

Minutes of Dunham-on-Trent, with Ragnall, Darlton and Fledborough Parish Council (Dunham & District Parish Council)



Meeting of **Dunham & District Parish Council** held on the **11th Oct 2022** at Dunham Village Hall, the meeting commenced at **6:30pm**.

Council Members & Officer Present

Cllr Madeline Barden
Cllr Vera Ballinger
Cllr Kathryn Watkinson
Cllr Adrian Stapleton
Cllr Carole Booth
Current Vacancies
Ed Knox

Chairman
Vice-Chair
Cllr Lucy Atkinson
Cllr Emma Thorpe
1
Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer

Also, Present

0 Members of the Public
County Cllr John Ogle
Dist Cllr Shirley Isard
Ed Cooke Meadow Makers Project Manager

Queen Elizabeth II - Following the news of the death of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II on 8th September 2022, protocol and Section 243 of the Local Govt Act 1972 prevented the calling of a September meeting. A Book of Condolence was arranged at the Village Hall with the joint cooperation of the Parish Council and the Village Hall Committee, the flag was flown at half-mast during the required mourning period. A copy of the Proclamation of King Charles III was displayed in all the noticeboards in the parishes and a copy has been included as an appendix to this month's minutes.

➤ Public Forum None.

58/22 To receive apologies for absence

The Council **resolved** to accept the apologies of Cllrs Bean & Lovett. Cllrs Oldfield & Stapleton did not attend.

59/22 To receive declarations of interest None.

60/22 To Approve Minutes of the Previous Meeting

After discussion, the council **resolved** to accept the minutes. The chairman signed the minutes of the previous meeting as a true and accurate record.

61/22 To Consider Altering the Start Time and Frequency of meetings

The neighbouring Councils at Laneham, East Drayton, Normanton-on-Trent and Markham Clinton meet every other month instead of ten times a year. The Council has been in bi-monthly since May as it met in May, July and Sep and the business has been manageable so far without meetings getting up to 3 hours long. It is also easier for the Clerk to work the meetings (particularly in the winter months), when they start a little earlier with several other parishes starting at 6:30. After discussion, the Council **resolved** that meetings will commence at 6:30pm and move to bi-monthly from November 2022 onwards.

62/21 To Progress the Jubilee Wildlife & Environmental Project

Cllr Barden welcomed the Project Manager who gave an update on the project. Rewilding taking place across 7 identified sites in the 4 parishes of the Council's area. This involves meadows, tree planting, and wildlife homes. The locations should encourage bees and dragon flies. The meadows are being made at present in Fledborough, Ragnall and Dunham. The plan is to have a community tree planting day in December and a further leaflet drop in the Spring of 2023 to inform the public of the progress of the project. The grants and donations will pay for the setting up of the project. The ongoing annual maintenance cost of the sites is expected to be £1500 in total, per year. The Clerk suggested that the Council can potentially fund this, at no extra cost to the tax-payer by using 75% of the S.137 budget for this purpose.

63/21 To Order Signage for the Jubilee Wildlife & Environmental Project

Cllr Barden discussed the idea for the signage, and will obtain a quote for an acrylic sign to say:

*"These Trees were planted by the children of the parishes
To celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee
And the reign of Queen Elizabeth II
1952 – 2022"*

64/22 To receive reports from County and District Councillors

Dist Cllr Stanniland – Did not Attend due to illness and provided the following report by email:

- New leader of Bassetlaw District Council, Cllr James Naish.
- STEP fusion project has been confirmed for West Burton Power Station. This should bring millions of pounds in investment to the area.

Dist Cllr Isard – advised further information on the appointment of Cllr Naish as Leader of BDC.

County Cllr Ogle: provided an update to the Council, which included:

- West Burton Site for Nuclear Fusion STEP: "STEP (Spherical Tokamak for Energy Production) is an ambitious Government Led programme to design and construct a prototype fusion power plant. The first example of its kind in the world.

Fusion power will provide a reliable and virtually limitless source of low carbon energy to meet expected increases in future energy demand.

Fusion power differs significantly from nuclear fission as it does not produce the same type of highly challenging wastes. The process is also safe. If any disturbance occurs, the plasma cools and within seconds the reaction stops.

It's important to note that fusion energy will sit alongside renewable energy sources - such as wind and solar to create a diverse energy portfolio to serve the country's needs.

The process of building and operating the plant will be led by the UK Atomic Energy Authority (UKAEA). As a result, the UKAEA launched a nation-wide search to find a suitable site to build its new prototype STEP fusion power plant at the end of 2020.

A bid document for the West Burton A power station site was prepared by the County Council and its partners, due to the imminent closure of the coal fired power station. This is now expected to be after this winter, and will not affect the Fusion plans.

