning was circulated to members of Clapham Parish Council prior to this evenings' meeting, that EC said was useful to see. Once Bedford 2040 plan is in place with allocated housing, it will be good to get the Clapham NDP updated to prevent speculative housing enquiries. Due for review in 2025. Need to allow funds in budget although the Parish Council still has £2.5k ringfenced for this purpose. Borough Chief Planning Officer reiterated any additional building of homes by the Borough that aren't allocated in the Universal Studios area planning, will not be positioned in rural areas. They will be on the edge of the urban area.
- b) National consultation opened to enable remote and hybrid attendance and proxy voting at local authority meetings in England. Issues and challenges raised include technical capability and capacity, guidance and sharing of good practice, predetermination and confidentiality, and ensuring effective meetings, mainly when held hybrid.
- c) The Borough Rights of Way officer is retiring in December. RP to write thank you and acknowledge support shown to our Parish over the years.
- d) Our BRCC Village Agent has seen an uptake in demand from residents for services including support for applications for blue badges, attendance allowance, referral for equipment, key safes, any paperwork and letter-writing, power of attorney, housing applications, mental health referrals and befriending service, social prescribing, job applications. The Agent now uses space at the Village Hall with free internet to provide support approx. every 2 weeks.

RP

#### 7. Police Matters

##### a) Crime Figures

Report circulated prior to meeting.

## 8. Borough Council Report

### a) Cllrs Walker and Abbott – update

- I. Cleat Hill ongoing process and Borough is supporting as a priority. People still unable to return to their homes. Insurance issues because residents out of homes for 30 days. Richard Fuller MP tabled motion in parliament about installation of ground source heat pump being calling for Parliament to do more work on this.
- II. 3-week SEND inspection from 5 November 2024 ongoing
- III. Corporate Plan sent back to executive to be reworked. Going to full Council next week, seems clear and coherent.
- IV. Executive meets tomorrow night with cuts in bus services being discussed. Grant Palmer increasing 25 service from next Monday. No changes to the 22 service.
- V. Car park charges to go up 10% and free parking will be extended.
- VI. Recommendation to close Oasis permanently due to cost of repairs.
- VII. Xmas lights switch on Saturday 5pm 23<sup>rd</sup> with family entertainment from midday. Activities every day after Xmas during holidays.
- VIII. Glenn Miller memorial at Twinwoods museum on 15<sup>th</sup> December.
- IX. Winter Wonderland opening Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> Nov until 5<sup>th</sup> January 2025
- X. Borough originally refused planning permission for Greenacres School but inspectors overturned decision and conditions regarding the road modifications don't appear to have been laid. Discussion ensued around the formal planning process in a situation such as this that is now causing severe traffic disruption between Clapham and Bedford.

## 9. Environment Committee

### a) Report from Environment Committee meeting 11/11/24

- I. Minutes of meeting circulated prior to this meeting.
- II. AP confirmed as Chair of Flood Group, as approved by all members of the Envco.
- III. Sand storage area to be created at Cody Road garages.
- IV. N Beds villages Flood Forum will be organised by Clapham Parish Council for 11th February 2025. Stakeholders to include Borough Council Flood Group, Police and emergency services.
- V. Borough have confirmed grant award for planting of trees throughout Clapham. Planting expected to start in January 2025.

### b) Proposals for ratification

PROPOSAL: To pay for labour and materials for the creation of a secure area at Cody Road garages with fencing and padlocked gate for storage and distribution of sand, sandbags and other equipment during flooding.

PROPOSED: Cllr. Ian Gasking

SECONDED: Cllr. Phillipa Simms.

- c) RP raised concerns from Cllr. Nigel Sparrow that after its December meeting, the Environment Committee will not meet until March. NS said this is the only working Committee and has a valuable role to play. Furthermore, we know the annual August recess gives rise to backlog to be caught up with in September. The Parish Council understood the concerns raised however felt urgent and/or major issues wouldn't be left dormant. They would be dealt with at full Parish Council or could be discussed after the Flood Group meeting in February 2025.

## 10. East West Rail

- a) Consultation – update Cllrs. Sarah Walker and Eric Cooper
- I. People should be aware non-statutory consultation starts 14/11/24 to 24/1/25. Number of events being held locally. Also virtual consultation room available online with considerable detail. Potentially a lot of issues for Clapham as a community. The Parish Council will be responding on behalf of its community.
  - II. Agreed that Clapham will host a pop-up event and a meeting to engage with the people of Clapham to demonstrate we've listened to what local residents are saying with a wide range of views across anticipated. Anticipated date of meetings: during period of 3<sup>rd</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup> January 2025.
  - III. Massive disruption expected from the development if it goes ahead, affecting residents for decades.
  - IV. BeFare meeting 28/11 and Richard Fuller MP hosting meeting next week.
  - V. Parish Council will formulate its written response after the Precept meeting on 14<sup>th</sup> January 2025. Response will be ratified at full Parish Council on 21<sup>st</sup> January 2024.
  - VI. Budget to be allocated to allow presentation of high-quality photos and other materials to residents showing the impact of the building works.
  - VII. Concerns being raised already include: disruption to Clapham from sheer scale of construction, disappearance of farmland that will not be replaced by the construction.

