

## **BOYLESTONE PARISH COUNCIL**

**Annual Parish Meeting held on Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> May 2023**

### **Boylestone Village Hall**

**Present** Cllr P Wilkins C Crossley (Locum Clerk)  
Cllr M Moore  
Cllr H Walker  
Cllr D Watkins  
Cllr G Upson

**Also Present** Pete Bambury (Newly appointed Clerk)  
Steve King (Neighbourhood Watch Representative)  
9. residents

#### **23/010 Appointment of the Clerk**

C Crossley was announced at the clerk for the meeting as a locum clerk, with P Bambury in attendance.

#### **23/011 Apologies**

Cllr S Bull (DCC)  
Cllr T Morley (DDDC)

#### **23/012 Chairman's Report – Prepared by Cllr R Watson and presented by Cllr H Walker**

### **Village & Parish Plan**

#### **Background**

Some 5 years ago, Boylestone Parish Council embarked on a Neighbourhood Plan in response to an offer by Derbyshire Dales local authority to have this incorporated in its next revised Local Plan.

Once developed in draft form, a main consideration was to open it up to public debate with the aim of identifying and agreeing projects which would most benefit our community, as well as those areas which represented opportunities to improve our parish to the benefit of residents. This was very much an 'open book' opportunity to then focus on those areas which the residents agreed they wanted to proceed with. At the time, this was considered an important document to produce for Boylestone Parish based on the following legislation:

*“Neighbourhood Plan policies take precedence over non-strategic Local Plan policies in decision-making.”*

Due to the impact of the restrictions caused by the pandemic, our draft neighbourhood plan was never rolled out for public review and was ultimately not agreed or published in time to be included in the local authority Local Plan.

As it eventually emerged, this delay was not crucial since Boylestone was not impacted by any material changes within the new Local Plan, in as much as it will be considered not suitable for any new development, except for limited opportunities for infill development within the village envelope/footprint. All other development will still fall within category of Development in the Countryside under planning policy SF4.

As a result of this, it was agreed by the Parish Council to focus on specific projects which had already been identified so far. These identified projects were to be scoped out with appropriate costings and benefits and then proposed for approval to proceed. Each of these would be presented to the residents for comment where options were to be considered as viewed appropriate. These projects were identified as:

**1. Village signage –**

- a. Green local places of interest signs.
- b. mandatory **Boylestone** signs.
- c. bespoke entrance signs, eg. “Welcomes careful drivers”, “Please drive carefully.” Or alternative bespoke/themed welcome signs.
- d. repair/maintenance of the existing 30mph signage.

Item a. was successfully completed in 2020

Items b.c.& d. will benefit from the experience gained in completing our local signage but these will require more collaborative initiatives with DCC Highways who are the legal owners, both physically & legally.

**2. Improved utilisation of village open spaces –**

- a. existing verges where the local authority is willing to assign use and maintenance over to Parish Councils.
- b. Parish owned land extending to some 4.25acres (1.79ha). Currently rented out for agricultural use but which provides opportunity to create a woodland & open space walking & activity amenity for the Parish. Within this project, in cooperation with neighbouring landowners, there may be further opportunities to extend the existing footpath network and woodland areas around the village.

**3. Telephone box – restore & repurpose including potential for extending open space around it.**

**4. Drainage ditches around The Square and New Road – following on from the very successful project undertaken by the Parish Council, it is now apparent that the ditches require further maintenance/clearing and that some areas which were not included earlier now require a significant amount of work to protect the roads from potential flooding.**

### **Progress for 2022**

By the end of 2022, the Parish Council had started scoping out options on the **village signage & the village land** open spaces study and had completed the **drainage/congestion improvements** as well as the **telephone box**.

The **telephone box** is virtually completed and is now used as a village walks information hub. This was done with donations from Councillor Morley DDDC, very generous donations from some 35 residents and funds set aside previously by the Parish Council. This was completed on time to a post pandemic revised deadline by a very hard working & skilful set of volunteers, led by George Upson, the Parish Clerk.

The **drainage traffic congestion** project on New road and leading down into the Square has also been completed. This area is now virtually flood free and provides a convenient area for traffic to pass relatively drama free. Both projects will always represent opportunities for enhancement & improvement. They also present an ongoing maintenance requirement. The latter being a key requirement and something the Council recognises has been a somewhat influential issue in which projects to prioritise.

Clearly these represent an impressive set of successfully completed projects despite the headwinds of the pandemic still rolling over into 2022. For the future we now also have a set of 2023-2024

initiatives in which to direct the Parish Council's priorities to plan and implement these outstanding previously approved projects in our Parish Council Plan.