The West Burton bid focused on the site's central location in the country and its close proximity to a wide range of complementary research and development and manufacturing facilities along with high-quality academic institutes. The West Burton site also provides a large amount of land which could be developed further to act as a wider campus for not only the fusion energy plant but training facilities and a range of complementary uses. The site has a direct rail connection and river access to enable people and goods to be moved to the site sustainably.

The UKAEA made their final site recommendation to the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy over the summer of 2022. The decision to select West Burton as the home of STEP was formally announced on 3rd October.

Benefits of STEP

The decision to make West Burton the home of STEP will bring massive long term economic benefits not only to the local area but to the region as a whole. This will be in the construction of the power plant, research and development activities and the supply chain as a whole. Training opportunities in high skilled areas will also be significantly boosted.

- The construction and operation of the fusion power plant will employ a significant number of people. Nuclear power plants (of a similar scale) employ between 500 to 100 people and during the construction process can swell to 3500 workers or more at the peak.
- Research into fusion energy shows it is creating 4000 jobs annually (direct employment and related activities)
- Supply chain – the UK already has a thriving private sector fusion industry and a significant proportion of this is in our region. The STEP project will reinforce and expand on this.
- The UKAEA are planning to build and invest in training facilities in the local area which will give local people the opportunity to gain training and, ultimately, highly skilled jobs.

Process Going Forward

Given the recent announcement, the timescales/process going forward is still being developed. However, it is important to note that the UKAEA are placing a great deal of importance on working with and consulting with the local communities.

An initial public event will be taking place at West Burton power station on Thursday 6th October. However further public events will be taking place over the coming weeks at a variety of locations across Bassetlaw. The purpose of these events will enable the UKAEA to introduce themselves and provide information to local communities.

The UKAEA will still be required to undertake detailed site assessment work and the preparation of a full planning application as a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project along with gaining all the necessary consents prior to any construction work taking place on the site.

Expected future timescale:

October 3rd 2022	Location of STEP site announced
2024	STEP concept design approved
2032	Detailed engineering design and all relevant permissions and consents to build the plant sought
2040	Fusion plant to begin operating

All questions from the public should be directed to communications@step.ukaea.uk

Devolution Deal for Nottinghamshire

Cllr Ogle then discussed the Devolution Deal for Nottinghamshire the Government confirmed that a £1.14 billion devolution deal is on offer for Nottinghamshire, Nottingham, Derby, and Derbyshire: £1.14 billion devolution deal for the East Midlands. More details about the deal are available on the website here:

www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/devolution-a-brighter-future-for-the-east-midlands :

Devolution: summary of the deal

The Government has confirmed that a £1.14 billion devolution deal is available for the East Midlands over the next 30 years. The deal covers Derby, Derbyshire, Nottingham, and Nottinghamshire. All four city and county council leaders have signed up to the deal.

The four councils will continue working together to develop details of the deal. Each council will take a report through their respective council meetings. There will also be a public consultation later this year to ensure that the voice of residents, businesses and partners is fully heard.

After the deal is confirmed there will be opportunities to build and enhance on it over time. There is a lot still to be agreed, and this is the beginning of the journey, not the end. We're determined to build on this deal over time, as other areas have done. The new mayoral combined county authority (MCCA) will be considered at future national government spending reviews.

Governance

- The two city and two county councils would be constituent authorities, who would each appoint two members to the combined authority – 8 members in total, plus the elected mayor.
- There would also be up to 8 non-constituent members, including up to 4 representatives from district and borough councils. The government requires the two city and two county councils and the mayor to have a majority on the governing group.
- The government expects emergency services, health, and business to be represented.
- The mayoral county combined authority (MCCA) could create committees which can include representatives from city, county, district, and borough councils, and other stakeholders.
- Audit and Scrutiny Committees will be set up.
- Some of the powers held by the MCCA and/or the mayor would be national government powers. Some would be powers already held by the city and county councils. There are no plans to give the MCCA/mayor any District or Borough Council powers.
- The four councils and other partners are working with the D2N2 Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) to identify the best way to integrate the work of the LEP into the new combined authority.

Resources

- East Midlands Fund, including capital and revenue each year over a 30-year period.
- Capacity Funding in 2023-4 and 2024-5 to support the MCCA in early stages.
- Devolved Capital Funding in 2024/5 to support the building of new homes.

- Capacity funding to support the pipeline of housing sites.
- Further capital to support the delivery of shorter-term housing and net zero priorities.
- Capacity funding to support the preparation of Local Transport Plan.
- Responsible for devolved funding for projects within the Road Investment Strategy 2 (RIS2) and Levelling Up Fund (LUF) major capital programmes.
- Fully devolved Adult Education Budget.
- Power to borrow up to an agreed cap for non-transport functions.