## 11. Planning Committee

- a) Applications Decided  
Details circulated to members prior to meeting.
- b) Current Applications  
Details circulated to members prior to meeting.

## 12. Communication

### a) 4YP – project update Cllr. Eric Cooper

- I. Project starts this Friday 22 November.
- II. Open to young people from school year 7 upwards from 5.30 to 7.30pm.
- III. No response from Lincroft School despite contacting heads of departments.
- IV. Good online advertising completed.
- V. 2 youth workers will be present on Friday. Engagement from Councillors will be welcomed. RP to email those who aren't here tonight.
- VI. Parish Council pleased to be providing things for another village demographic.

**RP**

### b) Christmas Lights Event

- I. Lights switch-on 30<sup>th</sup> November 4-6pm. All churches and Concert Party will be singing and providing entertainment.

### c) Pantomime

- I. Performances on 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> December at 12noon and 5.30pm.
- II. 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Concert Party. Nearly £40k raised for charity in this time.

## 13. Allotment Committee

### a) Report from Allotment Committee meeting 4/11/2024

- I. Thank put on record to the Allotment Association Committee for their successful and ongoing work.
- II. Allotment Association thanked Parish Council for the replacement roof on the soot shed.

## 14. Burial Ground

### a) Update

- I. Borough going to deal with weeds in the grass at Milton Road burial ground in the next week or so as a 'goodwill gesture'. Needs to be at least 3 days before or after mowing and better if light rain is expected after application with temperatures above 10c.

## 15. Highways

### a) Update

Can we turn off traffic lights overnight when no traffic on bypass. Waste of electricity and incredible levels of light at night. Sainsburys lights excessive, create a feeder lane to Clapham from bypass. JW will focus on traffic lights sequencing.

## 16. Village Hall

### a) Update – Cllr. Phillippa Simms

- I. Four grant applications have now been refused.
- II. Loan application is underway.
- III. Insurers are threatening within 4 weeks, to not renew insurance cover for 2025-26 because building is not watertight. In the event this happens, we will no longer be able to hire out the Village Hall.
- IV. Borough Council is trying to find grant funding opportunities. However, funds are all but exhausted at this time.

PROPOSAL: Parish Council to allocate £25k funding as an interim loan to cover costs of work to render Village Hall watertight.

PROPOSED: Cllr. Sarah Walker

SECONDED: Cllr. Allan Prudham

- V. PS gave thanks to the Parish Council on behalf of the Village Hall Management Committee for the offer of the loan.
- VI. SW asked to put on record formal thanks to PS and RP for the “huge amount of work” they are undertaking to allow the Village Hall to continue to be viable for the local community.
- VII. PS gave thanks to Clapham Concert Party and other funders for their generous donations towards the Village Hall.

## 17. Finance

### a) Payment of Accounts

Accounts to be ratified were circulated to members prior to the meeting.

PROPOSED: Cllr. John Keech

SECONDED: Cllr. Ali Dove

### b) NALC pay settlement – ratify

PROPOSAL: to accept the proposed NALC increase in the Clerks’ salary backdated to 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024 and increase of 2.5% on all allowances

PROPOSED: Cllr. Phillippa Simms

SECONDED: Cllr. Adrian Langley

It was confirmed the changes in NI from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2025 introduced in the Autumn Budget will have no effect on Parish Council finances or administration costs.

### c) Asst Clerk – confirm in post

PROPOSAL: To confirm the Assistant Clerk in post with effect 17<sup>th</sup> November 2024 following three months’ probation since August 2024.

PROPOSED: Cllr. Allan Prudham

SECONDED: Cllr. Adrian Langley



**18. Correspondence**

- I. Enquiry from resident at 1 Cody Road regarding trees overhanging from KGV Playing Field.

**19. Date of Next Meeting**

Tuesday, 17<sup>th</sup> December 2024 in the Methodist Church Hall

The meeting was closed by the Chair at 9.25pm

Signed as a true reflection of the meeting:

|        |                                |
|--------|--------------------------------|
| Signed | <div></div> <div>Chair</div>   |
| Dated  | 17 <sup>th</sup> December 2024 |