

BALSHAM PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on
Monday 20th March, 2023 at 7.30pm
in Balsham Pavilion (Green Room)

Present: Gordon Fiddy, Steve Wilcox, James Kiddy, Steve Thurgood, Heather Pierce and Jennie Tipler, Nick Coates, Kim Pearson

Public: 13

Also in attendance: Cllr Henry Batchelor and Cllr Geoff Harvey

Clerk: Tracy Coston

1.	Apologies for absence: Paul Anderson, Tracy Coston (illness)	
2.	Councillors are required to review the agenda, and to declare any pecuniary interest in any item: None.	
3.	Public Participation (15 mins): No business was raised	
4.	Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 20th February, 2023: The previously circulated minutes were approved and signed by the Chair.	
5.	<p>Report from District and County Councillor:</p> <p><u>District Councillor:</u></p> <p>Roundabout at Bartlow Junction. The work is due to start work imminently and estimated to take approximately 9 months to complete. Disruption on the A1307 should be kept to a minimum, as a new temporary road will be created to ensure traffic flow during the construction period. Concern was expressed regarding the construction and the probable increased traffic through Balsham and West Wickham as a result of closures and signage issues. It was agreed that a contact name would be provided, in order that the Parish Council can address their concerns before the work starts.</p> <p>Electric Vehicle Charging. A grant of £5000 per application is now available for communities to install charging points on their community/public buildings.</p> <p>Election boundary changes. To note that the consultation period on the boundary changes has now ended and the final recommendations are now being formalised. If the proposed change is accepted, Balsham will be part of South Cambridgeshire, resulting in changes to the village's local MP and other representatives.</p> <p>Pothole repairs. The Parish Council commented on the increasing problem of potholes and the ineffective repairs to date. It was noted that funding for further repairs is not likely to be available until the new financial year.</p> <p><u>County Councillor:</u></p> <p>20mph speed reduction schemes. The Parish Council noted the new County Council scheme which allows parishes to apply to reduce specific road speeds to 20mph. The Parish Council agreed that this should certainly be reviewed, and an application submitted. Heather Pierce and Kim Pearson volunteered to take this forward.</p>	

<p>6.</p>	<p>Matters arising from the minutes:</p> <p>a) Illumination of the Prince Memorial: As noted at the last meeting, the Clerk has sent photos and measurement to the company and awaiting a response.</p> <p>b) Cleaning of war memorial: The faculty petition has been advertised and when the date expires (after 30 days), the Parish Council will be required to pay £317 (inc. VAT) for a court fee to complete the faculty.</p> <p>c) Footpath from Barton’s Close to allotments/Woodhall Lane allotments: Following the previous approval of the quote, the contractor will be carrying out the works imminently.</p> <p>d) Rookery trees report: Martin Hugi will carry out the tree inspection as soon as possible for the trees in The Rookery. Martin Hugi has carried out tree inspections in another parish for the Parish Clerk and has given a detailed report. The PC would like all trees that they are responsible for in the Parish inspected in due course.</p> <p>e) Telephone box refurbishment: The door work is on the list for the contractor to complete.</p> <p>f) Community orchard: Emails have been sent to Melissa Tabecki but no response has been received. The Parish Clerk to chase up again. The Parish Council agreed that Steve Thurgood would visit and review the Orchard in 6-8 weeks to check the state of the trees and ascertain what needs to be done.</p> <p>g) Request to pay invoice for Church Institute lighting: It was agreed to defer the decision regarding the payment of the invoice until the scheduled meeting with the Church Institute Committee on 29th March.</p> <p>h) Street lights in Fox Road/Cambridge Road: The old street lights have been taken away. The Parish Clerk checking that Mike McCall can now use the light in Cambridge Road for the speed sign. Jenny Tipler to check light and update PC.</p>	
<p>7.</p>	<p>Update on the Church Institute Lease: Following advice from the solicitor, the Parish Council formed a working party to discuss the different options for the Church Institute Lease. Four options had been put forward for further discussion and for a final vote by the Parish Council.</p> <p>Option 1 The Parish Council to lease the facility on terms proposed by the Balsham Parochial Church Council (BPCC).</p> <p>Option 2 To notify the BPCC that the Parish Council will no longer be leasing the facility at the end of the current lease.</p> <p>Option 3 Approach the BPCC requesting that they again consider gifting the facility to the people of Balsham or sell the freehold to the Parish Council for a nominal sum. To be held in Trust by the Parish Council to ensure that it could only be used as it is now. The Parish Council would ensure that there is an agreement between the PC and the BPCC giving the church use of the facility on Sunday’s and after 5pm one day each week. Paying only for the utilities.</p> <p>Option 4 The Parish Council to lease the facility under their proposed heads of terms. The PC noted: To amend the lease in relation to options 1 and 4, will cost a significant sum due to legal costs. There has been no agreement yet as to who would pay for the new or amended lease to be drawn up. A survey of the Church Institute would be needed for options 1, 3 and 4, to ascertain the current condition of the building, and any future maintenance</p>	