New devolved functions and powers of the mayor and MCCA

- Designation of a Mayoral Development Area, with consent of relevant District and Borough Councils.
- Housing and land acquisition powers, housing supply, land development and regeneration, commercial space, and infrastructure, working closely with Homes England. Relevant District and Borough Council consent also needed where Homes England compulsory purchase powers are being exercised.
- Business rate supplement and option of a Council Tax precept to fund Mayoral functions are part of the framework, but no plans to use the precept as can be avoided by capacity funding.
- Power to draw up a local integrated transport plan and strategies, as well as bus franchising.
- Transport functions, including setting up and coordinating a Key Route Network, smart integrated ticketing, may run enhanced concessionary fares schemes.
- Work with national government and Great British Railways to ensure Integrated Rail Plan, including HS2, Midland Main Line electrification etc. maximise regeneration impacts.
- Economic development and regeneration.
- Adult education and skills. Supporting development of Local Skills Improvement Plans (LSIP).
- Retrofit measures, clean heat coordination, and local energy plan, generating new jobs.
- Duty to take action to improve public health given to MCCA as well as constituent authorities.
- Work closely with Police and Crime Commissioners on public safety.
- Work with local partners on long-term governance model for fire and rescue services.
- Working with national government to explore initiatives to address homelessness, domestic abuse, community safety, social mobility, and support for young people.

Frequently asked questions and answers

Q) What is devolution?

A) Devolution is the transfer of powers and funding from national government to local government.

Q) What sort of devolution deal are we looking at in the East Midlands?

A) We are looking at a devolution deal to set up a combined authority. If the deal is approved by central government, it would create a new East Midlands Mayoral Combined Authority. This is known as a 'level deal'. Level 1 and level 2 deals offer considerably fewer transfers of powers and budget from central government.

A combined authority is a legal body created through national legislation that enables a group of two or more councils to collaborate and take collective decisions across council boundaries.

A combined authority is more than an informal partnership or even a joint committee. It empowers member councils to be more ambitious in their joint working, taking advantage of powers and resources devolved to them from national government.

Q) Why are we doing this?

A) We are doing this:

- to address underfunding in the East Midlands
- to focus spending on local priorities
- to work together across services and use local knowledge to get better value for money
- to bring in new investment, better training, and job opportunities, and upgraded and more connected public transport to the area
- to be more self-sufficient and have more responsibility for the future of the local area
- so that more major decisions can be taken by locally elected politicians who better understand local issues, and can be held to account more easily
- Ultimately, the reason we are doing this is to make sure that services across the region are the best they can be, for the benefit of our residents.

Q) What would happen to existing local councils in Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire? Will they be merged, so they no longer exist?

A) We are not talking about merging councils together. If the devolution deal is successful, all local councils in Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire - including Nottingham City and Derby City – will continue to exist, as they do now.

Q) What powers would councils lose if they became part of a combined authority?

A) None. This is about central government devolving powers to the region, not individual councils giving up power to the region. Local councils will continue to make the decisions over local issues.

Q) What would happen to local council services?

A) There will be no immediate changes to local council services if the devolution deal is agreed. In the longer term, some services might be delivered on a regional rather than local basis, if this is deemed more efficient or better value for money.

Q) Why would more local decision making be better?

A) Local decision making tends to result in better local economic performance, as policies are tailored to the needs of specific areas.

Local leaders often know and understand the areas much better than politicians and civil servants based in the capital, and their knowledge and experience can deliver what is appropriate and what will work for their region, especially when they work with nearby public and private sector partners.

Q) Why do we need an elected regional mayor?

A) One of the conditions for a level 3 deal, which offers the most local powers and funding, is having an elected mayor. The role of an elected regional mayor would be to look at major issues which affect our whole area, a prominent, accountable person who can look at the big picture and give the region more of a voice.

A mayor with a clear and direct mandate, strong accountability, and the power to make change happen, could be a powerful driving force for the East Midlands.

If approved, the mayor would work together with leaders of local councils to create a strategy for the wider area. This is a critical role, and it is essential that this person should be democratically accountable.

Local councils would still be responsible for most public services, such as waste management, schools, recreational facilities, and so forth. The mayor would focus on wider issues that span across the area, like transport, regeneration, and employment.

Q) What powers are you asking for in the devolution bid?

A) We are focussing on key areas including transport and infrastructure, business growth, inward investment, strategic regeneration, employment, employment skills, supporting young people's journey into adulthood, and community safety.

We believe that these are areas the entire region would benefit from, in terms of greater investment and more decision making at a local level.

