

**Minutes of Bathford Parish Council Meeting
held on Monday 21 January at 7.30pm in the Parish Office, Bathford Hill,
Bathford**

Present: Councillor Shirley Beazer (Chair)
Councillor Stan Cherry
Councillor Hugh Baker
Councillor Susan Barclay (from item 5)
Councillor Wendy Chambers (from item 5)
Councillor Paul Faulkner (from item 6a)
Councillor John Lloyd
Councillor Keith Masdin
Councillor Ian Plain
Councillor Jean Vesey
Councillor Richard Wickham

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

1. Public Five Minutes

1.1. No matters were raised under this item.

2. Apologies

2.1. There were no absences.

3. Declarations of Interest in any item on the Agenda

3.1. The Chair called for any declarations of interest. None were made.

4. Approval of the Minutes of the last meeting

4.1. The minutes were agreed and signed as a true record of 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. Fingerposts – Cllr Shirley Beazer reported that B&NES was having difficulty finding a pattern for the base, but she had received a response to her enquiries about costs from one company. This matter would be returned to at a future meeting when further details were available for consideration.

Action: Cllr Shirley Beazer

5.2.2. Culvert on Whitehaven bridleway – it was reported that although the culvert had been unblocked along its course, the drain opening on the bridleway had not been reinstated in the place where it had been tarmaced over. Cllr Ian

Plain explained that there should be a grill and drain where the tarmac currently ends and in addition a section of the tarmac is now sinking. Cllr Shirley Beazer said she would contact B&NES about this matter and Cllr Ian Plain said he would be happy to attend a site meeting with B&NES officials to discuss the problem on any Monday, Wednesday or Thursday.

Action: Cllr Shirley Beazer

6. Committee Reports

6.1. Amenities Committee

6.1.1. Cllr Stan Cherry presented the Amenities Committee monthly report for January 2008. The following items were discussed:-

6.1.2. Grant for play equipment – Cllr Stan Cherry reported that the parish council would receive a grant of £3,339 towards the cost of new play equipment, subject to approval of B&NES budget for 2008-09. No work would begin until the grant was confirmed. GB Sport and Leisure, a company on the B&NES list of recommended contractors, had provided the cheapest quote for the supply and installation of the Wicksteed rocking play equipment.

6.1.3. Cricket Club secure store – it was noted that the store would be placed temporarily at the top of the field, pending its relocation to its permanent site in the tree line on the far side of the field. Residents near the location of the temporary site had been consulted about the proposals. Delivery was not expected until the weather improved.

6.1.4. Meeting with Avonvale RFC – Cllr Stan Cherry reported that the rugby club had requested a meeting prior to the rent review in June 2008 and this was scheduled to take place in March. In addition to discussion about the calculation of the rent level, the meeting would also cover the request for a sponsors sign on the old Scout Hut and the problems with regard to floodlighting.

Action: Amenities Committee

6.1.5. Bench Project – Cllr Hugh Baker reported that the benches and picnic tables had been purchased but it had been difficult to make arrangements for haulage with the usual supplier. Consideration was being given to alternative options for getting the benches from Kirkham.

Action: Cllr Hugh Baker

6.2. Communications Committee

6.2.1. Cllr Ian Plain apologised that there was no written report, but there had been no meeting of the Communications Group since the last council meeting. The following items were discussed:-

6.2.2. The Bathford Bulletin – Cllr Shirley Beazer congratulated the group on the production of the new format Bulletin in January. Cllr Ian Plain reported that favourable comments had been received on the new look. He confirmed that quotes had been received for printing the Bulletin and it was expected that professional printing would begin early in the new financial year after discussion with St Swithun's PCC about the change over.

- 6.2.3. Members noted that BEFA had suggested taking a significant amount of space in a future edition of the Bulletin and the question was asked whether it would be reasonable to request a small contribution from BEFA, or any other organisation in the same circumstances, towards the increased costs of printing additional pages. The parish council's view was that it would be reasonable to request a contribution towards the additional printing costs.
- 6.2.4. Cllr Ian Plain informed the council that a public meeting about the future of the Bulletin was planned for Tuesday 12 February, venue to be confirmed.
Action: Communications Group

