

Minutes of the Clarborough & Welham Parish Council meeting held at 7.00pm on Monday 29th April 2024 in the Clarborough Village Hall, Main Street, Clarborough.

Present: Cllr Gibson (Chair), Cllr Palfreman, Cllr Baines, Cllr Driver and Cllr Joyce
Others: Mrs Davies (Clerk) County Councillor Tracey Taylor, Mr Herdman (C.D.C.A) members of the public

2508/24 To consider any apologies and reasons for absence

No apologies received. Cllr Avery will be joining the meeting shortly.

At this point the Chair reported that Cllr Willcock has resigned from the Parish Council due to threats of violence to both himself and his property which he received on Saturday from a resident and the verbal abuse I received from him and a woman resident of the village.

"In view of that incident I feel that I am not prepared to continue in the role of managing the Pasture nor as a Parish Councillor. I thought that I was helping to improve the Parish for the benefit of all residents. It appears that at least some residents are totally opposed to this and I, therefore, consider that it is not worthwhile to carry on.

I would like to thank you for all your personal support to me during the Neighbourhood Plan process and in my work on the Parish Pasture. I would also like to thank the Parish Councillors for their support in providing finance to help turn the initial ideas for the Pasture into the current reality."

2509/24 To receive any Declaration of Interest in any items on the agenda

No declaration of interests received.

2510/24 To suspend the meeting for open session for Members of the public to speak and to receive reports from the District & County Councillors and CDCA

- The C.D.C.A report has already been given at the Parish Meeting
- County Councillor Tracey Taylor commented that the rumours on social media are saying that the local household waste recycling centres; this is not correct

2511/24 To consider the minutes of the meeting held 25th March 2024

After altering the date from 4th December to 4th September on minute no. 2492/24, Cllr Baines proposed to accept the minutes of the meeting held 25th March 2024 as a true record; this was seconded by Cllr Joyce and resolved by the Council.

2512/24 To receive updates on any actions from the previous meeting

Min 2491/24 – The work on the village hall entrance wall is still work in progress

Min 2495/24 – Installation of the paving slabs is work in progress

Min 2496/24 – The litter pick went well with 25 volunteers. 25 bags of litter were collected and the district council collected and disposed of them. The new litter picking equipment recently purchased were used

Min 2498/24 - the cost of the extra grass cutting would be approximately £50; however, the Chair is still waiting for a written estimate

2513/24 To receive reports from any other meetings attended

Cllr Avery has received an invite to attend the next EDF Local Community Liaison Committee meeting on the 15th May 2024; the Chair will also attend.

2514/24

To receive play area inspection reports and consider any expenses

The Chair has carried out one play area inspection on 8th April; the benches have been graffiti sprayed and require cleaning. All the play equipment was sprayed with disinfectant.

The Chair also carried out the half year ancillary routine inspection and read out the various actions taken:

- Cleaned various signs and repaired the slight damage to the Welham notice board
- Checked and cleaned the defibrillator
- Disinfected and cleaned up dog bins
- Two grit bins require filling which the Chair will do
- The village hall notice board was cleaned

At this point Cllr Avery attended the meeting.

2515/24

To consider any planning applications as listed and note any planning correspondence

Application: 24/00357/HSE

Proposal: Rear single storey extension, accessible wet room, utility room and living area

Location: 11 Pear Tree Close, Clarborough

Cllr Avery proposed not to make and objections, this was seconded by Cllr Palfreman and resolved by the Council.

2516/24

To consider a Biodiversity Action Plan for Clarborough & Welham

Paul Willcock attended a Biodiversity training session which was arranged by Nottinghamshire Association of Local Councils, and presented by Mike Deegan Consulting. The course was to look at practical measures to help enhance wildlife and address new legislation.

Paul previously circulated a report he has put together which consists of the definition of Biodiversity, *The variety of biological organism (i.e. life) in a given habitat, area or ecosystem. It refers to the variety of species, ecosystems and genes. It is important as variety encourages healthy environments, healthy humans, and healthy economies.*

The concerns were also recorded and show that in most of our countryside Biodiversity is in rapid decline.

The responsibilities – In 2006 the National Environment and Rural Communities Act (NERC) Section 40 place a responsibility on every public authority that they should:

“when exercising its functions, to have regard, so far as it is consistent with the proper exercise of these functions, to the purpose of conserving biodiversity.”

The Environment Act 2021 extended the duty on all authorities to regularly consider what actions those local authorities can take to enhance the general biodiversity objective.

“extends the biodiversity duty on public authorities to include the enhancement of biodiversity along conservation by way of creating “the general biodiversity object”. This is achieved by a revised section 40 of the NERC Act, including new provisions, which are now in force.”