Q) Isn't this just adding another layer of bureaucracy?

A) This isn't about adding a layer of unnecessary bureaucracy but moving resources and decision-making powers which already exist from London to the East Midlands and making all of this democratically accountable to the people who live here.

Devolution is mainly about strengthening regional arrangements. If a combined authority deal was approved, it would come with new wide scale powers not currently available at a local level.

These new powers would be exercised across the whole region, with the consent of local councils in our area. This is because they would add value by addressing issues like transport that benefit from being planned on a wider geographical basis.

Q) If devolution is about getting access to more funding, why couldn't we have that in the first place?

A) The East Midlands has long been overlooked, in comparison to other areas like the West Midlands and Greater Manchester in terms of government investment. Public spending per person is lowest in the East Midlands at £12,113 – 10% below the UK average.

The government has made it clear through their Levelling Up White Paper that they believe more local decision-making leads to better outcomes for communities, and so the greatest benefits are attached to devolution deals which include more local accountability.

Q) Will this mean a rise in Council Tax? Haven't the four main councils involved in this asked for powers to raise money through more Council Tax in their bid?

A) In our bid to the government, we have asked for everything that is potentially on offer, as we don't want to rule anything out at this early stage. We have included the power to raise money through Council Tax because it might be used at some point in the future.

Of the nine existing mayoral combined authorities, eight have this power, but only two have ever actually used it. So, this is a possible option, not a foregone conclusion.

Q) What happens if we don't have devolution?

A) It would be a major missed opportunity. We'd miss out on the chance of getting more funding for services in our region, and the efficiency of working at scale.

We could potentially get left behind compared to other areas who are part of devolution deals, giving them a bigger voice, as well as being able to make more major decisions locally, near the people they affect.

It's likely we would have less influence over future government investment priorities, less financial certainty, would have to compete more for national funding, and we could lose the chance for a guaranteed funding stream.

Ultimately, we'd lose a big chance to improve public transport, get more investment for business growth, bring in more jobs, skills, and training, and improve the places where we live and work, as well as potentially much more.

Devolution is all about getting a better deal for our area, and we don't want to miss out.

Q) Which areas have devolution arrangements like the one planned for the East Midlands? Which other areas are looking at setting this up?

A) Nine combined authorities with elected mayors currently exist in England:

- Cambridgeshire and Peterborough
- Greater Manchester
- Liverpool City Region
- North of Tyne
- South Yorkshire
- Tees Valley
- West Midlands
- West of England
- West Yorkshire

Other areas were invited by the government in February 2022 to start formal negotiations to agree new devolution deals, with the aim of agreeing a number of these deals by autumn 2022:

- Cornwall
- Derbyshire and Derby
- Devon
- Durham
- Hull and East Yorkshire
- Leicestershire
- Norfolk
- Nottinghamshire and Nottingham
- Plymouth and Torbay
- Suffolk

Derby City Council, Derbyshire County Council, Nottingham City Council and Nottinghamshire County Council have sent the government initial proposals to negotiate a combined devolution deal.

65/22 Finance:

1. To Approve Payments:

The Council **approved** the following: -

<u>Payee</u>	<u>Item</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Holmes Groundcare	Grass cutting Dunham Play Area Jul	£92.70
Holmes Groundcare	Grass cutting Dunham Play Area Aug	£46.35
Holmes Groundcare	Grass cutting Dunham Play Area Sep	£46.35
RBLI	Lamppost Poppies for all 4 parishes	£780.00
S.Ashworth Diggers	Dunham Play Area Remedial Works & Bin Emptying	£106.00
S.Ashworth Diggers	Darlton Play Area Remedial Works	£52.00
S.Ashworth Diggers	Dunham Laneham Road Lengthsman Works	£250.00
S.Ashworth Diggers	Fledborough Lengthsman Works	£175.00

S.Ashworth Diggers	Ragnall Lengthsman Works	£350.00
S.Ashworth Diggers	Dunham Main Village Lengthsman Works	£250.00
S.Ashworth Diggers	Dunham Play Area & Fledborough Bin Emptying	£32.00
NALC	New Cllr Training 1 x Delegate	£45.00
Buzz Off Pest Solutions	Wasp Nest Treatment Dunham Play Area	£45.00
Cllr Watkinson	Mileage to Bilsthorpe Lengthsman Training	£15.30
MeadowMakers Ltd	Wildlife Project wildflower meadows, across 5 sites	£3,125.00
Cllr Barden	Expenses Mileage to Meetings & QEII Condolence Book	£72.38
Total Payments		<u>£5,481.08</u>

Receipts:

