

Minutes of Bathford Parish Council Meeting
Monday 20 March 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 Maureen Breeze
Councillor Wendy Chambers
Councillor Jan Hooker
Councillor John Lloyd
Councillor Jean Vesey
Councillor Richard Wickham

Also Present: Ruth Holding (Clerk)
1 Member of the public

1. Public Five Minutes

1.1. No matters were raised.

2. Apologies

2.1. Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Sally Broadway due to work commitments.

3. Declarations of Interest in any item on the Agenda

3.1. The Chair called for any declarations of interest. Cllr Maureen Breeze declared an interest in item 12ii on the proposed use of the parish office by shop personnel on the grounds of being a member of Bathford Enterprise For All (BEFA) management committee.

4. Minutes of the last meeting 20 February 2006

4.1. The following amendment to the minutes was identified:-

4.1.1. paragraph 14.1 – insert the word “is” so it reads ...CiLCA qualification is one of the requirements....

4.1.2. The minutes were then agreed and signed as a true record of the proceedings.

5. Matters Arising

5.1. Councillors 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. Sweeping in Garstons – Cllr Shirley Beazer reported that Wayne Honey from B&NES has inspected Garstons and in his opinion the standard of sweeping was satisfactory.
- 5.2.2. Hedge cutting in Warleigh – it was noted that Cllr Wendy Chambers would be responsible for overseeing this issue. She was waiting to hear from Alan Sperring at B&NES.
- 5.2.3. Record of fingerposts, milestones and marker stones – Cllr Hugh Baker said he had a .pdf version of the report. Cllr Jan Hooker asked for two copies.
Action: Cllr Hugh Baker
- 5.2.4. Travellers camp at Conkwell – Cllr Wendy Chambers asked whether there was anything to report on this matter as there was an increasing number of cars on site although there had been no increase in the number of vans. She confirmed that a resident from Warleigh had submitted a formal complaint to Wiltshire County Council to ensure objections to the site were recorded. Cllr Jan Hooker said that the Planning Committee was monitoring the situation and would keep it on their agenda.
- 5.2.5. Twinning Memorabilia – Cllr Maureen Breeze advised that money from the EU had not yet been received and therefore the montage of photographs which it had been proposed would be prepared with this funding had not been done. Council accepted that there was no urgency relating to this and agreed that the Charter and painting could be hung whenever the photographs were ready.
- 5.2.6. Cllr Maureen Breeze's attendance at meetings – Council confirmed that they did not expect Cllr Maureen Breeze to attend every council meeting in view of her commitment to the shop project which they had previously agreed. Cllr Shirley Beazer said that an update on the progress of the shop project would be appreciated even if Cllr Maureen Breeze was unable to attend the meeting.

6. Committee Reports

6.1. Amenities Committee

- 6.1.1. Cllr Stan Cherry presented the Amenities Committee monthly report for March 2006 which was noted. The following items were discussed:-
- 6.1.2. Playing Field Car Park – Cllr Stan Cherry said that council had considered the issue of a playing field car park previously, but had not recorded its agreement to submit a formal application for planning permission. The purpose of this item was to obtain the council's support for an application.
- 6.1.3. Cllr Stan Cherry reminded the council that during previous discussions, the council had agreed to approach this matter in stages, the first step being to make a planning application, and then consider further steps separately. Planning permission, if granted, would be

valid for 5 years although there would be no obligation on the council to build the car park if permission was granted.

- 6.1.4. Cllr Maureen Breeze said that she would like to see a business case prepared by the Amenities Committee to support the decision to go ahead with a planning application. This would set out the pros and cons of the proposals and summarise the reasons why it was considered the project was justified.
- 6.1.5. Cllr Stan Cherry said that there was significant support for the creation of a sports car park in the parish plan. The car park would not be a tarmac area with marked bays, but would be a gravel hard standing. B&NES' planners had previously indicated that it should be for a maximum of about 20 cars. Therefore, it should not be a large urban intrusion in the landscape.
- 6.1.6. Cllr Stan Cherry proposed and Cllr Hugh Baker seconded a proposal to submit a formal application for planning permission for a playing field car park. The Chair called for a show of hands. There were 9 votes for and 1 abstention and therefore the council RESOLVED to make a formal application for planning permission.
Action: Amenities and Planning and Environment Committees
- 6.1.7. Ownership of bridleway leading from Bathford Hill to Rugby Club – Cllr Stan Cherry said that he had been approached by Whitehaven with a proposal to transfer the ownership of the bridleway from them to B&NES. However, B&NES had indicated that they would not be willing to adopt the route and therefore the Amenities Committee had considered whether it would be advantageous for the parish council to adopt it. The Committee had concluded that there were benefits particularly as this would be the access road to the playing field car park, if built.
- 6.1.8. Cllr Stan Cherry said that there were issues which would need to be resolved, not least of which was to establish the ownership of the wall at the rear of the properties in Titan Barrow. Whitehaven were already looking into this. The parish council would also need to investigate what responsibilities and liabilities they would have if they adopted the route. It was confirmed that there was a right of way in law to the rugby club but there is no right to park on the bridleway.
- 6.1.9. Council RESOLVED that the proposal by Whitehaven to give up ownership of the bridleway should be investigated further. The Amenities Committee would arrange to meet with the manager and trustees of Whitehaven to explore the matter further.
Action: Amenities Committee
- 6.1.10. Cllr Shirley Beazer agreed to approach B&NES to find out what responsibilities the parish council would have if it adopted the route.
Action: Cllr Shirley Beazer