The Act further put a responsibility on all local authorities above the level of Parish Councils to produce a biodiversity reports. This is called a “Biodiversity Action Plan” (BAP). This responsibility became effective from January 2024.

There is, therefore, no requirement for Clarborough & Welham Parish Council to produce a Biodiversity Action Plan, only to consider the subject regularly.

However, Paul Willcock has written on behalf of the Parish Council a Biodiversity Action Plan.

After consideration, Cllr Joyce proposed to adopt the Biodiversity Action Plan and to review annually; this was seconded by Cllr Avery and resolved by the Council.

2517/24 To consider quotation for additional grounds maintenance work in the Orchard

This item is pending a written quotation from the contractor.

2518/24 To consider the extension of the District Council’s Dog Control Orders

As part of Bassetlaw District Council’s Anti-social Behaviour Crime and Policing Act 2014; they are consulting on the proposed renewal of an existing Public Spaces Protection Order.

In September 2021, the District Council renewed a Public Spaces Protection Order aimed at controlling anti-social behaviour related to dogs and dog ownership.

The Bassetlaw District Council – Public Spaces (Dog Control) Order 2021 states that:-

- Owners must pick up their dogs’ faeces on any land to which the public have access
- Owners must keep their dogs on leads in specified burial grounds cemeteries and churchyards
- Dogs are banned from specified fenced children’s play areas
- Owners must be able to demonstrate to an authorised officer that they are carrying suitable means, such as a suitable bag, to pick up[and remove dog faeces from designated land

Public Spaces Protection Orders remain in force for a maximum period of three years, but the District Council may renew the Order for further three-year periods if it is believed that an Order is still necessary.

For Clarborough & Welham:

Schedule one – Keeping of dogs on lead

This Order applies to all the land described – St John the Baptist’s Churchyard, Clarborough.

Schedule two – Dog exclusion Areas

This Order applies to all the land described:

- Children’s Playground to the rear of the Village Hall, Main Street
- Children’s Ball Park, Smeath Lane – (the Parish Council will request this the Ball Park allows dogs on leads).

After consideration, Cllr Joyce proposed to approve the three year extension and to ask for the Ball Park area to allow dogs on leads rather than been banned – this is due to it being an entrance into the Parish Pasture land. This was seconded by Cllr Palfreman and resolved by the Council.

A copy of the Dog Control Ord is available on the Bassetlaw District Council’s website.

2519/24 To receive an update on the Parish Council website

This item was deferred.

2520/24 Finances - to consider payments as listed and finances documents for 31st March 2024

The Clerk circulated payments for approval as listed below; plus 31st March 2024 financial reports, budget, earmarked reserves and copy of the bank statement for the Councillors to view.

CLlr Baines proposed to approve the payments as listed and financial documents; this was seconded by Cllr Avery and resolved by the Council.

- 1) March – Clerk expenses – Phone top up £10.00 (2436)
- 2) March – Clerk expenses – stamps £6.00 (2437)
- 3) Information Commissioners Office – Date protection annual fee £40.00 (2438)
- 4) Holmes Groundcare Maintenance – 2 x March cuts £418.36 (2439)
- 5) N.A.L.C – Biodiversity training £45.00 (2440)
- 6) N.A.L.C – Annual subscription £267.10 (2441)
- 7) Darbys Ltd – Payroll processing for 2023-24 £113.40 (2442)
- 8) P Willcock – Parish Pasture expenses £263.35 (2443)
- 9) P Gibson – expenses for notice board repair, mileage, printing and litter pick £48.04 (2444)

Bank Balance 31 st March 2024	£40,884.62
Less unrepresented cheques	<u>£00,224.00</u>
Closing cash book balance 31.3.2024	<u>£40,660.62</u>

Made up of:	General reserves	£21,050.40
	Ear marked reserves	<u>£19,610.22</u>
		<u>£40,660.62</u>

2521/24 To receive any updates on the Parish Pasture and consider any expenses

Please see the report which is attached.

Footpath - I have received a quotation from KOBİ Construction with regard to the needed improvements to the footpath. I have, unfortunately, not been able to follow-up on this due to personal commitments. I do not know, therefore, whether the material appears suitable for the problem or not.

I would suggest that an expenditure be approved subject to examples of the material being seen at another discussion with the contractor.

Damage to the Parish Pasture - At the end of February I submitted a claim for £750 to BDC Estates department in order for the Parish Council to employ contractors to restore the damaged land. I listed the remedial work needed.

I received a response from the BDC Estates Manager at the beginning of April that he was seeking the opinion of the BDC legal department as to their liability. Despite two emails to the BDC Estates Department since then I have received no reply. They appear to think that if they ignore our requests we will go away!

