

Beswick Parish Council

Meeting of the Council held at 7 pm on Wednesday, 10 January 2024 at Kilnwick Village Hall

Minutes

1 Apologies for Absence:

Cllr Ben Jeffrey.

Present:

Cllrs Beachell (Chair), Corscadden, Duncan, Hill, Ward Cllr Jeremy Wilcock, Julia Bugg (Clerk), Ian Reid (expert speaker).

2 Declarations of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests:

None.

3 Minutes:

The minutes of the meeting held on 8 November 2023 were approved as an accurate record.

4 Matters Arising from the Minutes:

4.1 Co-option of Parish Councillor:

Welcome to Cllr Chris Hill to the Parish Council.

4.2 Footpaths – Cutting back of hedges, nettles etc:

Cllr Beachell reported that all of the outstanding works had been undertaken but that two trees have blown down in recent storms. It was agreed to give the parties involved time to be able to get on the land to clear them as flooding and heavy rain makes this inappropriate at this time. Following discussion, it was agreed that the works undertaken by ERYC to the verge and hedge adjacent to the A164 between the C59 and Beswick School is not of an appropriate level. Clerk to contact ERYC and request that this carried out to the required standard.

4.3 ERYC – Community Governance Review:

The Clerk reported that the review determined that the number of Cllrs should not be increased and would remain at five for BPC.

4.4 Community Speedwatch:

In Cllr Jeffrey's absence the Clerk reported that BPC had not been successful in its bid to become part of the Community Speedwatch process but had been added to the queue of parish councils to have temporary mobile speed cameras on the C59. The waiting list for this is long and we will be informed when it is our turn.

4.5 Update Street Lighting SLA:

The Clerk reported that last year's details had been sent in error and the new version received in printed form, is for £2083.18.

4.6 Any other items:

None.

5 Flooding at Wilfolme:

Cllr Corscadden introduced the issue and invited guest Ian Reid, who sits on the Beverley and North Holderness Drainage Board to detail the reasons for the flooding and give his expert opinion as to what BPC can do to assist the affected parishioners. Detailed below is a summary of the information:

It was noted that the area known as Aike Carrs, which includes Wilfolme and three of the homesteads in the vicinity, was historically a wetland and which now has a very complex drainage system; 'high' level drainage being the River Hull and its tributaries and 'low' level being the Beverley & Barmston Drain to the west of the river and Holderness Drain to the east. Both of these drains sit at a lower height than the river and thus do not feed into the river by gravity. The drains were dug to carry local ground water and local surface run-off towards the Humber, so allowing all-year agriculture and husbandry and, incidentally, preventing flooding downstream in the urban areas of Beverley, Woodmansey, Dunswell and ultimately Hull.

When water levels in the Hull are low enough to allow for pumping of excess water from the drains, the three newly refurbished pumps at Wilfholme as well as those at Hempholme and Beverley Waterside are used. But if water levels are high then this is not possible. This means that in times of exceptional rainfall, the carr lands are still used as a temporary holding area for excess water. Additionally, the Hull is still tidal at Wilfholme meaning that flow is upstream twice a day, blocking drainage towards the Humber. Groundwater levels in the Wolds are currently at the highest levels ever recorded and did not fall as they usually would during summer 2023. As there are very few wooded areas on The Wolds, rain adds directly to the groundwater. As a consequence, springs are now pushing water vigorously into West Beck (R Hull) and all its tributaries such as Watton Beck. This water, in addition to the tidal blocking, is keeping river levels high and restricting use of the pumps.

The Hull is not overflowing. However, because its level is high, spillways on its tributaries such as Watton Beck and Scurf Dyke are taking water towards the Beverley & Barmston Drain i.e. the 'low' level drainage system. In addition, a breach during 2018 in the 19th century levée at Foston means that one-time 'high' level water from Beeford and Dunnington is flowing into the 'low' level drainage towards Wilfholme. These distant sources are exacerbating the flooding of Aike Carrs, Wilfholme and other areas. The topography of the former marshland will allow it to flood and nothing can be done to alter this currently.

The Environment Agency has carried out a long-running study into the 'high' level drainage. The study is still underway, but early indications are that renovating the 'high' level levées will cost close to £300M. Whilst Top Hill Low water treatment plant and Wilfholme Pumping Station will be maintained and protected, it is unlikely that work will be done because of a need to protect Aike Carrs and similar areas in the Hull valley. Within the Parish, the area currently inundated affects about 250 acres of grade 3 (and poorer) farmland and three homesteads. Locally, the way forward is to improve resilience of buildings with adaptations to prevent flooding of the three homes which are low lying.

Following discussion, it was agreed that a letter be sent to the lead flood authority (ERYC), to express concerns that little is being done to assist those affected. Additionally, a letter could be sent to Graham Stuart, local MP, to seek assistance for them too. Clerk authorised to undertake these actions.

It was also agreed that a more in-depth explanation be included in the BPC Newsletter due for distribution in March/April 2024. Clerk to ask Ian Reid to check the articles for accuracy prior to printing.

The Chair thanked Ian for his expert and in-depth explanation as to what is causing the flooding and for his guidance. All present agreed that this was a very interesting and thought-provoking report.

6 Planning Applications:

6.1 Planning Consultation for 23/02786/PLF:

Glebe House, 1 Church Lane, Kilnwick, East Riding of Yorkshire, YO25 9JW.

Amendment to plans; documents previously circulated – no amendment to decision.

No other applications were received following the publication of this document:

7 PRECEPT 2024/25:

Following the analysis of the details provided by the Clerk and discussion, it was agreed that the precept for 2024/25 be set at £6100 and the Clerk was authorised to complete and submit the necessary documents to ERYC.

8 Count of Rough Sleepers:

The Clerk informed the meeting that a null return had been made.

9 Finance:

9.1 Payments:

Confirmation and payment of required items including any received following the publication of this Agenda.

Street Lighting SLA – payment to ERYC - £2083.18

9.2 Finance Report:

The Clerk reported on the previously distributed reports.

10 Electoral Register:

The Clerk distributed the new register and requested that the old versions be shredded. Copy to be retained with Emergency Plan at the Kilnwick Village Hall and by Chair.

11 AOB: *Items arising under AOB cannot be resolved if they involve expenditure or commit the Council to a course of action but will appear on the next Agenda.*

11.1 Devolution Consultation:

It was noted that the invitation to participate in the consultation had been emailed to Cllrs, who may participate if they so desire.

11.2 Newsletter:

The Clerk reminded the meeting that she needs to create the newsletter and have it ready for agreement at the March meeting. Please email her Word documents and pictures for inclusion. It was agreed that a more detailed explanation relating to Agenda Item 5 be included. An up-to-date photograph of Cllrs will be taken at the March Meeting so please ensure all are present.

11.3 Hunt Disruption:

Parishioners were frightened, livestock affected and land entered illegally by the Holderness Hunt on Saturday 6 January 2024 along with the large number of saboteurs who pursued them. No advance warning of the hunt being likely to use public rights of way was given to landowners so they found themselves suddenly deluged by the hunt, hounds etc. Following discussion, it was agreed that the Clerk contact the hunt to express BPC's displeasure and request that consideration be given to parishioners, their livestock, pets and land.

Meeting Closed at 8.40 pm

Date of Next Meeting:

13 March 2024