<u>From</u>	<u>Item</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Bassetlaw District Council	2 nd ½ Concurrent Grant	£17.00
Bassetlaw District Council	2 nd ½ Street Cleaning Grant	£244.00
Bassetlaw District Council	2 nd ½ Precept	£7,503

Total Receipts **£7,764**

Bank Balance **£35,415.47***

Bank Reconciliation for the year to date to be approved. Council **resolved** unanimously that figures were correct. Reconciliation to be signed by when practical. Direct Debits and Standing Orders for staff salaries including PAYE and Pension, all **approved** unanimously. * £5,461.50 Wildlife & Environmental Project Budget, Grant Funds currently raised and Ring-Fenced for the project. The County Council Local Communities Fund Grant Application final 25% will be paid if the Council fully spends the £3,750 on the wildlife project, on provision of invoices to Notts CC.

2. **Finance: Lengthsman**

The Council noted the early rough draft of the budget from the Clerk. For the past 10 years the previous Notts County Council Lengthsman Grant provided an annual payment to the Parish Council of £3700. However, the relaunching of the scheme by the County Council has now reduced this annual amount by £2,740 to £960. Therefore, the Parish Council needs to consider how to fund the Lengthsman role in future, via the precept. The estimated extra amount next year to cover this reduction in funding, inflation and other rising costs is estimated to cost the following extra to the local tax payer, if the full cost is added to the precept:

Monthly @ Band A	Monthly @ Band B	Monthly @ Band C	Monthly @ Band D	Monthly @ Band E	Monthly @ Band F	Monthly @ Band G
£0.85	£0.99	£1.13	£1.28	£1.56	£1.84	£2.13

The Council will look at the budget in January, once the Bassetlaw Council Tax Base is known. A potentially suitable replacement for the Lengthsman role has been found, but to make it worthwhile for both the candidate on a self-employed basis, and to get the most benefit to the local villages of the Council area, the Council will consider 1 full day (7.5hrs) per week. The Clerk will add the Lengthsman role to the November agenda.

The Council asked the Clerk to submit a Freedom of Information request to Notts County Council asking for all records and information relating to how the scheme was recalculated, what the total budget was, a list of all councils in the scheme, the amounts paid to them, their population/electorate sizes and methodology around the funding allocation.

66/22 **To Receive an update on Fledborough Broadband with a 15 Minute Presentation by Evolve Ltd**

Cllr Atkinson gave an overview on the progress to date. Evolve Ltd are hopeful that the Govt Voucher scheme will, if enough domestic properties and businesses sign up to the scheme it will fund the project. By signing up to the scheme, the applicants have to receive their broadband from Evolve for a minimum 1-year term. At present, Evolve are waiting for the Govt Portal to go live and funding to be allowed to be applied for (as the Govt have frozen this at present), Evolve will then produce a leaflet for each resident explaining how to apply.

If any residents have further questions, they can also contact the Notts County Council Broadband Engagement Officer and his Better Broadband for team using enquiries.broadband@nottsgov.uk or by phoning 0115 977 2532.

67/22 To pass a resolution to sign up to the civility and respect pledge & adopt the new Dignity at Work Policy NALC

NALC, SLCC and One Voice Wales request that all Parish Councils consider signing up to the Civility and Respect Pledge demonstrating a commitment to standing up to poor behaviour across our sector. Even Councils who currently abide by the principles of Civility and Respect, it may not always be the case, you don't know who might join the Council in the future and try to use bullying and harassment to achieve their goals – having considered this now and put in place the recommended policies and procedures, Councils are well prepared to nip such behaviours in the bud.

Council's signing the pledge must update their policies and procedures by adopting the NALC Dignity and Work Policy.

It is approved for use by both SLCC and NALC and focuses on challenging all inappropriate behaviour, rather than just bullying and harassment, having a zero-tolerance approach and the aim of dealing with concerns before they escalate.

There is no place for bullying, harassment, and intimidation within our sector and signing up to the Civility and Respect Pledge is one of the ways a council can demonstrate that it is committed to standing up to poor behaviour across our sector, and to demonstrating positive changes which support civil and respectful conduct.

By signing the Pledge, the council is agreeing that it will treat councillors, clerks, employees, and representatives of partner organisations and volunteers with civility and respect in their roles, and that it:

- has put in place a training programme for councillors and staff
- has signed up to the Code of Conduct for councillors
- has good governance arrangements in place including staff contracts and a Dignity at Work policy
- will seek professional help at early stages should civility and respect issues arise
- will commit to calling out bullying and harassment if and when it happens
- will continue to learn from best practice in the sector and aspire to being a role model / champion council e.g., via Local Council Award Scheme
- supports the continued lobbying for change in legislation to support the civility and respect, including sanctions for elected members where appropriate.
- After discussion the Council **resolved** to sign the pledge and adopt the Dignity at Work Policy with immediate effect. A signed copy is included as an Appendix to these minutes.

