

Minutes of Bathford Parish Council Meeting
Monday 20 February 2006 at 7.30pm in the Parish Office, basement of the
Post Office, Bathford Hill, Bathford

Present: Councillor Shirley Beazer (Chair)
Councillor Stan Cherry
Councillor Hugh Baker
Councillor Susan Barclay
Councillor Wendy Chambers
Councillor Jan Hooker
Councillor Jean Vesey
Councillor Richard Wickham

Also Present: Ruth Holding (Clerk)
2 Members of the public

1. Public Five Minutes

1.1. The following items were raised by the members of public present:-

1.1.1. Sweeping in Garstons – it was reported that the access ways were not being swept and the standard of sweeping that was being carried out was poor. Councillor (Cllr) Shirley Beazer said that she would raise this matter with B&NES.

Action: Councillor Shirley Beazer

1.1.2. Potholes on Bathford Hill – it was reported that there were a number of potholes in the road above the newly resurfaced section which had been there for some time. Cllr Stan Cherry said that residents could phone B&NES Action Line direct on 012255 394041 to report such defects, but agreed to check the location of the potholes and make a report to the Action Line on this occasion.

Action: Councillor Stan Cherry

1.1.3. Overhanging Ivy at Tyndale – a complaint was made about the spread of ivy overhanging the wall at Tyndale adjacent to the slipway. The Clerk was asked to contact Mike Whitcombe, the manager of the Carrswood Centre at Tyndale asking for the ivy to be cut back.

Action: Clerk

2. Apologies

- 2.1. Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Maureen Breeze due to work commitments and Cllrs Sally Broadway and John Lloyd due to illness.

3. Declarations of Interest in any item on the Agenda

- 3.1. The Chair called for any declarations of interest. Cllr Shirley Beazer declared an interest in the item on the application to upgrade the bridleway on the grounds of being the owner of land adjacent to Ashley Road.

4. Minutes of the last meeting 16 January 2006

- 4.1. The minutes of the last Parish Council Meeting were agreed and signed as a true record of the proceedings.

5. Matters Arising

- 5.1. Cllrs reviewed the list of actions arising from the last meeting and confirmed where action was complete.

- 5.2. The following matters arising were discussed:-

- 5.2.1. Paragraph 6.4.4 – Cllr Wendy Chambers said that Cllr Maureen Breeze had asked her to raise a concern that this paragraph did not accurately reflect the number of councillors who recalled seeing the plans for the double yellow lines. Cllr Maureen Breeze considered that only one Member had recalled seeing the plans, but the minutes indicated that a number of councillors recalled the plans. Full council confirmed the discussion that more than one councillor remembered the plans and therefore the minutes should remain as drafted.
- 5.2.2. Relocation of notice board – Cllr Hugh Baker reported that the high cost of a planning application and highways licence necessary to relocate the notice board did not justify changing its current position. Therefore, the notice board would be replaced with the new one in the same location.
- 5.2.3. House Style – Cllr Richard Wickham confirmed that consideration of a house style for the council's publications was ongoing.

6. Committee Reports

6.1. Amenities Committee

- 6.1.1. Cllr Stan Cherry presented the Amenities Committee monthly report February 2006 which was noted. The following items were discussed:-
- 6.1.2. Bench Project - Cllr Hugh Baker reported that donations totalling £1,200 had been received to date for the provision of new benches in the parish and a promise of a complete bench had been made by one donor. It was confirmed that the location of benches would not be restricted to the playing field and a number of suggestions had been made about locations for new benches including, the green in Dovers Park, outside the church lych gate and on Manor field. Cllr Shirley Beazer suggested that the green space in the sheltered housing might benefit from a bench. Cllr

Stan Cherry said that there had also been a suggestion for a picnic bench on the village green to encourage its wider use. Cllr Stan Cherry said that there had been a very good response to this project so far and confirmed that residents were still welcome to suggest locations for new benches.

6.1.3. Mobility Focus Group – Cllr Stan Cherry tabled the minutes of the inaugural meeting of the Mobility Focus Group for information. The outcome had been very positive and a further meeting was planned. Cllr Stan Cherry said that he would continue to keep Members updated about the progress of the group's work.

