

Bearpark Parish Council

At a meeting of **Bearpark Parish Council** held on **Wednesday 19 February 2025** at **7:00pm** at **Beaurepaire Community Hub**.

Present: Cllr M Wilson (Chair) Cllr J Baker Cllr D Cliff
 Cllr I Cummings Cllr O Edwards Cllr J Peart
 Cllr D Turnbull Cllr J Turnock Cllr P Wilson

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from: Cllr J Thompson

2. Declaration of Interests

There were no declarations of interest in relation to any items of business on the agenda.

3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 15 January were agreed as an accurate record.

4. Police Report

The Clerk advised that She had been in touch with the local Police Inspector regarding regular visits/reports to parish council meetings. Unfortunately, this was not going to be possible due to time constraints on Police Officers. The Inspector advised that the best way to receive updates was to attend PACT meetings and feedback to parish council.

Cllr Wilson attended the most recent PACT meeting and advised there was still an issue with antisocial behaviour which police were focussing on.

Resolved

That the Clerk share the details of upcoming PACT meetings and that the information be noted.

5. County Councillors Report

Cllr M Wilson provided an update to the Council as follows:

- DCC are continuing to crackdown on fly-tipping, with hundreds of fixed penalty notices issued, multiple vehicles seized and fines and court charges topping £134,000 secured in just over three years.
- A man named Michael Dunn has credited a County Durham homelessness service with transforming his life after he was introduced to the team at the Safe Night Hub, a new countywide service providing food, warmth and support to rough sleepers every night between 9pm and 8am.
- DCC have been making improvements to Hardwick Park's play area as part of a scheme to redevelop its play facilities. The works include installing a brand-new play area which features a zip line; basket swing; hammocks; accessible roundabout, outdoor musical instruments and a giant play tower, standing almost 15 metres tall.

- On Wednesday 12 February, DCC's Cabinet will be asked to approve our final budget proposals for 2025/26 and the following three years. This will include a 4.99% rise in council tax.

Resolved

That the information be noted

6. Report of the Clerk

The Clerk provided an update to the Council as follows:

a) Update on actions from previous meeting

- i. Contact with Morrisons Daily – The Clerk has emailed requesting to fix CCTV and Security Lights
- ii. Neighbourhood Warden – The Clerk has requested that this continue as last year and to increase patrols near Morrisons Daily
- iii. Noticeboard – The Clerk had been contacted to advise that there would be an additional cost due to some of the noticeboard being missing. This would be £225 + VAT
- iv. Flagpole – The Clerk was advised to purchase a ground collar to complete the look of the flagpole. This would cost £39 + VAT and delivery of 14.95 + VAT. It was also advised to take out a service plan. The cost of this would be £260.00 per year. The Clerk would make some enquiries to find out if this was a reasonable amount.
- v. Remembering Bearpark – This project was now complete.
- vi. Authorisation of Payments – it is proving difficult to add an authoriser onto the bank account. The Clerk would need to contact Unity Trust via telephone.
- vii. Royal Garden Party – Cllr June Watson from Seaham Town Council would be attending the event.
- viii. Gov.uk domain – no response as yet, the Clerk will follow up on this request.
- ix. Recreation Ground – The Clerk had contacted DCC but there was no response as yet. To be followed up. Cllr M Wilson has contacted the Chief Executive Officer of CISWO but has not received a reply as yet.
- x. Website – The website was now up to date with most recent agendas and minutes.

b) Training Opportunities

- i. NALC - Is the fight for standards a losing battle? 26 Feb, 12pm-1:15pm, online.
 - ii. CDALC – new councillor training would be available following the election
- c) **CDALC Smaller Councils Forum** – The next meeting of the CDALC Smaller Councils Forum would take place on Thursday 20th February 2025 at 2.00pm, hosted by City of Durham Parish Council at the Merryoaks Community Hall, Park House Road, Merryoaks, Durham, DH1 3QF, or via Zoom. Up to two representatives could attend.
- d) **DK Horticulture** – is now VAT registered so prices will increase but VAT can be reclaimed

- e) **The Big Spring Clean 2025** – DCC's campaign will run from 5th March 2025 to 5th May 2025 local councils are encouraged to get involved with possible litter picks
- f) **Finance Report** – The Clerk circulated a report which detailed all recent and upcoming expenditure.

Resolved

That the information be noted, relevant action taken by the Clerk and that all costs be approved by the Council.

7. Planning Applications

Details of relevant planning applications were circulated. There were no comments.

Resolved

That the information be noted

8. Allotments

Letters advising plot holders to maintain the expected standard were ready to be sent out by the Clerk.

There had been no further communication regarding the extension of land with a view to creating more plots.

Resolved

That the Clerk send the letters and follow up on the extension of land with DCC.

9. Parish Elections 2025

The Clerk advised that nomination papers were now available for the upcoming elections on 01 May 2025. The Clerk advised that Councillors thoroughly check their forms and that these needed to be hand delivered to County Hall for checking between 21 March and 02 April. All Councillors would need to submit a form if they wish to continue in their role. If there were only 11 submissions there would be no need for an election and existing Councillors would remain. If more than 11 nomination papers were submitted an election would take place.

Resolved

That all Cllrs complete the required paperwork and submit within the deadline window.

10. Requests for Financial Assistance

The Office of Durham Police and Crime Commissioner requested £500 towards a fund day to be held in Bearpark to raise awareness of emergency services with a view to reducing anti-social behaviour in the area.

Resolved

That the request be granted and the Clerk make the necessary arrangements.

11.Events 2025

a) Summer Fair

The Clerk had received a quote from Carnival FunFairs for a teacup ride, and some side game stalls. The total cost would be £2000 + VAT.

b) Remembrance

The Clerk had received a quote from Bearpark and Esh Colliery band for a player for the last post. This would be £50.

c) Christmas

The Clerk had received a quote for this year's Christmas tree, including installation, dressing, undressing and disposal. The total cost would be £1750 + VAT. A quote was also received from Bearpark and Esh Colliery Band to play at the light switch on event. The cost would be £200

Resolved

That all costs be approved and the Clerk make the necessary arrangements.

12.Village Matters

a) Overgrown Trees on Cook Avenue

The Clerk had received a quote from DK Horticulture to tidy up the area, cut the hedge back from road side and dispose of waste. The total cost would be £450

b) Salt Bin on Parish Land at Aldin Grange Terrace

The Clerk had received a quote from DK Horticulture to provide a salt bin, install and fill with salt. The cost would be £250 + VAT and £60 + VAT for every fill.

c) Trees on Parish Land at Aldin Grange Terrace

The Clerk had received a quote from DK Horticulture to prune the trees and dispose of the waste. The cost would be £230 + VAT.

13.Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting would take place on **Wednesday 19 March 2025 7:00pm** at **Beaurepaire Community Hub**.

Signed..... (Chair)

Date.....