Some of these remaining projects are still at the concept stage and will require consultation within the Parish to establish the most suitable and popular options should be pursued.

The three completed projects represent fine examples for the Parish Council to leverage external funding from several sources such as local government, DDDC & DCC, as well as from specialist agencies such as The Forestry Commission, The Woodland Trust, lottery fund and so on, with the aim of improving the environment, safety, and leisure provision for the residents of the parish.

### **Ongoing Planning** (within the revised DDDC Local Plan)

The parish council continues to receive a moderate number of development planning applications and has developed a reasonably effective communication line with both our formal local authority of Derbyshire Dales as well as our neighbouring South Derbyshire district council authority. The latter being triggered by a significant development at Lees Hall Farm Caravan Park, which in turn has provided us with better communication channels with our neighbouring Church Broughton Parish Council. This is currently under review by the planners but it looks likely that the planners will restrict the significant developments proposed there.

Specifically within our own parish we have taken direct action to call in two applications through Tony Morley our DDDC ward Councillor, the first, a repeat rejection by the planners for a retrospective residential conversion at Coton Wood Grange. This resulted in our PC attending the Planning Committee meeting in Matlock to make representations with Councillor Morley on behalf of the resident. This resulted in the planning committee overruling the planners recommendation and the application was granted. More recently we have requested that DDDC call in a development for a large agricultural building on a Woodland & pond wildlife site. This was on the grounds of disproportionate size for the stated need as well as lack of clarity for a building to support a mature wildlife site with 20 years of maturity. This decision was resolved at an open meeting attended by a number of concerned residents.

The focus of the Parish Council remains to review all applications in the context of the latest DDDC Local Plan referenced earlier and with this in mind encourage residents to identify and highlight any planning related concerns to the Parish Council. These concerns will always be welcomed and examined in relation to the above local plan criteria. Residents can still make their own individual representations and indeed multiple individual representations are often more powerful than the "single collective" representation from the PC

#### **1. Village care & maintenance**

These activities which would ordinarily be the direct responsibility of the Parish Council continue to be carried out by volunteers, both individuals, including Parish Councillors and local groups. These are activities such as grass cutting, maintaining the verges, looking after the clocks, decorative planting & the likes are conducted at no financial burden to the Parish Council freeing up financial resources for the more ambitious items which will continue to enhance the environment of our village.

In this spirit the Parish Council has placed a high priority on improvements and better maintenance of the areas which are normally the responsibility of the external Authorities but are underfunded and therefore overlooked.

With this in mind back in 2018 the Parish Council, supported by Councillor Bull-DCC, conducted a review of various issues related to the highways. Key areas being road surface & potholes, speed signage, drainage and condition of verges. The latter two being the catalyst to proceed with the New

Road drainage project and green village directional signs. This was supported with a joint site visit with highways management and a plan was agreed.

This was generally considered to be an overall successful initiative with significant improvements and repairs conducted during the following 12 months. However, during consecutive years of neglect, these “highways” related problems have re-emerged and have become the biggest area of concern for residents. With this in mind, the Council appealed for a list of issues to be collected, with the aim of submitting these through Councillor Bull to the appropriate level within DCC, so that we can repeat the positive exercise previously conducted in 2019.

This is something of a “work in progress”. The key challenges being;

- Lack of funding in DCC
- Identifying a “single point of contact”
- Balancing a repair job with a sustainable maintenance job

Having identified these challenges we have made good progress on establishing some good relationships with the responsible officers and coordinating the various specialist functions, road repair/drainage/flood risk management/planning/signage, etc. to achieve better outcomes.

So far since these issues were fed into DCC Highways we have received relatively prompt responses by way of emergency fixes of potholes and acknowledgement of localised disruptive and potential drainage problems. Some targeted longer term patching on approach roads and on large stretches of Audishaw Lane being good examples.

However these have come about by continuous pressure on a “he who shouts longer & loudest basis” rather than being part of the broader long term planned approach we are proposing.

## **2. Village communication & relationships**

This is something that the Parish Council sees as crucial for 2023 now that we have fully emerged from the restrictions of the Pandemic and recognising how a significant proportion of organisations and individuals are now working, socialising and communicating in different ways.

The above, combined with the decision to appoint a permanent paid clerk, presents an opportunity to review and enhance how the Parish Council communicates within and beyond the parish and how it represents itself.