6.1.4. Playing field car park – Cllr Jan Hooker asked whether the council had given its agreement to make a full planning application for a car park and whether this decision had been minuted. Cllr Stan Cherry said that he would check previous minutes to confirm whether the decision had been formally recorded. If not, then this matter would be brought to the next meeting.

Action: Councillor Stan Cherry

6.1.5. Contract for footpath on village green – full council unanimously endorsed the decision of the Amenities Committee to award the contract for the footpath on the village green to John Lloyd Contractors. The Clerk noted that as John Lloyd was a parish councillor he would be required to update his register of interests. The Clerk was asked to write to John Lloyd Contractors confirming that the tender had been accepted and to the unsuccessful tenderers.

Action: Clerk

6.2. *Finance and Administration Committee*

6.2.1. Cllr Wendy Chambers presented the Finance and Administration Committee monthly report for February 2006 which was noted. The following items were discussed:-

6.2.2. Precept for 2006-2007 – councillors noted confirmation that a precept of £20,475.00 had been submitted to B&NES. B&NES had confirmed receipt and the first half of the precept would be paid on 1 April 2006.

6.2.3. Parish Communications – Cllr Wendy Chambers reported that a public meeting had been arranged for Monday 13 March 2006, at 7.30pm in the parish office. An invitation to attend had been sent to those residents who had expressed a particular interest in this matter on the parish plan questionnaires. If there was substantial interest then the meeting would be held at another venue and this would be announced.

6.2.4. Keep Bathford Tidy – The Finance and Administration Committee had agreed to progress this parish plan issue after the matter of parish communications had been dealt with. There was discussion about whether this matter should be the remit of the Planning and Environment

Committee but it was agreed that it should remain with the Finance and Administration Committee.

- 6.2.5. Purchase of Governance and Accountability in Local Councils in England and Wales – council agreed unanimously to purchase a copy of the revised version of this publication at a cost of £11.99.

Action: Clerk

- 6.2.6. Purchase of router and anti-virus software for parish office – Cllr Richard Wickham introduced paper BPC/20Feb06/Item 9 which set out the proposals for the IT equipment. He confirmed his discussion of the options with a local IT specialist. The option proposed was a mid-priced wireless router and software package which provided the functions and level of protection required by the council. Cheaper options had been looked at but these did not provide sufficient security or the flexibility of the option proposed.

- 6.2.7. Council unanimously endorsed the recommendation to purchase a wireless router at a cost of £66.12 inc VAT and anti-virus software at a cost of £22.95 per year.

Action: Councillor Richard Wickham

- 6.2.8. Renewal of council's domain name – council unanimously endorsed the renewal of the council's domain name for a further two years at a cost of £8.99 per year. The council authorised Cllr Richard Wickham to renew the name via the internet and reclaim the costs as expenses.

Action: Councillor Richard Wickham

6.3. *Highways, Footpaths and Safety Committee*

- 6.3.1. Cllr Shirley Beazer presented the Highways, Footpaths and Safety Committee monthly for February 2006 which was noted. The following items were discussed:-

- 6.3.2. Application to upgrade bridleway (Box 83) to a B.O.A.T – Cllr Shirley Beazer said that the Highways Committee had met and had a lengthy discussion about what should be the council's response to the application. The committee had concluded that it should write to Wiltshire County Council registering its objection to the application on the grounds that since a landslip in 1936 the bridleway had been impassable to vehicles and that the same section of the bridleway was bounded by ancient mixed hedgerow which also limited its width. Wiltshire County Council had advised that the council need not register its objections until an order was formally issued, but it was agreed that the council should write immediately to ensure that its objections were on file.

- 6.3.3. The residents in Ashley Road and Garstons had submitted a petition to Wiltshire County Council, a copy of which had been sent to the parish council. However, Cllr Richard Wickham advised that under the guidance

issued on these matters, none of the issues raised in the petition could be accepted by Wiltshire County Council as valid objections to the application. Objections on the grounds of safety issues or environmental issues were not considered relevant under the guidance. If the route had been used by vehicles in the past, even horse drawn vehicles, it was regarded as having been open to traffic.