6.3. Finance and Administration (F&A) Committee

- 6.3.1. Cllr Susan Barclay tabled the F&A Committee monthly report for January 2008. The following items were discussed:-
- 6.3.2. Precept for 2008-09 – members noted that there had been some minor changes to the figures since the draft budget discussed at the last meeting. The budgeted cost of producing the Bulletin had been increased to £1,200 and the budget for subscriptions to relevant bodies had been increased very slightly to £150. Based on the new figures the precept would be £21,937.93 which was an increase of 4% on last year's figure.
- 6.3.3. No assumptions had been made in the budget with regard to grants towards play equipment as there was no guarantee that B&NES would award a grant if its budget was not approved.
- 6.3.4. Cllr Susan Barclay proposed and Cllr Wendy Chambers seconded acceptance of the budget for 2008-2009. Council RESOLVED unanimously to set a precept of £21,937.93 for 2008-2009. The Clerk was asked to complete the necessary paperwork.
Action: Clerk
- 6.3.5. Some minor typographical errors were noted with regard to the dates in the budget document. The Clerk was asked to make the necessary amendments and issue a copy of the updated budget to all councillors.
Action: Clerk
- 6.3.6. Cllr Stan Cherry suggested that consideration might be given to moving the date on which the playing field rents were reviewed from February each year to a couple of months earlier which would better inform the budgeting process.
Action: Cllr Stan Cherry
- 6.3.7. Change to internet and telephone service provider – the F&A Committee recommended changing the council's internet and telephone service provider from BT to the Phone Co-op. The Phone Co-op's minimum call charge was 1.2p compared to 4.2p with BT and the monthly internet charge was £10 per month cheaper than the existing charge. The line rental charge would also be lower with the new supplier. The Phone Co-op's internet fee of £13.99 per month did not allow unlimited downloads, but it was considered unlikely that the parish council would exceed the maximum allowance and, if it did occasionally need to download an substantial amount of data, then the fee

was only £1.50 per extra gigabyte downloaded. The Council RESOLVED to change its internet and telephone services to the Phone Co-op with immediate effect. Cllr Ian Plain as asked to make the necessary arrangements.

Action: Cllr Ian Plain

- 6.3.8. New member needed for F&A Committee – members noted the resignation of Cllr Richard Wickham from the F&A Committee and thanked him warmly for this significant contribution to the work of this committee over the past few years, not least for the setting up and maintenance of the parish council's website. The new Chair of the F&A Committee said it now comprised only 3 members and it would be helpful to have another member. All Councillors were asked to consider whether they would be willing to join the F&A Committee.

Action: All Councillors

- 6.3.9. Revised Mandate for bank account – relevant councillors signed the necessary form to enable the Mandate to be updated.

Action: Clerk

6.4. Highways, Footpaths and Lighting Committee

- 6.4.1. Cllr Shirley Beazer presented the Highways, Footpaths and Lighting Committee monthly report for January 2008. The following items were discussed:-

- 6.4.2. Closure of A36 – Cllr Shirley Beazer reported that a small section of the A36 at the junction with the Viaduct Hotel and the Winsley turning would be closed for 3 months from 31 March 2008. The official diversion route for HGVs was along the A4 and A350, but there was concern that drivers with local knowledge would use the A363 as an alternative route. The Clerk was asked to display a map of the works site and the official diversion routes in the post office and put a note in the Bulletin.

Action: Clerk

- 6.4.3. Cllr Wendy Chambers said that residents in Warleigh were particularly concerned that Warleigh Lane would become a "rat run" from Winsley and increase the number of vehicles turning on to the A363 from the dangerous junction at the end of Warleigh Lane. It was suggested that Warleigh Lane should be restricted "Access only" from both ends of the lane and permits issued for residents as was being arranged for other villages. Cllr Shirley Beazer said that she would contact the relevant bodies with the councils concerns and suggestions.

Action: Cllr Shirley Beazer

- 6.4.4. Box Road – Cllr Shirley confirmed that the cul-de-sac sign and speed check were in B&NES programme for the coming year.

- 6.4.5. Grit bins – Cllr Wendy Chambers reported that the grit bin in Warleigh was badly damaged and needed replacing. Cllr Keith Masdin questioned the report that gritting would not be carried out in Dovers Park as it formed part of

the bus route. Cllr Shirley Beazer said that she would contact B&NES about these issues.

Action: Cllr Shirley Beazer

- 6.4.6. Repairs to road surface, High Street – it was reported that work could not be completed in this area because vehicles were not observing the ‘No parking’ cones and the cones were being removed. Members suggested that if B&NES notified the residents in the surrounding area, either by a leaflet drop or a sign on the road, of the work to be carried out then they might be more likely to observe the parking restrictions. Cllr Shirley Beazer said that she would contact B&NES about the timetable for road repairs in this area and the idea of notifying the residents.