6.1.11. Change to refuse collection – Cllr Hugh Baker reported that the Amenities Committee had written to B&NES objecting to the proposal to change to edge of property refuse collection. Cllr Shirley Beazer said that further correspondence had been received on this matter which would be discussed under item 14.

6.1.12. Bench Project - Cllr Hugh Baker reported that donations had risen to £1,320.00.

6.2. *Finance and Administration Committee*

6.2.1. Communications Meeting - Cllr Wendy Chambers reported that the outcome of the Communications Meeting held on 13 March 2006 had been very positive. The minutes of the meeting were noted. Three sub-committees had been formed to look at the issues of notice boards, the Bulletin and websites. These groups would report back to the next meeting on 25 April 2006. Cllr Wendy Chambers said that it had been made clear that the purpose of the communications group was to bring about improvements in communications for parishioners by parishioners and the role of the parish council was to facilitate this aim. Cllr Wendy Chambers said that she would continue to keep Members updated about the progress of the group's work.

6.2.2. ALCA Annual subscription – councillors approved the payment of the annual membership fee of £344.12.

6.2.3. Tables of income and expenditure – the tables were noted. The Clerk reported further income of £508 from the rugby club in rent and receipt of a bursary of £127.50 towards the cost of the Clerk's training course.

6.2.4. Correction to report in The Bath Chronicle – Cllr Stan Cherry reported that the Chronicle had given the mistaken impression that Bathford Parish Council had received substantial grants from B&NES for improvements to the play area. He had contacted the reporter to confirm that the parish council had received only a small grant from B&NES and the remainder of the costs had been met from parish council funds. The newspaper had published a correction.

6.2.5. Purchase of office equipment – Council noted the list of office furniture from Argos prepared by the Clerk, but one of the Councillors said that, in their experience, the furniture would not be sufficiently robust for regular office use.

6.2.6. Cllr Hugh Baker proposed and Cllr John Lloyd seconded a proposal to allow the Clerk to spend up to £500 on office furniture, including a meeting table if possible. It was noted that the funds had already been accounted for in last year's budget. The Council RESOLVED to authorise the Clerk to spend up to this sum and claim the expenditure as expenses in due course.

Action: Clerk

6.3. *Highways, Footpaths and Safety Committee*

- 6.3.1. Cllr Shirley Beazer presented the Highways, Footpaths and Safety Committee monthly for March 2006 which was noted. The following item was discussed:-
- 6.3.2. New speed restriction on A363 – Cllr Shirley Beazer reported that the new speed signs had been erected. The Clerk was asked to contact the Police again about carrying out speed checks.
Action: Clerk

6.4. *Planning and Environment Committee*

- 6.4.1. Cllr Jan Hooker presented the Planning and Environment Committee monthly report for March 2006 which was noted. The following items were discussed:-
- 6.4.2. Unkempt area behind bus stop in Dovers Park – Cllr Jan Hooker said that she had contacted B&NES, but they had no powers to clear this land which was in private ownership. There had been no response from the owner to the parish council's previous request for the land to be cleared and the council accepted that there was no further action that could be taken at the present time.
- 6.4.3. Lavington's Yard – Cllr Jan Hooker said that the enforcement officer from B&NES would be contacted about the increase in the debris on the site.
- 6.4.4. Planning Committee meetings – there would be a gap in meetings over the Easter holiday, but any urgent matters arising over this period would be dealt with.
- 6.4.5. New dwelling in grounds of 6 Bathford Hill – Members noted that B&NES had refused permission for the new dwelling.