- 6.3.4. Cllr Shirley Beazer read the draft of a letter prepared by the Highways Committee. This registered the council's objection to the application to upgrade the bridleway on the grounds that it had been inaccessible to vehicles for 70 years and remained so. The council agreed the text of the letter and the Clerk was asked to send this to Wiltshire County Council.

Action: Clerk

- 6.3.5. Chair Shirley Beazer closed the meeting to allow a member of the public to speak. They said that there had been reports in the paper about proposed legislation to close the loophole which allowed bridleways to be upgraded and they would send a copy to the Chair. Cllr Shirley Beazer reopened the meeting.

- 6.3.6. Hedge cutting in Warleigh – Cllr Wendy Chambers said that B&NES had cut back the hedge at the corner in Tanglewood going out of Warleigh into Wiltshire. She said that she would be interested to know why the council had chosen to cut back this particular stretch of hedge and whether they intended to do any more. Cllr Shirley Beazer said that she would speak to Alan Sperring about this matter.

Action: Councillor Shirley Beazer

- 6.3.7. Fingerposts – Cllr Shirley Beazer reported that David Howells and Phillip Harris had kindly documented the finger posts, milestones and marker stones in the parish. Cllr Jan Hooker took the document to read and said she would ask David Howells for additional copies.

Action: Councillor Jan Hooker

- 6.3.8. Travellers Camp at Conkwell – council agreed that responsibility for pursuing his matter should pass from the Highways Committee to the Planning and Environment Committee.

Action: Planning and Environment Committee

6.4. *Planning and Environment Committee*

- 6.4.1. Cllr Jan Hooker presented the Planning and Environment Committee monthly report for February 2006 which was noted. The following items were discussed:-

- 6.4.2. Orchard Wood, Warleigh – the council noted correspondence from the owner of Orchard Wood in which they advised the council that vegetation

was being cut back from the edge of the road to improve visibility for drivers.

- 6.4.3. Listed Building Register – Cllr Jan Hooker advised that a speaker from English Heritage had been invited to the committee meeting on Wednesday 22 February to speak about the listing of buildings, the criteria used and the procedure for getting new buildings on the list. All councillors were welcome to attend the meeting.

7. Update on the operation of the Neighbourhood Watch Scheme

- 7.1. Cllr Jean Vesey reported that one resident had responded to the request in the Bulletin for new neighbourhood watch representatives and two people had come back to the scheme.
- 7.2. The number of neighbourhood watch representatives was generally good across most parts of the parish, although there were gaps in some areas, particularly in Mountain Wood. Cllr Jean Vesey suggested that a public meeting be arranged with PC Roger Parker to encourage more members to the scheme.
- 7.3. Cllr Stan Cherry suggested that the neighbourhood watch scheme would be a good subject for discussion at the Annual Parish Meeting in May.
- 7.4. Cllr Wendy Chambers said that there was a representative in Warleigh who was concerned about the lack of activity on the scheme. Cllr Jean Vesey said that she was unaware that there was a representative in Warleigh and said she would speak to Cllr Wendy Chambers after the meeting to get the name of the resident.
- 7.5. Cllr Jean Vesey tabled a letter which she proposed to put in the post office and other locations in the parish to encourage new members. The text of the letter was agreed, but it was suggested that it should also emphasise that membership of the neighbourhood watch scheme did not require a large time commitment from individuals.
- 7.6. Council congratulated Cllr Jean Vesey on the work she had done so far to reinvigorate the neighbourhood watch scheme and asked her to continue her good work.

8. Parish Plan

- 8.1. Review of progress on parish plan issues - Cllr Stan Cherry reported that he had been unable to make progress on the spreadsheet that he had been preparing due to other commitments. He said that the Parish Plan Steering Committee was due to meet again shortly to finalise the parish plan financial arrangements and he would ask members of the steering committee if any of them wished to be involved in the follow-up and review of progress of parish plan projects.