	<p>costs.</p> <p><u>Parish Council vote:</u> Option 1: 0 for: 8 against Option 2: 0 for: 8 against Option 3: 8 for: 0 against Option 4: 0 for: 8 against</p> <p>The Parish Clerk to write to the Church Institute (PCC) to communicate the Parish Council's unanimous decision for option 3, and to confirm the meeting time and location.</p>	
8.	<p>Allocation of S106 funds: Scout Hut: The Parish Council has not heard from the Scouts since Steve Thurgood's visit to the Scout Hut.</p>	
9.	<p>Planning: Proposal: Installation of air source heat pumps to garage. Site address: The Old School 5 Church Lane Balsham Reference: 23/00472/HFUL PC Decision: Approve</p> <p>Proposal: T1: Sycamore - prune back from neighbours drive by 3m and to clear GPO wires by 2m Site address: 86 High Street Balsham Cambridgeshire Reference: 23/0247/TTCA PC Decision: Approve</p> <p><u>Appeal notification</u> Proposal: Two storey extension and pergola to side. Site address: 7 Princes Close Balsham Cambridgeshire Reference: 22/04541/HFUL Received for information</p> <p>b) Decisions: None</p>	
10.	<p>Allotment update: It was noted that updates to the current allotment holders list is required, and a few people need to be contacted about their sites. There is a growing waiting list, but following the review, there may be enough open sites available to offer to those interested. The issues with the taps have been reported to the contractor. The Parish Council stated that a policy should be devised to ensure the taps are turned off completely during the winter (October – March) and properly insulated to reduce further problems. It was agreed that the issue should be kept on the agenda – so that the issue is not overlooked later in the year.</p>	
11.	<p>Recreation Ground/Pavilion a) Adult gym equipment – Path to the gym equipment: The Parish Council has received a quote from Robert Ellam for the path. The Parish Council briefly discussed the quote, noting that the width of the path was significantly wider than required, and that a 900mm or 1 metre wide path would be adequate.</p>	

	<p>The Parish Clerk was asked to revisit the quote and circulate the updated quote to the Parish Council members.</p> <p>b) Acoustic boards in the pavilion: The Parish Council considered the quotation from the acoustic consultant but felt the usage of the pavilion did not justify the expenditure. It was agreed to continue investigating alternative, less expensive solutions, when/if the issue is raised again. The Parish Council voted unanimously against the expenditure of the boards. It was agreed to remove the item from the agenda and revisit the issue again if required.</p>	
12.	<p>Highway Matters:</p> <p>The Parish Council acknowledged that a number of issues that have been previously reported are still outstanding and there had been no response to the Chair's correspondence with the Highways contact. However, it was noted that it is important to continue to report items to the Highways team, to ensure these issues are recognised and added to the list. A query was raised regarding the debris left on roads and verges following an accident, and whose responsibility it is for clearing it. There was no definitive answer provided.</p>	
13.	Correspondence: None.	
14.	Finance:- Receipts and payments up to 16/03/23 and any invoices/receipts received up until 20/03/23 will be considered at the meeting	
	Receipts (March)	
	Bowls rent	£ 157.00
	Total Receipts	£ 157.00
	Payments (March)	
	T Coston Salary £ 1,018.55 Exp: £ 219.59 Pension £ 56.02	£ 1,038.53
	M McCall (Gross £) £ 228.00 Ex £ 4.95	£ 187.35
	S Housden (Gross £) £ 154.00	£ 154.00
	Fit 47 Ltd (new windows and door in pavilion)	£ 2,109.60
	Drax Energy	£ 17.56
	PKF Littlejohn (audit)	£ 528.00
	Herts and Cambs Ground Maintenance	£ 3,048.00
	Herts and Cambs Ground Maintenance	£ 1,656.00
	Opus Energy	£ 786.41
	British Gas (Pavilion electricity)	£ 519.76
	Herts and Cambs Ground Maintenance	£ 4,134.00
	Kleen Windows	£ 30.00
	Surrey Hills Solicitors	£ 240.00
	The Play Inspection Company (play area inspection)	£ 90.00
	Saniclean (Drain cleaning at pavilion)	£ 180.00
	Total	£ 14,194.21
	<p>Bank Balances as at 16/03/23</p> <p>Community A/C: £ 8,397.50</p> <p>H.I. Account: £ 125,095.41</p> <p>3 month notice account (Lloyds) £ 42,490.67</p> <p>Total £ 176,793.58</p>	

15.	<p>Area Report:</p> <p>a) Hedge trimming: The Parish Council noted that following recent hedge trimming works by the Hawthorns site. The trimmings had not been cleared but left on the path. Clerk will ask the contractors to remove the debris.</p> <p>b) Recreation Ground/Pavilion external lights: It was noted that with the Daylight Savings on 26th March – the lights should be switched off for evening/night use from Sunday 26th March. It was agreed that a policy should be discussed at the next meeting to ensure that the winter use of the lights is properly documented and communicated.</p> <p>c) Blinds broken in the Pavilion: It was agreed to ask the Parish Clerk to contact the blind company to repair the blinds in the main hall.</p> <p>d) Linton Road flooding: The Parish Council noted the continuing problems with the flooding but agreed that photographs would be needed in order to properly investigate and address the issue with the correct the County Council.</p>	
16.	<p>Date of Next Meeting: The next Parish Council Meeting will be held on 17th April, 2023 at 7.30 pm in Balsham Pavilion.</p>	

Meeting closed at 8.30 pm.

Signed

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Date

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