

Bishopton Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 11th October 2023 at 7:00 pm.

536. Present: Cllrs: D Latham, G. Preston, N Melaney (Chairman), P. Watson

In Attendance: S. Rose [Parish Clerk], Ward Councillor Deborah Laing

537. Apologies for Absence: Ward Councillors Colin Pease and Yvonne Renton

538. Chair's Welcome

The Chair welcomed Steve Rose to his first meeting as Parish Council Clerk having taken over from Les Foggett on 1st October and receiving induction on 5th October. Unanimous thanks and appreciation were recorded for Les Foggett and his achievements as Parish Clerk over the past seven years. A suitable recognition of his service was discussed.

539. Public Participation

No members of the public were present.

540. Vacancies for Parish Councillors

A number of names were discussed and it is hoped that the full complement of 7 Councillors can be achieved.

541. Declarations of Interest in Items on the Agenda:

Cllr. Preston expressed an interest in anything to do with Mill Lane.

542. Previous Minutes:

The minutes-of the previous meeting were read and approved and were duly signed by the Chairperson as a true record of the meeting of 13th September 2023. Proposed by Cllr. Preston and seconded by Cllr. Watson.

543. Matters Arising from Previous Minutes:

543.1 Community Speedwatch

There was no report from Speedwatch due to lack of equipment and a lack of volunteers.

543.2 Traffic Monitoring

For monitoring period 9th September – 5th October 2023

Mill Lane: of 3,350 vehicles - 13 were recorded above the speed limit with the highest being 45mph on 14th September.

High Street: of 9,659 incoming vehicles there were 60 travelling at more than 40mph and 11 at more than 45mph. Of 18905 outgoing vehicles, 363 were recorded at more than 40mph this equates to 1.92%. 216 vehicles were recorded at more than 45mph. There were two outgoing vehicles recorded at 71-75mph on Saturday 9 September (at 14.09) and Sunday 1st October (at 00.35)

The Green: of 6,158 incoming vehicles, 17 returned speeds of more than 40mph. Of 12,680 outgoing vehicles 107 returned speeds of more than 40mph and 19 at more than 45 mph. One vehicle registered 60mph at 14.33 on Saturday 23rd September.

543.3 Parking in the village.

There are still issues of vehicles parking haphazardly on the village green especially around the Talbot inn. There are also vehicles parked that block footpaths. Despite constant efforts locally to prevent illegal parking DBC Enforcement have not responded to Parish Council requests to address the issues by failing to act.

544. Finance

544.1 2023/24 Budget monitoring & current financial position:

The clerk had previously circulated the current financial position which was accepted. Additional detail: £995 from Banks Group for Xmas Tree and Brass Band. A further grant has been approved by Banks for defibrillators. It was noted that Banks had sold their Renewables Division to Brookfield who were maintaining the current funds that will still be managed through County Durham Community Foundation.

544.2 2022/23 AGAR:

The external audit report has been received and agreed.

544.3 Village Green Repairs:

The details of repairs to the village green will be discussed under the item of Village Green discussed at minute 546. It was noted that payments for the remedial work to tarmac outside nos. 4, 6, 8 and 10 on The Green could not be made under current Village Green policy regulations. These can only be changed at the next Parish Council AGM when recommendations will take place following a review of the Village Green Policy.

544.4 Petty Cash Payments:

- Royal British Legion for Wreath - £50 approved. Proposed: P. Watson, Seconded: D. Latham;
- Clerk's Travel Expenses - £36.40 approved. Proposed: D. Latham, Seconded: P. Watson

545. Planning Applications:

545.1 Planning Application 21/01086/FUL

Change of use of land for the siting of 24 no. holiday lodges together with new access track and other associated infrastructure works on land NE of Bishopton Lake. Awaiting decision. This planning application has been revised but the council has resubmitted their objection. The Council will consider making a representation to the planning committee when the application is considered.

545.2 Planning Application 22/00447/FUL

Change of use of agricultural fields to glamping site with the siting of 10 no. bell tents with individual shower and toilet sheds, mobile kitchenettes, seating, extended access track, on-site parking provision, drainage and associated works Land West of Outhouse Farm Bishopton Lodge Glamping Redmarshall Road Bishopton. still awaiting decision

545.3 Planning Application 23/00372/FUL

Creation of ponds for great crested newts at Glebe Farm, Mill Lane. The Council supports this application.

