

Cranwell, Brauncewell and Byard's Leap Parish Council

Minutes of the ordinary meeting of Cranwell, Brauncewell and Byard's Leap Parish Council held at Cranwell Village Hall, Old School Lane, Cranwell Village, NG34 8DF on Monday 3rd April 2023 at 7.30pm.

Participating: Chairman: Cllr Mr T R Batten

Councillors: Cllr Mrs C Batten, Cllr Mrs M Cassidy, Cllr Mr M A Cassidy, Cllr Mr M Collier, Cllr Mr M Pears (Vice Chairman and Acting Parish Clerk), Cllr Mr D Wilson and Cllr Mr D Graves

Also in attendance: No other officials or delegates attended the meeting.

Mrs B Pears, Assistant Clerk to the Parish Council

3 members of the public were in attendance.

Public speaking:

Cllr T Batten asked the members of the public whether anyone wished to say something before the meeting opened. Nobody wished to do so.

The Chairman declared the ordinary meeting open at 7:31 pm.

66 To receive apologies for absence and reasons given i.a.w. Local Government Act 1972, Sch 12, para 40.

There were no councillors absent.

67 To receive declarations of interest and to consider applications in relation to Disclosable Pecuniary Interests.

Disclosure of pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests is to be in accordance with the Localism Act 2011. The need for disclosure is to be based upon agenda items, or at any suitable time during a meeting when it becomes apparent to a Member.

Cllr M Pears declared an interest in minute ref: 69b. page 23-2023 as he is a payment recipient.

68 Notes of the ordinary meeting held on Monday 13th March 2023 of Cranwell, Brauncewell and Byard's Leap Parish Council to be approved as Minutes.

Action: The Council RESOLVED to approve the notes of the ordinary meeting held on Monday 13th March 2023 of Cranwell, Brauncewell and Byard's Leap Parish Council, as Minutes.

Proposed by Cllr T Batten, seconded by Cllr D Graves and approved by a vote of 6 for, and 2 abstentions by Councillors who were not at the March meeting.

69 Financial Matters

a. Approve the payments made since the last meeting.

PAYMENTS MADE BETWEEN MEETINGS - April 3rd 2023			
EB-0892	Clerk's Salary	Brenda Pears	£667.12
EB-0893	Clerk's Salary	Kirsty Elson	£631.82
Deb	Adobe AcroPro	Adobe	£15.17
Deb	Yale Doormaster Silver Gearbox latch and deadbolt	Screwfix Direct Ltd	£59.99
Deb	HIKVISION DS-1275ZJ CCTV vertical pole mount brackets x4	Amazon Services Europe s.a.r.l	£111.92
Deb	Email database	The Rocket Science Group, LLC (Mailchimp)	£20.26
TOTAL:			1506.28

Action: The Council RESOLVED to approve the payments made since the last meeting.

Proposed by Cllr T Batten, seconded by Cllr D Wilson and approved unanimously.

- b. Approve the payment of invoices etc. as listed on the Payments to be Authorised sheet.

Payments to be authorised

EB-0891	Playground - Annual Inspection	Wicksteed Leisure Ltd	144.00
EB-0894	Expenses	Brenda Pears	35.00
EB-0895	Councillors Expenses	Mike Pears	15.80
Total			194.80

Action: The Council RESOLVED to approve the payments of invoices etc. as listed on the Payments to be Authorised sheet.

Proposed by Cllr M Collier, seconded by Cllr D Graves and approved unanimously.

- c. Approve the bank reconciliation from the previous month.

Balance in Lloyds Account = £61,955.75

In addition, the Precept of £27,626 for next quarter was paid on 3rd April.

Action: The Council RESOLVED to approve the bank reconciliation from the previous month.

Proposed by Cllr D Graves, seconded by Cllr D Wilson and approved unanimously.

- d. To present information on preliminary documentation to show the 'End of Year' situation with the Council Finances for 2022-2023.

Detailed documentation will be provided at the next meeting after further reconciliations.

The Acting Clerk Cllr M Pears explained that the figures detailed today are necessarily predicted figures as the Council is still waiting for some monies to come in e.g the refund of maternity payments made to the Clerk. Due to receiving more money than anticipated, the Council is showing £6,200 underspent for 2022-2023.

Estimated Lloyds Balance on 31st March 2023 - £67,000

Reserves (Ring Fenced Funds) - £38,000

Unbudgeted Funds - £38,000

1/3rd retention of precept as required - £17,000

'Free' unbudgeted funds - £21,000

Unbudgeted funds represent 67% of 2023-2024 precept.

Regulations indicate that a Council can retain unbudgeted funds up to no more than 100% of annual income and expenditure i.e. of the precept.