8.2. Village Design Statement – Cllr Stan Cherry tabled a copy of the newly published Village Design Statement for each councillor. He confirmed that a total of 80 black and white copies of the VDS and 20 full colour copies had been printed. Cllr Stan Cherry said that Batheaston Parish Council were considering preparing a parish plan and had asked to purchase copies of Bathford's Parish Plan and Village Design Statement. The council RESOLVED to charge £5 for a black and white copy of the VDS and £15 for a colour copy. The price of the parish plan had been agreed previously at £2.00 per copy. The Clerk was asked to invoice Batheaston Parish Council for 5 black and white copies of the VDS and 5 copies of the parish plan.

Action: Clerk

9. Parish Office

9.1. It was confirmed that the main door from Bathford Hill was the only entrance and exit from the office. It was noted that a torch and fire extinguisher had been placed in the office in case of emergency. The Chair considered that a larger torch would be more appropriate and would arrange to purchase.

10. Terms of Reference for Committees

10.1. The council RESOLVED to accept the changes to the Terms of Reference for the Finance and Administration Committee. The Clerk was asked to issue a copy of the full Terms of Reference, as amended, in loose leaf format to enable updated pages to be replaced easily.

Action: Clerk

11. Review of format for Annual Parish Meeting

11.1. Cllr Wendy Chambers reported that she had received ideas from Cllr Shirley Beazer about a new format for the Annual Parish Meeting, which included serving refreshments and a guest speaker. It was considered that reports from each Committee should be retained as part of the programme in order to prompt questions from residents.

11.2. A further suggestion was the use of display boards for information relating to major projects such as the shop initiative and the parish plan.

11.3. Council agreed that the meeting should be tightly controlled with regard to the time allowed for each item.

11.4. Cllr Richard Wickham invited Members to send any ideas to the Finance and Admin Committee for consideration.

Action: Finance and Admin Committee

12. Update on Village Shop Enterprise

12.1. The Council noted that a suggestion had been made that the shop manager might be allowed to use the parish council's office space to do paperwork and make use of the telephone line and other office equipment on a shared cost basis.

12.2. The proposal was met with concern from some of the Members who felt that it would set a precedent for others in the village who might want office facilities. There was some doubt about the propriety of a commercial enterprise being closely associated with the parish council and it also raised questions of confidentiality.

12.3. The Council RESOLVED to defer further discussion on this item until the next meeting when Cllr Maureen Breeze could be present to put the shop committee's point of view.

13. Parish Council Meetings

13.1. Members noted the concerns set out in paper BPC/20Feb06/Item 13 about the length of council meetings and the amount of business considered. The general view of Members was that the introduction of written committee reports and other measures such as the action sheet had increased the efficiency of the meetings. All the business on the agenda was considered essential for discussion by the Council. It was suggested that this matter could be revisited in 3 months if the problem persisted.

14. Request for Clerk's Training

14.1. The Council noted that obtaining Quality Status would give them benefits with regard to access to additional sources of funding and a Clerk with a CiLCA qualification one of the requirements for Quality Status. The SLCC course Working with your Council provided the foundation for CiLCA qualification.

14.2. The course cost £170.00 but a bursary was available for up to 75% of this cost.

14.3. The Council RESOLVED that it would pay the course fee for Working with your Council and make an application for a bursary immediately. The Chair and the Clerk signed the relevant application form.

Action: Clerk

14.4. The Council further RESOLVED to endorse the Clerk's request to attend the ALCA seminar on accounts and related matters and to pay the fee of £20.00.

Action: Clerk

15. Payments for approval

15.1. The Council approved the following payments:

15.1.1. Bathford Post Office (office rent)	£ 100.00
15.1.2. J Watkins (chairs for parish office)	£ 15.00
15.1.3. EDF Energy 1 Ltd (street lighting)	£ 10.15
15.1.4. Mr S Cherry (expenses)	£ 57.08
15.1.5. British Telecom (new line and rental)	£ 138.03

15.1.6. Mrs R C Holding (salary for Feb 06)	£ 542.18
15.1.7. Mrs R C Holding (expenses & petty cash)	£ 120.46
15.1.8. Inland Revenue (tax and national insurance)	£ 38.75

15.2. Electricity Supply to basement office in Manor - Members noted that the electricity supply was still connected to the parish office in the basement of the Manor and RESOLVED to maintain the account to allow the continued use of this office, particularly for storage.