545.4 Solar farms planning especially Byers Gill (JBM)

Nothing substantive to report in relation to Parish Council business.

546. Matters Raised by Councillors & the Clerk:

546.1 Road Signs: Still awaiting delivery of road site completely destroyed due vehicle leaving the road at the bottom Folly bank

546.2 Roadside Bollards: need reflectors renewing or replacing completely due to damage on mill Lane in proximity of Whitton. This caused by the ongoing problem of HGVs using the lane illegally Cllr. Laing to speak to DBC.

546.3 Road Markings

Cllr. Watson asked and Council agreed that a complaint be made to DBC under National highways Road layout inspection & assessment Document ref CS126 whereby the quality of road markings is stipulated. Under this guidance published online it is clear that road markings around the Parish are in a critical state and need immediate attention. Cllr. Laing was asked to address this. A letter will be drafted by Cllr. Watson and sent by the Clerk to senior officers of DBC. Cllr Watson raised serious concerns regarding the safety of the roads around Bishopton and stated it was simply a matter of time before there is a serious accident due to roads being very difficult to drive in dark wet weather as the verges are encroaching on the road widths and due to the complete erosion of white centre line markings.

The National highways CS126 Road layout and inspection & assessment document was tabled, and Appendix C (photographic examples for detailed visual assessment) reviewed with comparison to white lines of local surrounding roads. It was unanimously agreed that at best the roads scored 10 (barely Visible) with the majority at 0 (non-existent) This categorises the majority of the roads around Bishopton with Critical defects which requires immediate attention /rectification.

Cllr Laing agreed with this interpretation of the wite making condition and stated they were certainly not a marginal (30) condition rating as stated by Darlington Borough councils Highways department and qualified that she would raise this issue with DBC highways team.

546.4 Remembrance Day.

The Wreath has been ordered and will be delivered – cost £50. The Vicar will lead the ceremony at the Cenotaph at 11.00am on 12th November. Mr J Potter will lay the wreath on behalf of the Village and residents

546.5 Christmas arrangements and costs

All arrangements reported at the meeting of 13th September and in hand. Clerk will ensure PAT testing and Xmas Tree delivery is organised in the same timeframe as 2022. It was agreed that a flyer covering the details of Carol Singing and mince pies on 21st December would be circulated.

546.6 Autumn Village tidy up

Cllr Latham asked if we could arrange an Autumn tidy up of the Village (collecting fallen leaves etc.). The Council were in favour of this and volunteers will be sought for the Sunday 5th November between 2.00-4.00pm. Included in this is to replace planting in the barrel planters. £100 approved for plants – proposed by P. Watson, seconded by G. Preston.

547. Village Green

547.1 Damage to the Village Green and repair quotations

Quotes from S. Wall circulated for all remedial work – these to be actioned by Cllr. Melaney as required. Other quotes may be sought by the Clerk.

547.2 28 High Street Tree root damage

The council will continue to liaise with the residents to achieve a solution to this.

547.3 Resident Complaint: Tree blocking footpath

Cllr. Watson raised a complaint made by a resident about a tree overhanging the footpath behind the pub that is blocking access. Clerk asked to write to the owner of the property to take appropriate action.

547.4 Resident Complaint: Village Green grass cut excessively

The council agreed that grass cutting had taken place with blades set too low so causing damage to the grass around The Green. Cllr. Melaney will speak to the grasscutters.

547.5 Parking on The Green

Ideas to introduce attractive planters, or use existing ones, to inhibit illegal parking were discussed. A new planter would cost £480. To be discussed at future meetings.

548. Date of Next Meeting:

Next Meeting: 7:00pm on Wednesday 8th November 2023 in the Village Hall.

N.B. This date may be subject to change due to councillor's availability – details published on the Bishopton Parish Council website.

The meeting closed at 8.59 pm.

Signed: _____

Vice-Chairman Councillor Geoff Preston

Date: 08.11.2023