EXTRA – we have £20,298 in the Pavilion Fund Account.

- e. To consider a grant request for £500 from the Air Ambulance.

The Council has an allotted budget for such grant requests and £1,000 remains in that budget.

Cllr T Batten's opinion is that the Air Ambulance Service does tremendous work and warrants this support.

Action: The Council RESOLVED to grant a donation of £500.

Proposed by Cllr T Batten, seconded by Cllr D Graves and approved by a vote of 7 for with one abstention.

- f. To discuss and consider a request from the Cranwell Junior Football Club for £200 to be refunded to them.

The payment of £400 the CJFC made to the Council this year was to include the cleaning of the toilets they have access to, but now that it has been agreed that they will do the cleaning themselves they feel money should be reimbursed. It was previously agreed that the Council would return £200 of this money.

Cllr Michael Cassidy pointed out that the club has been given access to storage facilities which they have not maintained properly. Specifically, they store the line marker in the small garage and the floor of this space is a mess, being covered in paint. Also, it is still cluttered. It was intended to be

for the line marker only. It was pointed out that C.J.F.C. had twice previously assured the Council that this would be cleared up but it still hadn't been. The meeting felt that this should be addressed.

Action: The Council RESOLVED to require the reinstatement of the garage floor to a clean condition, as it was when the football club took it over, before a refund of £200 could be made.

Proposed by Cllr T Batten, seconded by Cllr D Wilson and approved unanimously.

g. To consider changes to the water rates for the playing field – i.e the playing field area, bowls club etc.

The account for water rates is in arrears due to an error in the Direct Debit payments taken by the water company. The account with Anglian Water had been in credit, hence they reduced the DD to £8 per month but failed to adjust that amount when the costs rose. Anglian Water are suggesting payments of £70 to recoup the arrears, but the routine bills now ought to be approximately £40 per month. Acting Clerk Cllr Mike Pears suggested that rather than raising then lowering this DD amount risking further errors and complications, the Council should pay a lump sum to clear the arrears and continue with the correct amount debited each month.

Action: The Council RESOLVED to pay the arrears in a lump sum and authorise an increase in the DD amount to Anglian Water.

Proposed by Cllr M Pears, seconded by Cllr Michael Cassidy and approved unanimously.

h. To consider any financial implications of the Annual Playground Inspection by Wicksteed.

Cllr Michael Cassidy reported that most things that have come up from this are minor, no safety issues. Signs do not need updating as they were the correct ones at the time of the installation of equipment. The 'Springers' are getting old and need to be kept an eye on. Some bolts need tightening for which access is a bit difficult. Cllr D Graves said he would take a look to see what he can do. If these pieces of equipment do need to be replaced there is £4,000 already budgeted to do so. Also, some varnishing maintenance is required and the groundsman will be asked to include this in his work.

i. To consider the purchase of a Dymo labeller and tape at a cost of up to £50 inc vat. The defibrillators are the priority for this equipment.

Action: The Council RESOLVED to spend up to £50 on a labeller and consumables.

Proposed by Cllr M Pears, seconded by Cllr Mark Collier and approved unanimously.

j. To consider the purchase of a heat laminating machine.

This would be used for posters and notices – approximate cost £70. Cllr D Wilson donated a new machine to the council therefore removing the need for this purchase.

k. To consider any further suggestions for using the C.I.L money.

No further suggestions were made this evening.

70 Planning Applications

None received.

71 To receive a report from the Acting Parish Clerk on matters pertaining to the Parish Council.

1. We are owed £4,552 by HMRC for maternity payments + £827 for V.A.T. returns = £5,329 to come back in next week or so and added to 2022-23 accounts.

2. Fire extinguisher officially checked today in the Old School at the same time as those in V.H. and Social Club. We have 2 – one Co2 in the kitchen (its o.k.) and a water one in the main room that has been replaced as its over 5 years old. Social Club seem to get the bill for the whole complex – spoke to Ken Wilson (Social Club) and he will send us our portion of the bill.