7. **Risk Assessments**

- 7.1. Cllr Shirley Beazer reported that a risk assessment had been prepared for highways issues and asked committees whether risk assessments had been prepared for other parish council responsibilities. Cllr Richard Wickham said that he had obtained example risk assessments for other parish councils from the internet. Information had also been circulated previously by the Clerk. Cllr Richard Wickham said that the risk assessment might not just cover health and safety issues, but also financial risk.
- 7.2. The council discussed the action taken to mitigate risks identified in the parish office, such as the provision of torches, notice on action to be taken in the event of a fire, no smoking signs, and provision of a fire extinguisher.
- 7.3. Council RESOLVED that committees should complete risk assessments for presentation to the parish council meeting in June 2006.
Action: All Committees

8. Parish Plan - Review of progress on parish plan projects

- 8.1. Mobility Group - Cllr Stan Cherry reported that the mobility group had held its second meeting and teams would be set up to survey the village and Warleigh. The aim was to have a short report on the group's activities ready for the Annual Parish Meeting.
- 8.2. Mental Health Support Group – Cllr Stan Cherry reported that Lennie Almond was setting up a mental health support group. She had enquired whether there was money available towards the cost of hiring a meeting room. Cllr Stan Cherry said that funds from the parish plan account could be made available for this purpose.
- 8.3. Disabled access to buildings – it was noted that Somer Community Housing Trust would be looking at the provision of disabled access to the community rooms. Cllr Stan Cherry reported that the Post Office wanted to make alternations to its access and he had helped to identify an officer in B&NES who could give advice on this matter.

9. Parish Office

- 9.1. Members noted that the parish office would open to the public for the first time on Thursday 20 April 2006. The rota of councillors was also noted. Members were asked to advise the Clerk if they were unable to attend on the date or time shown on the rota.

Action: All Councillors

10. Responsibility for front page of the May edition of the Bathford Bulletin

- 10.1. The Finance and Administration Committee agreed to take responsibility for producing the front page of the Bathford Bulletin which would be used to encourage residents to attend the Annual Parish Meeting and promote the opening of the shop. The front page would need to be submitted to the editor of the Bathford Bulletin by 15 April. Cllr Shirley Beazer asked to see the draft before publication.

Action: Finance and Administration Committee

11. Review of format for Annual Parish Meeting

- 11.1. It was suggested that the format of the annual parish meeting should comprise the presentation of short reports (maximum 3 minutes each), a break for tea or coffee, and a question and answer session.
- 11.2. Cllr Maureen Breeze suggested that there could be a number of “stations” on various projects set up around the hall and residents could go and talk to parish councillors on the issues that were of particular interest to them. Cllr Jan Hooker supported this approach.
- 11.3. Cllr Shirley Beazer commented that annual meetings in other parishes seemed to have more young people in attendance and perhaps more could be done to encourage younger residents to attend.

11.4. The Finance & Administration Committee would meet to discuss and agree the format.

Action: Finance and Administration Committee

12. Update on Village Shop Enterprise

- 12.1. Progress report - Cllr Maureen Breeze reported that it was planned to open the shop under BEFA management in 6 weeks time. There were significant financial challenges to overcome, as the target of £25,000 had not yet been reached. BEFA had submitted several grant applications to funding bodies, but it might be months before these were considered.
- 12.2. The shop would open in June with little change being made to the existing premises. A 6 week refurbishment programme was planned, during which the shop would remain open to help with cash flow. Cllr Maureen Breeze said that more volunteers were required to ensure there was cover for the proposed opening times of 7.30am – 6.30pm.
- 12.3. Council noted that two applications had been made for the post of shop manager and interviews would be held on 22 March.
- 12.4. Cllr Maureen Breeze said that she was uneasy with the description of the shop as a commercial enterprise. She acknowledged that the shop would need to cover its costs to survive, but the aim was to provide a sustainable service for the benefit of the community. It was projected that it would be at least 4-5 years before financial stability was achieved. It was noted that the shop may not offer all the services on opening that it aimed to provide in the long term, such as deliveries and a café area, but services would be added incrementally as soon as finances and volunteer support allowed.
- 12.5. Proposal for shop Treasurer to share parish office – Cllr Maureen Breeze declared an interest as a member of the BEFA Management Committee and introduced another member of the management committee, Peter McCowen, to speak to the parish council about this matter.
- 12.6. Peter McCowen said that space in the shop was limited and therefore the management committee would like to explore the possibility of BEFA having a desk and filing cabinet in the parish office for occasional use by the BEFA Treasurer, particularly as the office was not used full time by the Clerk. Peter McCowen confirmed that BEFA would need its own telephone line to enable card payments to be made in the shop and they would arrange this separately.
- 12.7. Chair Shirley Beazer said that the parish council had concerns about the legality of the parish council sharing its office accommodation with an outside body. Advice was being sought from ALCA, but no reply had been received to date.
- 12.8. The office was quite small and it was acknowledged that there would not be sufficient room for another desk and filing space once the Clerk's

needs had been met. However, the parish council was keen to support this community enterprise and it was suggested that the Treasurer use the office on a Thursday evening when it was open to the public and the Clerk would also be on site.