Action: Cllr Shirley Beazer

6.5. Planning and Environment Committee

- 6.5.1. Members noted the Planning and Environment Committee minutes of the meetings held on 15 November 2007 and 3 January 2008 which formed the monthly report. The following items were discussed:-
- 6.5.2. B&NES Core Strategy – Cllr Hugh Baker reported that a number of letters of support for Bathford Parish Council’s views on the threat to the Green Belt had been received following the letter sent by the Council after the November meeting. The Committee would continue to monitor this issue carefully, particularly as it appeared that B&NES had made a commitment to keep the Green Belt between Bath and Bristol which might move the threat of development further south and east.
- Action: Planning Committee**
- 6.5.3. Scheme of Delegation for determining planning applications – Cllr Hugh Baker reported that the council has sent objections to B&NES with regard to the proposed changes to the Scheme of Delegation which would allow Planning Officers to decide on all planning applications. Under the previous scheme, a parish council’s comments had been taken into account when considering whether a case should be called to B&NES’ Planning Committee. Under the new scheme applications would only be called to committee when a Ward Councillor objected within a short period of the application being received. Bathford had objected on the grounds that the provision of the new scheme were unworkable and would effectively sideline the parish council’s input to the process of determining planning applications. B&NES had not replied to the parish council’s letter.
- 6.5.4. Applications – Cllr Hugh Baker reported that permission has been granted for work at Hedge Lea, Box Road and 2 trees were to be removed from Whitehaven’s grounds with permission to prevent further damage to the wall along Bathford Hill. A listed building application had been received for The Clock House, Shockerwick which would be considered at the next meeting.
- 6.5.5. Lavington’s Yard – members acknowledged that the work being carried out at the yard improved the visually amenity of the site, but there were very great concerns that the work appeared to be progressing without proper planning permission. Members considered that if work was being undertaken without the relevant permissions then enforcement action should be taken or proper

permission obtained. In the council's view to do otherwise would send the wrong message to other owners and undermined the proper planning process. The level of the site appeared to have been raised, run-off would go straight into the By-Brook and there was concern that the entrance might be right on the road which could cause problems to traffic approaching and coming off the roundabout.

- 6.5.6. Members noted a copy of a letter from a resident to the Head of Planning expressing their concerns about the work being undertaken at Lavington's yard. Members agreed that the parish council should also write to B&NES with their concerns about what is going on and copy the letter to the Environment Agency.

Action: Clerk

7. Wynne Willson War Memorial Recreation Ground

- 7.1. As the Corporate Trustee of the Wynne Wilson War Memorial Recreation Ground, the council noted the details in the Annual Information Update 2007 submitted to the Charity Commission on-line.

8. Brown's Folly

- 8.1. Members noted the Avon Wildlife Trust's reply to their request to reduce the height of the trees around the Folly to enable it to be seen more clearly. The Trust had indicated that it did not have the funds to carry out this work as its priority was addressing biodiversity matters within the nature reserve. The Trust had suggested a meeting with the council and members agreed that this would be helpful. Cllr Hugh Baker was asked to invite the Trust to a Planning and Environment Committee for discussions as soon as a convenient date could be found. Members with an interest in taking part in the discussion but were not members of the Planning Committee would be welcome to attend. The date of the meeting would be circulated as soon as it was known.

Action: Cllr Hugh Baker

9. Liaison with School Governors

- 9.1. Cllr Jean Vesey reported that she had attended the Governor's meeting held in the previous week. The building work on the two new classrooms remained on schedule for completion in April. She reported that £14,000 had been raised towards the target of £17,000 needed to fund the balance of the work.
- 9.2. Members noted that the parking situation around the school had deteriorated again recently and this was associated with the bad weather which had increased car use.
- 9.3. Members again commented on the very poor condition of the school fence which detracted from the appearance of the well maintained village. There was some doubt about whether this was the responsibility of the school or the local education authority and Cllr Jean Vesey was asked to find out whether the upkeep of the fence was a part of the school's maintenance responsibility or not. The parish council would consider whether to take this matter further, if it had the power to do so, when responsibility for the fence had been established.