15.3. Mandate for Council's Bank Account - The Council discussed the failure by Nat West Bank to update the Mandate for the Council's account. Council RESOLVED that the Clerk and the newest Councillors should be signatories to the account. The Clerk was asked to prepare a letter for the Chair's signature, complaining about the level of service and asking Nat West to correct the Mandate immediately.

Action: Clerk

16. Correspondence

16.1. Before reviewing the correspondence received Cllr Shirley Beazer said that she had been speaking to Ward Councillor Tony Cox who had commented favourably on the minutes of the meetings and the work of the Clerk.

16.2. The following correspondence had been received:-

16.3. Compost Bins – BANES had issued a leaflet giving details of compost bins for sale by the council at very competitive prices.

16.4. Parishes Liaison Meeting – this had taken place on 15 February 2006. A representative from Bathford Parish Council was unable to attend at the last minute.

16.5. Warden at Sheltered Housing - Somer Housing group had written stating that the warden for Bathford was likely to work from an office in St Nicholas Court in Bathampton, but most of the warden's working day would be spent on site in Mountain Wood. Council agreed that this was most unsettling for the residents. Council RESOLVED that the Clerk should write again to Somer expressing concern about the loss of the residential sheltered housing officer and asking whether they have considered the difficulties and expense of travelling to Bathford from Bathampton via the toll bridge.

Action: Clerk

16.6. Additional car parking at RUH – it had been reported in the Action for Pensioners newsletter that an additional 80 car parking spaces were to be made available at the RUH outside the Education Centre.

16.7. National Express pick up in Batheaston – Cllr Shirley Beazer said that she had been informed by Phillip Harris that National Express services would no longer stop in Batheaston after the end of March, but there had been no confirmation from the company about this change in their operations.

Council RESOLVED that Batheaston Parish Council should be made aware of this issue.

- 16.8. **Clerk's note:** Cllr Stan Cherry has spoken to the Clerk of Batheaston Parish Council about this matter. Batheaston Parish Council was aware of the proposal and has written to National Express.
- 16.9. Direct Debit to pay BT bills – BT had offered the council the option to pay by Direct Debit. The Council RESOLVED not to make arrangements to pay by Direct debit as it wanted to switch to a cheaper service provider as soon as possible.
- 16.10. South West Bath Credit Union Ltd – the council noted the services offered by the credit union operating in the south western parts of the city.

17. Items for the Bulletin

- 17.1. The council RESOLVED to publish the following notes in the Bulletin:-
- 17.1.1. parish office telephone number and office opening hours;
- 17.1.2. publicise the availability of specially designed maps for cyclists published by B&NES;
- 17.1.3. advertise Communications Meeting to be held on 13 March;
- 17.1.4. ask dog owners to clear up after their dogs following a complaint from a resident about the dog mess left in Pump Lane;
- 17.1.5. outcome of the first meeting of the Mobility Focus Group.

Action: Clerk

18. Any other items to report

- 18.1. Parking of Winnebago at junction of Ostlings Lane and Bathford Hill – concern was expressed about the proximity of the vehicle to the junction which had been clearly marked following the resurfacing of the area. The Council RESOLVED to ask the Clerk to contact PC Roger Parker asking him to check that the vehicle was legally parked.

Action: Clerk

- 18.2. Unkempt land by bus stop in Dovers Park – The Clerk confirmed that there had been no reply from the owner in response to the Council's request for the area to be tidied up. There was a suggestion that the local authority had the power to clear the area and charge the cost to the owner, if the owner had not acted. Cllr Jan Hooker said that she would pursue this matter with B&NES.

Action: Councillor Jan Hooker

- 18.3. New bus stop on Bathford Hill – Cllr Stan Cherry reported that B&NES was looking again at the position of the bus stop to find a location and style of shelter that was safe and acceptable to residents in the area.

19. Items for the next meeting

- 19.1. Update on Village Shop enterprise and proposal for shop manager to share office facilities

19.2. Report on outcome of Communications Meeting to be held on 13 March

20. Date of next meeting

20.1. The next meeting will be held at 7.30pm on Monday 20 March 2006 in the Office under the Post Office, Bathford Hill.

The meeting closed at 9.25pm