68/22 To Receive Councillor's/Clerks' Reports including Road Traffic Accidents:

• **Noting of Accidents – None**

New Highways issues, Cllrs report via the online tool (ideally with photos) in first instance whenever possible and let the Clerk know the reference number, then at each meeting any unactioned reported items the Clerk will escalate to the County Cllr/District Cllr, Highways Manager/Waste Managers.

The following items have been raised with the Highways Authority Manager so that these matters can be investigated and finally resolved. Each month the Clerk chases the Highways Manager and the Parish Council adds to this list while awaiting a reply:

Outstanding Items (chased monthly with the Highways Manager and being discussed with the new area manager at the site meeting with Cllrs Barden & Ballinger on 15th Nov 2021) Highways Manager Response in italics:

- **4 Long Row Cottages Flooding** - The Drainage Manger and Principal Flood Risk Manager are working together to find a resolution to this issue. The resident has been contacted by a member of the Flood Risk team at NCC. The Council would like to be copied in on the final resolution for information purposes, request that Highways Manager provides a copy of the report. *23.12.2021 – The flooding issues at 4 Long Row Cottages are currently being investigated and if I receive any further updates, they will be forwarded to the Parish Council. 16.06.2022 the County Drainage Manager advised "This particular issue is something that I've looked in to. It has been awaiting a further drainage investigation,*

at my request, to try and establish the cause of the issue, but we just haven't been able to prioritise an attendance as yet due to the backlog of other issues Countywide.

The information in the letter from the resident to Cllr Ogle is really helpful and actually negates the need to attend for further investigation. It's clear that we need an assessment of the levels to see if the recently installed pipe can be replaced with one at the appropriate level for the water to drain away. This is something that I'll need to request that my colleagues in the Highways Design Maintenance team carry out. I'll submit a request to them tomorrow and then advise you when I receive a response to indicate what timescale we may be looking at.

In terms of when the works might take place, the Structural Drainage budget, which I manage and is designed to deliver such works, is allocated in advance of each financial year. This means that I will be unable to fund any required works this year, but any required works could potentially be considered for funding in next year's programme.

We need to know what any proposed works will consist of before any further decision can be taken, so let's see where things are once the levels have been assessed. 25.08.2022 Drainage Manager advised "I need to chase up my colleagues in the Highways Design team. I'll come back to you once I have a response."

06.09.2022 Drainage Manager advised "I'm meeting a colleague from the Highways Design team on site tomorrow afternoon to start initial discussions. In terms of allocating funds for any works identified, it'll be dependent on the magnitude of scheme required, but it won't be this financial year as my budget is allocated in advance of each financial year. It'll be consideration for funding alongside all other schemes Countywide that require funding from the structural drainage budget. That's allocated on a risk-based approach. This means giving priority to those situations where a risk of injury exists (e.g., on the highway speed network) or where the internals of properties might be affected. Everything else we will seek to prioritise as best we can, but it still means fitting in work between the most pressing issues / programmed activities."

11.10.2022 Drainage Manager advised "I met a colleague from the Design Team on site a couple of weeks ago. We spoke to the resident affected whilst there. We'll need to return to take levels but I think that the solution is to create a ditch around the outside of the field. This will require liaison with the owner of the field. It's a scheme that will be considered for funding for the next financial year, commencing April 2023. The resident is aware of that."

- **Children Playing/Playground Signage REF HAMS 4302792** - the Parish Lengthsman advises that on Low Street near the Village Hall, there is no Children Playing/Playground Signage. Reported to Highways Manager 19.04.21. Highways Manager agreed no signage was there so this would be looked into for potential signage installation. The Highways Manager asked Ruth Eyre Highways Liaison Coordinator (HLC) to provide the PC with an update. 01.10.2021 HLC asked for a google earth map of the location of the play area, map emailed to HLC. 07.12.21 HLC confirmed this is submitted on the Highways Programme for 2022/23. 15.06.2022 The 'children playing' sign on Low Street will be provided this current financial year – I'm sorry I can't be more specific on timescales, as there have been a number of staff changes in the section that deals with these so I can only say that it will be provided in due course.
- **Road Name Plates for Sweet Apple Lane in Fledborough & Main St Ragnall** – The Clerk requested on 13.07.2022 that the Bassetlaw Street Naming Dept order and install the appropriate name plates. **23.08.2022 Item Closed** - Bassetlaw surveyed each home and the majority responses from local residents was to take no action and leave the street without an official name, leaving the addresses unchanged. Bassetlaw concluded by saying that no further action will be taken in regard to this matter and the case is now closed.