Action: Cllr Jean Vesey

10. Neighbourhood Watch

- 10.1. Cllr Stan Cherry reported that the Police Community Support Officer had approached him to ask whether Bathford would like to form a Neighbourhood Speed Watch. Speed cameras could be purchased from the police for about £50.00 and training would be given.
- 10.2. Members noted that similar initiatives had failed previously due to lack of volunteers to use the cameras and the penalty for drivers was a warning only if detected by a civilian speed watch.
- 10.3. Members RESOLVED to put a note in the Bulletin asking for volunteers to form a Neighbourhood Speed Watch scheme.

Action: Clerk

11. Correspondence

- 11.1. Cllr Shirley Beazer reported the following correspondence issued on behalf of the council or received by the council:-
- 11.2. Churchyards – Cllr Shirley Beazer referred to an interesting article on responsibility for closed churchyards which had appeared in a recent edition of *Clerks and Councils Direct*. Information from the Vicar of St Swithun's confirmed that the churchyard was not full and therefore the matter of responsibility for closed churchyards was not of immediate concern.
- 11.3. Dan Norris MP – it was noted that the MP had written in support of the parish council's views on B&NES Core Strategy and the possible threat to the Green Belt.
- 11.4. Regular letters about policing matters – the council had been notified of the decision to restructure the police management teams, but were assured that Neighbourhood Police Teams would remain unchanged. The regular letter from the Chief Superintendent about general policing matters was noted. Council RESOLVED that the regular letters from the police should be put on a round robin.

Action: Clerk

- 11.5. Avon Wildlife Trust Consultancy Team – members noted the new team set up to offer advice about land management, biodiversity etc.
- 11.6. Community Action Parish Plan Event – members noted the event taking place on 29 February 2008 to give advice to parishes undertaking parish plans. Cllr Stan Cherry said that he would be speaking at the event.
- 11.7. Open Spaces Society – members noted the information circulated by the Open Spaces Society about registering land as a village green.
- 11.8. Heritage Events Jan – April 2008 – the leaflet issued by B&NES was noted. Copies had been made available in the shop.
- 11.9. Letter of complaint about dog-fouling – a resident had written to the council about the apparently worsening situation of dogs being let off the lead in the

residential area of Mountain Wood and the increasing problem of dog fouling on the grass verges. The Council asked the Clerk to reply to the resident, put a note in the Bulletin asking owners to be considerate and to contact the Dog Warden about this matter.

Action: Clerk

11.10. Environment Agency – members noted receipt of the agency’s Flood Incident Management Calendar 2008.

11.11. Consultation by department of Communities and Local Government – members noted the consultation document on the Orders and Regulations relating to the Conduct of Local Authority Members in England issued by the government. The document was passed to the F&A Committee for consideration.

Action: F&A Committee

12. Items to report

12.1. Cluster Meeting 6 February 2008 – details of the Cluster Meeting had been circulated to all councillors and items for the agenda had been received. The Clerk was asked to send the list of items to B&NES by the deadline set.

Action: Clerk

12.2. Christmas Tree on village green – the Christmas Tree was felt to be disappointing this year as was small compared to the size of the village green and unlit. It was agreed that arrangements should be reviewed for next Christmas and that consideration should be given to relocating the tree to its previous position outside the front door of the Post Office and that the tree should be larger and lit.

13. Items for the Bulletin

13.1. The council RESOLVED to publish the following notes in the Bulletin:-

13.1.1. Closure of A36 and diversion routes;

13.1.2. Complaint about Dog Fouling in Mountain Wood

13.1.3. Action taken with regard to the untidy land in Dovers Park

13.1.4. Date of next meeting

Action: Clerk

14. Items for the next meeting

14.1. Preparation for Annual Parish Meeting in April 2008.

15. Payments for approval

15.1. Council RESOLVED to approve the following payments:-

Bathford Post Office	Rent for parish office – Jan 08	£100.00
B&NES	Grass cutting – recreation ground	£1,682.86
The Garden Business	Maintenance of allotment central path	£146.87
BT	Quarterly internet charges	£77.51
BT	Quarterly telephone charges	£67.38
EDF Energy	Street Lighting	£3.21

Mrs S D Beazer	Expenses – Christmas Tree	£12.00
A Coombe	Repair and renewal of allotment gates	£881.25
Mrs R C Holding	Clerk's salary – Dec 07 & Jan 08	£903.61
Mrs R C Holding	Clerk's expenses, petty cash, electricity	£90.00
Post Office Ltd	Tax & NI	£26.10

16. Date of next meeting

16.1. The next meeting will be held on Monday 18 February 2008 at 7.30pm in the parish office.

The meeting closed at 9.36 pm

Signed..... (Chair)

Date.....