I suggest two lines of action. Firstly - ask our District Councillor to follow-up on this and ask why they are not reply to emails, and what was the legal opinion. Secondly – ask the Chief Executive of BDC the same questions direct.

Footpath Edges - Personal commitments having delayed the process, wildflower seeding has now taken place on 95% of footpath edges. The rains of the last week were ideally timed.

Threats of Violence - On Saturday 27 April I was about to complete that seeding at around 4.30 pm. As I approached the area still needing seeding a spaniel type dog ran off from a group of dogs around the broken seat near the play area alongside the canal. I was some 70+m away from that group and had no intention or need to go near the group. The dog ran straight towards me yapping and barking. A man who I took to be the owner tried to call it back, but it ignored him. As I had a garden rake for raking over the seed bed with me, I picked it up in order to defend myself should the dog attack me as looked very likely. Fortunately, the dog stopped about 3 meters away and a woman owner caught up with the dog and put it on a lead. I was then harangued by the woman who accused me of threatening the dog. I pointed out that I was still holding the rake low and had never raised it. She was then joined by the man who joined in a tirade aimed first at me, with much swearing and unsavory names. There were many sides to their venom, much of it personal to me but also quite a lot aimed at the Parish Council in general but, also, specifically at the Chair of the Parish Council. I suggested several times as they changed their line of attack that they should attend the next Parish Council Meeting if they have issues but they said 'we live on the wrong side of the village for going to that – you lot aren't bothered what we think!' They complained about everything to do with the Pasture, and a good number of other Parish related matters as well, including the dandelions! I was called several unsavory names and repeatedly threatened by the man with – 'don't cross my path again' and 'I know where you live'.

In view of these threats I went to see the PC Chairman. I also contacted Nottinghamshire Police via 101 and have an incident number, with the full details of the incident recorded in view of the threats of violence to me and my property. I was telephoned by the Police on Sunday 28 April as they take this type of threatening behavior seriously. I have never seen the man before but have had a number of amenable conversations with the woman when I have been working on the Pasture. I don't know her name.

In view of this incident I am no longer prepared to carry out work on the Pasture.

I am sorry that my 7 years work on developing the Pasture has to end, and especially in this way. I had hoped to continue to enhance the species count of wildflowers and trees; encourage all the insects, mammals, bats and birds to come onto the land and help educate both adults and children as to why we have certain flowers at different times of year. I had only on Saturday morning put on display two posters to explain the importance of Spring and the value of increasing the number of cowslips and primroses as early spring pollinators which we have on the land. Last year we had 45 named species of flowers and I am hoping, with the new sowing, that their number will spread over a wider area of the Hay Meadow side of the Pasture.

Unfortunately, we seem to have a group of selfish residents who are also dog owners who see the Pasture as nothing more than a dog toilet over which they and their animal(s) should have unfettered access. They have no consideration for those many people who are scared of dogs per se and cannot, therefore, use the Pasture because so many dogs are uncontrolled as was the one on Saturday. I was a dog owner for 18 years but only in recent years have I become very wary of the way owners allow their dogs to run up to complete strangers. Hence my action in case I needed to defend myself on the Pasture. The 'my dog is harmless' syndrome pays no attention to the increasing number of dog owners who are being injured and even killed by their own dogs, let alone the massive increase in dog attacks on complete strangers.

These dog owners have a complete lack of understanding or care for those who are afraid of dogs of any sort.

I feel very strongly that when the Parish Council makes a decision about the use of the Parish Pasture it should be that all dogs must be on a lead at all times. By allowing dogs to be off the lead the Parish Council are denying access to the Pasture for those who are frightened of dogs.

All of our residents have a right to be able to use their Pasture!

The Chair reported that he and Cllr Joyce carried out the annual allotment inspection. No issues were raised and it was noted that one shed requires guttering.

- 2522/24 To receive any updates on the Mayflower Community Orchard and consider any expenses**
Cllr Avery had nothing new for the update; currently waiting for the grass cutting before planting the eight plum trees.
- 2523/24 To receive any updates of flood reports**
Cllr Avery discussed various flood issues with County Cllr Tracey Taylor and the Council. A site visit is to be arranged with Notts County Council's flooding engineer.
- 2524/24 To report any Highways, Rights of Way, or Service Faults**
- The Chair had reported the blocked storm drains; these have now been cleaned recently
 - Cllr Ross to report the average speed camera signs at the top of Claborough Hill have disappeared
- 2525/24 To receive any correspondence or information for future agenda items**
Agenda items – Annual Meeting of the Council & Election of Chairman and Vice-Chair etc.
- 2526/24 Time and date of the next Parish Council Meeting**
The next Parish Council meeting will be the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council which will take place on Monday 13th May 2024 at 7pm in the Claborough Village Hall.