- **Dedicated public highway access St Oswalds Church to Church Walk**

At the May meeting members of the public expressed concern over the closure of the access to the public along this route. Cllr Barden explained that she had been in contact with the Highways Officer at County Council regards the matter of the closure of the public highway, because the County Council have stipulated in their response to the planning application for the conversion of the church the following:

"It should be noted that our records suggest that the footpaths linking the church to the A57 and Church Walk, together with the area located directly in front of the entrance into the building are dedicated as public highway. These areas must remain available for public use."

The Council has contacted Bassetlaw Planning Dept for their views because the red line looks as though part of the dedicated highway is showing within the curtilage of the church's new owner, BDC have advised:

*"With regard to public rights of way, there is no specific reference within the planning permissions, however, the granting of planning permission **does not override** any existing legal rights of way. The closure of a right of way, etc would be a matter initially for the County Council to resolve and there are appropriate procedures to follow.*

The red line application site refers to the land to which the application relates, however, the granting of planning permission does not override any existing legal rights of way or third-party rights of ownership."

After talking with the highways officer at the County Council, they have clarified that:

"The whole path from the A57, under the church, in front of the church door and onto Church Walk is a public highway of Notts County Council."

The highway has been closed by the new owner of the church at the archway (which they do not own) and has erected signage which states:

"This is no longer a church. It is a private residence. To access the graveyard entries are via the A57 and the Green Thank you." And "Over the last year large pieces of stone have fallen. For health & safety reasons, and by the recommendation of the Highway Authority, the gate is closed until further notice"

The County Council Highways Officer advised that *"To close have an official Urgent Footpath Closure, the applicant has to send in an Urgent Footpath Closure form to the County Council and pay the appropriate fee and display the correct temporary notices and provide alternative route access. The signage is the wrong signage and not county council authorised signage."*

The Council has chased the Highways Officer for regular updates and on 6.07.2022 was advised that they wrote to the new owner of the church and said *"Your details and email of 13 May 2022 have been forwarded on to myself to look further into the matter of the extent of adopted area at Church Walk Dunham on Trent.*

The plan previously submitted to you shows the adopted area shown green and is historically the extent of adopted highway for public access to the church. This would have been brought to your attention as part of the purchase of the building – I see from our records that you enquired in August last year about the process for having the adopted highway stopped up prior to the purchase.

s part of the planning process, included within the Highway Authority's response to Bassetlaw DC was that the footpaths linking the church to the A57 and Church Walk, together with the area located in front of the entrance into the building are dedicated as public highway. Therefore, these areas must remain available for public use. I understand that these areas have been closed off by yourself. You state in your email of 13 May that the Church of England was unable to provide any documentation as to when and why it was adopted. This would have been public highway for visitors to the Church from the time of its construction which I understand to be 15th Century so obviously this would prove difficult to provide official documentation from this era.

*You should be aware that for any public adopted highway to be permanently closed off, it needs to be permanently extinguished, with prior approval from the Highway Authority, by the process of a Stopping Up Order under S116 of the Highways Act 1980 which is a legal process through the Magistrates Court, completely funded by the applicant. The whole Stopping Up process may be challenged by anyone wishing to do so in the court and should an objection be received; the Order would not be successful. The applicant will need to fund the Stopping Up Order process, which can prove costly, even if unsuccessful. My colleague, Jo Hage, has sent emails to yourself with attachments regarding the process for a temporary closure whilst you carry out the necessary repairs to make the building safe so that the public highway may be reopened, and not remain closed without approval. **In view of this, the public highway should remain available for public use, and if works are to be carried out to the building which requires a temporary closure to the public highway**, then approval from the Highway Authority should be sought as per the email from Jo below."* 12.07.2022 Cllr Barden has spoken with the Highways Manager to clarify and emailed to confirm as follows: *"The public footpath should be open until Mr Waddingham seeks a proper closure order from Nottinghamshire County Council, Highways Department, which you suggest could take approximately six weeks."*

On 12.07.2022 the Council **resolved** that because the owners of the church were emailed by the County Council on 6th July instructing them to keep the walkway open, and that so far the owners have not removed the barriers and signage, to email the new owners of the Church to point out that they were

told on 6th July to open the public highway and they must do so immediately, if they don't the Parish Council will inform the Highways Manager at the County Council and request that they may take legal action to force open the public highway until the proper temporary closure order has been granted. The clerk wrote to the owner on 13.07.2022. **(No response)**

The Clerk chased the Highways Manager and Rights of Way Manager on 20.07.2022 **(no response)**. The Clerk then forwarded a written complaint from a member of the public on 14.08.2022 to the Highways Manager, Rights of Way Manager and County Cllr Ogle to ask for help with the matter and whether we should direct complaints about the public highway at the church direct to the County Council **(No response)**.