3. HSBC bank account – still trying to gain access to the money.

4. PWLB LOAN APPLICATION – documents have been completed and after the Chairman has signed them, they would be ready to be submitted to LALC who do a first check then send them on to the Govt. with a covering report. Now on hold due to uncertainty over the financing of the project.
5. Enquiry about Street Cleaning not being done by NKDC – Cllr Jim Clarke advised he would investigate for us. He emailed to say the schedule should be for it to be done every 6 weeks, Cranwell was due on 20th March. He assures us he will continue to monitor such a programme for the future. No-one has seen them in the village.
6. The Council received an offer from “Finding Fitness Ltd” Stamford to possibly get a free “Monkey Wall” via them assisting us to apply to the National Lottery. No cost to us to apply. Details provided on separate sheet.
Action: The Council RESOLVED to request the Clerk to investigate further.
Proposed by Cllr T Batten, seconded by Cllr Mark Collier and approved unanimously.
7. SSE Complaints – phone call on 24th March – meter is wrong one (no signal) and doesn’t work so they are guessing at usage. They are going to fit an “old style” meter that we read periodically and then post the reading online -being done tomorrow (April 4th). Once fitted they should be able to manually read the old meter for past billing due – otherwise it will be free units. Addresses sorted by her while I was on the phone.
8. Notification from SSE of Change In Rates for Village Green Electric Supply. No contract – variable rate - Daily Standing Charge will be £1.62 per day. Units 57p per kwh. So we will be paying £592 per year just in standing charges.

72 Information update on the Parish Council Elections on 4th May 2023.

7 applications have gone in for Cranwell, Brauncewell and Byard's Leap Parish Council before closing of applications tomorrow – 4th April.

If the situation remains the same i.e. no more than 9 applications, there will not be a Cranwell, Brauncewell and Byard's Leap Parish Council election. Also, the Council will be an elected Council by default and no longer a co-opted one.

73 Consider making changes to the Clerk’s contract of employment to reflect the changing needs of the Parish Council for the period of the Pavilion building work.

The Council now has different demands on the role of the Clerk, particularly with a view to work being done on the new Pavilion. It was felt that the Clerk now needed to be working in the village and it was suggested that the Council now had an empty building (The Old School) that was ideal for use as a Parish Office. The Acting Clerk explained the various options available to the Council to implement this change and explained the legal advice they had obtained from an Employment Lawyer. As the Clerk’s contract currently stipulates the “place of work” as their own home it was proposed that the Clerk’s existing contract should be terminated by giving one month’s notice up to the start date of the new Council (May 8th) and a new one implemented from May 9th at the earliest. It was suggested that the new contract remains mainly the same as before but stipulates the requirement to work in an office in the Old School and to do this on at least 3 days a week. Expenses will not be paid for travel to and from that office. A new draft contract was shown to the Councillors for their consideration. Four weeks notice must be given to the Clerk on the current contract. A meeting would be arranged with the current Clerk to discuss this situation and to explore whether she wanted to re-apply for the post under the new conditions.

Cllr M Collier asked whether the position had been advertised at the time the vacancy had previously arisen. This was confirmed.

Cllr Pears declared an interest in this subject and wouldn’t vote.

Action: The Council RESOLVED to terminate the Clerk’s current contract, giving her the required four week’s notice, and to implement a new contract on the terms mentioned above.

Proposed by Cllr T Batten, seconded by Cllr D Graves and approved by 7 with one abstention (Cllr Pears).

74 Consider the formulation of an official response from the Parish Council to the Springwell Solar Farm project.

There is a deadline of 20th April 2023 for this. Cranwell, Brauncewell and Byard's Leap Parish Council is identified by the Planning Inspectorate as a 'consultation body who must be consulted'. The Council must provide a response even if that is 'nothing to contribute'.

Action: The Council RESOLVED to declare their support for this project.

Proposed by Cllr T Batten, seconded by Cllr C Batten. A vote of 3 for and 3 against with one abstention meant that the Chairman's casting vote was required for the decision.

75 To receive an update on the Pavilion project and agree any decisions with regard to progress.

The outline costs for the wooden building currently proposed are £90 to £100K for the main build with other costs for demolition, drainage and foundation estimated to bring that to £125K. The basic package for internal fitments is estimated to bring the total to around £150K. The contractors need a 12-week lead time and a build time of a further 12 weeks. There is no pre-fabrication off-site. Cllr T Batten expressed concern that in the initial consultation with the public the information leaflet distributed spoke of a brick building for this price but now the Council is offering a wooden building. Also, it was stated in that flyer that the village would be consulted again before the actual commitment to build it. With that in mind Cllr Batten felt another information leaflet is required to consult the residents again.

Cllr M Pears reminded the meeting that the Council must be sure of having the required funds before a loan can be requested, the normal procedure for applications. In particular they needed definite proof of the promised donation of £70,000 and it seemed that this was now unlikely to be forthcoming. He pointed out that the Council does have funds that can be re assigned from other areas of the budgets to meet all of the anticipated costs but, depending on the final price of the project, a loan had to be utilised and the residents could be contributing to loan repayments over as long as 13 years.