It has been a long standing desire to ensure there are good two way communications with as many of the formal & informal groups within the village as well as the PCs and affiliates in neighbouring Communities.

Specific areas of focus will be:

### **Village website:**

this has very poor uptake and has fallen way behind the latest technology.

### **Communications with village groups:**

cross representation, either guest attendance for monthly quarterly updates or permanent co-opting.

### **Communications with external groups:**

attendance at neighbouring PC meetings. (Two way)

Benefits are:

- Improved relationships
- Identify best practice
- Pick up District & County notices from different sources,
- Identify shared issues, particularly with higher local authorities.

### **Summary**

By way of conclusion,

“Boylestone is one of the most pro-active villages in my ward” – Councillor Tony Morley, DDDC.

Tony continues to express this view externally in his own wards and more broadly around the rest of the Dales, so we must be doing something right! This is down to the wide range of very active, enthusiastic and multi talented groups in the village, representing a testament to the efforts of many residents, and we hope that the plans and objectives outlined herein will serve to maintain and support these great achievements and to further improve the environment and surrounding in which we live and continue to benefit from.

We should also recognise that a combination of these successes and accolades positions us well to be considered favourably to utilise grants and funds effectively in the future.

Thank you

Rob Watson 1<sup>st</sup> May 2023

The following comments were raised by residents in attendance;

Request made for the replacement of the 30mh road sign.

Questions raised about the parish owned land and the location. There were discussions about creating a circular footpath around the village. This would involve selling some land and purchasing other areas. Cllr Wilkins explained that this would require to have public comments and further discussions to be considered for the project, including costs and maintenance of the area for fencing, seating, info board etc.

Regarding drainage issues, a resident questioned if constant maintenance is now required. Cllr Upson described the reports from the environment survey report. The resident raised concerns following

heavy rain fall causing flash flooding and filling the ditch with silt and running off in the wrong direction.

It was mentioned that the verges are moving by the heavy traffic into the ditches. It was suggested that ditches were added to the land.

A resident described the drain clearing in Marchington by the Staffordshire council every 3 months.

Cllr Walker explained that this is something the Parish Council could undertake, but this would have an impact on the precept and therefore the council tax cost for the homeowner.

Thanks were given by Cllr Walker to those involved for the telephone box.

Concerns were raised regarding neighbouring PC planning, as in some cases Boylestone village are unaware of planning applications which may impact Boylestone.

Suggestions were made of contacting other neighbouring Parish Councils.

The Gateway has been removed when drainage work was undertaken. Gateways have not been replaced. Concerns were raised about travellers accessing the site.

A request has been made to highways, that the entrance to the lighthouse for improvements to the road surface.

Further comments raised regarding heavy traffic and speed in the village. An incident was described that horse and rider were hit by a tractor.

Potholes raised as a concern on New Road. The app "Love Clean Streets" was described and an easy way to report potholes to highways.

Thanks were given from a resident to Cllr Rob Watson for his report.

### **23/013 Audited Accounts for year 2022/2023**

Financial report given by Cllr Upson.

Financial Summary Boylestone Parish Council 2022-2023						
Cost Description		s brought forward	Incom	Expendit	Net Cost	Reserves Carried Forward
<b>Reserves Brought Forward</b>		3257				0
Derbyshire Dales - Annual Precept			792		792	
Parish Lands Rental received			576		576	
Interest from Lloyds TSB - 30 day notice account			2		2	
DALC	Derbyshire Councils Assoc			71	71	
Village Insurances	Public Liability			167	167	
Audit fees				45	45	
Website management				85	85	
Defib Grant	Grant to Village Hall For new Battery			200	200	
Christmas Tree	Contribution to Village Christmas Trees			200	200	
Phone Box Renovation						
BT Phone Box	Renovation of Phone Box			1420		
Glass Donors		200	390			
Phone Box Net Cost					830	
Platinum Jubilee	Jubilee Celebration Costs					
Platinum Coins				210		
Platinum Fireworks				399		
Derbyshire Dales Platinum award			500			
Platinum Award Net Cost					109	
Reserves Carried Forward						2919
Total Income/Expenditure		3457	2260	2798	3078	2919
Note	VAT reclaim to be made following Audit further £200 cost reduction possible					

With added description of the telephone box costs and the Jubilee celebrations.

#### **23/014 Reports Received**

Neighbourhood watch representative Steve King, explained how to contact the group via the WhatsApp Group. The Parish Council will re-publish the details for the group on the Parish Council Website.

#### **23/015 Any other business**

None raised.