On 16.08.2022 The Clerk forwarded a photo of the inappropriate signage, which the new owner of the church has fitted to the Parochial Church Council's gate, to the Highways Manager, County Highways Manager, Rights of Way Officer and County Cllr Ogle advising that *"Local people feel that this sign 'red' is making it a 'keep out/psychological' barrier to local people. The church had been closed as a church for some years and even when it had been used for funerals/weddings, in between these, it was never 'open' to the public so to say 'the church is no longer open' is unnecessary, to state 'it is a private residence' is also unnecessary as the whole village knows it has been bought and being turned into a house. The line 'the path provides access to the church only' is a lie as the path is (as you have confirmed) a public highway which doesn't provide access to the church 'only' it provides access from the pavement/public highway beside the A57 to the pavement/public highway on Church Walk. The last statement is also incorrect as 'the Graveyard access is via the Green and A57' is incorrect, graveyard access can be along this path via church walk round to the Green and then into the church yard. The sign is misleading at best, a mental 'keep out/red' barrier to local people and at worst incorrect."* The Clerk asked the County Council Managers for their guidance on the matter and asked if they are doing anything about the signage and contacting the new church owner. **(No response)**.



25.08.2022 Response received from Notts County Council Highways Manager: "I apologise for the fact that you've had to chase this matter up. I wanted to give the new owner of the church sufficient time to respond and then unfortunately I contracted Covid and then took annual leave.

I can confirm that the new owner of the church has not contacted me at all, nor have they contacted my colleagues in Co-ordination about a temporary closure of the public highway. Your frustrations and those of the Parish Council are absolutely clear. My understanding is that this is not the responsibility of the Public Footpath Officer to be involved. **I am in the process of issuing an Enforcement Notice** and once completed, this Notice has to be submitted to Licensing and Enforcement for approval and signature before sending to the Owner of the Church. I will confirm to you when this has been carried out and submitted.

If there is still no response within the dates specified in the Notice, VIA will carry out the required works. Finally, if there are harassment concerns regarding the new owner of the church, this would be a matter for the members of the public to pass to the police." 25.08.2022 The Clerk chased the Highways Manager for confirmation on 'what are the dates specified within the notice' and to ask about the outstanding matter of "Do the public have the right still to walk from the public highway into the churchyard at point where the grass becomes pavement near the church door". No response received. Clerk chased again 5.09.2022

06.09.2022 The Rivers Retford Parochial Church Council advised that *"NCC Highways stated their position on the public highway very clearly in their submission as part of the planning process. If the right of way is being obstructed, it is a matter for them to take forward."*

06.09.2022 – The County Council Highways Manager advised that *"Enforcement Notice has been posted today to Mr Waddingham. I have allowed 14 days for the public highway to be reopened (by 20th Sep).*

As the footpath leading to the south shown by the green cross is not public adopted highway unfortunately, I can't provide any information about it, even though I understand this has been used by the public in the past." 11.10.2022 It is believed that the incorrect signage is still in place, Cllr Ballinger to check tomorrow so that the Clerk can report the breach to the Highways Manager.

- **Road Resurfacing Work towards Dunham Bridge** - Cllr Ogle then mentioned that a resurfacing request for approach to Dunham Bridge from the village on the A57 will be put forward on the Cllrs Priority List due to the very poor condition of this main road. Cllr Watkinson added that on the Lincolnshire side of the bridge, the A57 has been resurfaced and gives a negative, neglected impression of Nottinghamshire once you get over the bridge.

New Items:

- **Cllr Atkinson** – Provided an update from the latest Village Hall Committee meeting, and the recent retirement of several of its members.
- **Cllr Watkinson** – Dunham school are in the process of converting to Academy Status.
- **Cllr Thorpe** – Requested an up-to-date contact template for the noticeboards and will swap these over in due course, also is contacting Notts CC regards further posters and leaflets for the Notts in Demand bus service.
- **Cllr Barden** – Gave a report from the Bassetlaw South East Forum meeting. Cllr Barden asked that both Litter Picking and the Lengthsman Role to be on the agenda in November, and as a future agenda item the next stage for the PC, General Power of Competence etc.
- **Cllr Booth** – Mentioned the overgrowth from the abandoned house onto the public footpath has become a problem again, and recommended that this is dealt with by the new lengthsman once they have been appointed.

69/22 Closure of Meeting

There being no further business, the Chairman thanked everyone for their contributions and closed the meeting at 9:50pm.