12.9. The council voted on the proposal of allowing the BEFA Treasurer to use the parish office in principle, subject to confirmation of the propriety of the arrangement. There were 9 votes for the proposal and 1 abstention. The motion was carried. It was RESOLVED that the arrangement would be open to review by both parties.

12.10. The Clerk was asked to pursue a response from ALCA to be reported at the next meeting.

Action: Clerk

13. Payments for approval

13.1. The Council approved the following payments:

13.1.1. Bathford Post Office (office rent)	£ 100.00
13.1.2. BT (installation of broadband line)	£ 167.84
13.1.3. BT (quarterly line rental and call charges)	£ 51.30
13.1.4. SLCC (Clerk's training course)	£ 170.00
13.1.5. ALCA (Annual Membership)	£ 344.12
13.1.6. John Franklin (repairs to bus shelter)	£ 235.00
13.1.7. BWBSL (Wessex Water- allotment water)	£ 14.06
13.1.8. SLCC (copy of revised financial guidance)	£ 11.99
13.1.9. Cllr H Baker (expenses)	£ 9.36
13.1.10. Cllr R Wickham (website expenses)	£ 33.13
13.1.11. Cllr S D Beazer (expenses)	£ 18.35
13.1.12. Mrs R C Holding (salary for March 06)	£ 422.72
13.1.13. Mrs R C Holding (expenses & petty cash)	£ 59.00
13.1.14. Inland Revenue (tax and national insurance)	£ 6.21

14. Correspondence

14.1. Cllr Shirley Beazer reported the following correspondence issued on behalf of the council or received by the council:-

14.2. National Express pick up in Batheaston – a letter had been sent to National Express setting out the council's concern at the decision to stop picking up in Bathford and Batheaston. There had been no reply to date.

14.3. Reconfiguration of the NHS – the letter sent to the Strategic Health Authority supporting the creation of 7 PCTs with boundaries coterminous with local authorities was read out at the meeting.

14.4. Bursary from NALC for Clerk's training – council noted that the application for a bursary had been successful and a cheque for £127.50 had been received.

14.5. SLCC Conference – council noted that the SLCC were holding a regional conference in Plymouth in May. No members wished to attend.

- 14.6. Fairtrade Directory – B&NES had sent the parish council a copy of the latest edition of the Fairtrade Directory. This was retained in the parish office.
- 14.7. Warden at Sheltered Housing - Somer Community Housing Trust had written confirming that the residential warden post would be discontinued from April 2007 and the services of the sheltered housing officer would be delivered by a non-residential warden based at a local office. Cllr Shirley Beazer said that she had received confirmation that the community rooms would remain available for public use, but no decision had been made regarding the future use of the warden's house and office.
- 14.8. Refuse collection – the parish council had received a letter confirming that B&NES were moving to an edge of property refuse collection system from June 2006. Cllr Shirley Beazer said that she had already made it clear to B&NES that the residents of Pleasant Place will not take rubbish to the High Street. The Clerk was asked to write to B&NES identifying Pleasant Place and Oldmere cottages as two locations in the parish which would be problematic with regard to edge of property collection.

Action: Clerk

- 14.9. Village of the Year competition – the information about the Village of the Year competition was passed to Cllr Wendy Chambers for consideration by the Finance and Administration Committee.

Action: Finance and Administration Committee

15. Items for the Bulletin

- 15.1. The council RESOLVED to publish the following notes in the Bulletin:-
- 15.1.1. date of opening of parish office;
- 15.1.2. date of Annual Parish Meeting;
- 15.1.3. telephone number for reporting noise nuisance;
- 15.1.4. change of refuse collection arrangements.

Action: Clerk

16. Any other items to report

- 16.1. Birdcage Walk – Cllr Stan Cherry passed on the thanks of the mobility group to Cllr Shirley Beazer for arranging the clearance of Birdcage Walk.
- 16.2. Dying tree on Dovers Park green – Cllr Susan Barclay said she had noted a dying tree on the green. Cllr Stan Cherry suggested that she call B&NES' Action Line to report the condition of the tree.

Action: Cllr Susan Barclay

- 16.3. Sweeping in Warleigh – Cllr Maureen Breeze reported that she had phoned B&NES' Action Line to request sweeping and clearance of mud in Warleigh, but this had yet to be carried out.

17. Items for the next meeting

- 17.1. Report on legality of sharing parish office.

18. Date of next meeting

18.1. The next meeting will be held at 7.30pm on **Wednesday** 26 April 2006 in the Office under the Post Office, Bathford Hill.

The meeting closed at 9.50pm