There was a lively discussion covering various aspects of the planning of this project. The delays, disappointments with suppliers and spiralling costs are causing councillors concern, but without finalising those costs the meeting agreed that residents cannot be asked to give their views again. Other alternatives were also being suggested, such as undertaking a much smaller build and utilising part of the Old School Building. The Pavilion Sub-Committee will be asked to meet as soon as possible. It was agreed that the Council could not proceed with any commitment to this project now without further consultation with the public.

Action: The Council RESOLVED to spend time finalising the full costing of the project as quickly as possible through the Pavilion Sub-Committee with a view to preparing a flyer to consult the residents again as they did before.

Proposed by Cllr D Graves, seconded by Cllr T Batten and approved unanimously.

76 To confirm the final arrangements for guest speakers/presentations at the Parish Meeting in April.

Speakers are all arranged. They are bringing their own presentation equipment. The refreshments are in hand. An extra-large poster will be put on the notice boards. Details are on the website. A reminder will be added to Facebook.

77 To discuss and make any decisions for the progress of the application to the Public Works Loan Board (PWLb) for a loan for the Pavilion.

Deferred. More details of costs required to establish funds available.

78 To receive an update on any decisions and developments with the future use of the Old School.

The demands of Parish administration are increasing, especially with the Pavilion project. The Old School will become the Clerk's office in the near future to make this role more effective and efficient. There will still be opportunities to use some of it for other activities.

79 To receive a report on the current situation with regard to the Speedwatch Group.

Cllr D Graves advised that he now has 2 more volunteers for this task. In their second session last Friday they had 360 vehicles go through in 1.5 hours. 7 of those were speeding and details were reported to the police. He is organising more training sessions.

80 To receive an update on the SIDS in the village.

Cllr Graves reported that he is struggling to get the supplier to respond to demands for action on the failed units. His calls are ignored. He has advised the company that the items are not fit for purpose and solicitors' action is being considered. New units will cost approximately £3,000.

81 To receive an update on the distribution of '30mph' stickers.

Cllr D Graves reported that these have been distributed to some residents along the main road. They are intended to be stuck on to their rubbish bins. They seem to have been well received so far and he has 2 new volunteers for the Speedwatch Group as a result too.

82 To receive an update on the on the installation of the new CCTV equipment, the deployment of suitable warning signs and the adoption of a 'Surveillance Camera Policy' document.

Cllr T Batten advised that the remaining cameras will be fitted by him at the end of this week, then a policy can be drafted.

83 To further consider the arrangements for celebrating the King's Coronation.

The proposed garden has yet to be costed and investigated for feasibility thus decisions deferred to the next meeting.

84 To further consider the decision reached (a resolution) at the November meeting (item 189, page 67) to try out a Consultation Session at a coffee morning. This would be part of the Church's Saturday coffee morning.

Cllr M Collier wants to be able to meet and chat to residents at the Saturday Church Coffee Morning to answer any questions they might have about the Parish Council. He would like to hand out a general information leaflet that gives some detail of what the PC responsibilities are, who the Councillors are and contact details. Action; The Acting Clerk will prepare this leaflet.

85 To consider again the proposal to mark the entrances to the villages by a gate or similar marker (last rejected at April 2022 Meeting).

There are safety requirements attached to this kind of installation as Roadways demand the position is at a safe distance from the edge of the road. The space, for gates for instance, is very limited in some places. Cllr Maureen Cassidy wondered why gates are thought to be appropriate. It seems that marking the entrance to the village has been shown to raise motorists' awareness that they need to check their speed. Cllr Michael Cassidy reminded the meeting that there is more than one village to consider for installations of this kind as this is the Cranwell, Brauncewell and Byard's Leap Parish Council. One set has previously been costed at £900.

Action: The Council RESOLVED to look at this proposal again. Proposed by Cllr T Batten, seconded by Cllr D Graves and passed with 5 for, 2 against and one abstention.

86 To receive reports from Councillors on their various Areas of Responsibility.

Cllr D Wilson said that the holes in the road are just getting bigger as they have not been dealt with.

Cllr Michael Cassidy reported that the Village Hall defibrillator still needs attention from an electrician to sort the light problem. The child's pads for a defibrillator have been ordered as they soon expire. The re-setting of the fence post at the playground is in hand.

Cllr M Pears confirmed that grass cutting is due to be done and that the handyman has been asked to clean and maintain village benches (varnish if necessary) as part of his contract.

- 87 On behalf of the Parish Council, Cllr M Pears thanked Cllr Carole Batten for her service as a Councillor. She will not be standing again this time.
- 88 Meeting dates.

The next meeting was confirmed, being Monday 15th May 2023 in Cranwell Village Hall, starting at 7:30 pm.

This will be the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council and the first one with the newly appointed Council.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 9:15pm.

Signature:

Printed Name: Cllr Mr T Batten

Date: 15th May 2023