

Minutes of Bathford Parish Council Meeting
held on Monday 18 February 2008 at 7.30pm in the Parish Office, Bathford Hill,
Bathford

Present: Councillor Shirley Beazer (Chair)
Councillor Stan Cherry
Councillor Hugh Baker
Councillor Wendy Chambers
Councillor John Lloyd
Councillor Jean Vesey
Councillor Richard Wickham

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

1. Public Five Minutes

1.1. Rubbish dumped opposite Westwoods – Peter Martin said that rubbish had been dumped in this area. He was advised to contact B&NES via the Council Connect helpline and request its removal.

2. Apologies

2.1. Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Susan Barclay, Paul Faulkner, Keith Masdin and Ian Plain.

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 said that the two quotes received had been passed to Cllr Keith Masdin. Cllr John Lloyd suggested that a local saw mill be approached to enquire whether they could fashion a finger post in oak. He said that he would pass the details on to Cllr Keith Masdin for further consideration.

Action: Cllr John Lloyd

5.2.2. Benches – Cllr Hugh Baker confirmed that arrangements had been made to collect the benches from Kirkham.

- 5.2.3. Review of rent levels – Cllr Stan Cherry confirmed that this had been done.
- 5.2.4. Change of telephone and internet service provider – The Clerk confirmed that Cllr Ian Plain had requested the information necessary to change the service provider and it was assumed that this action was in progress.
Action: Cllr Ian Plain
- 5.2.5. Membership of Finance & Administration Committee – No Councillors had expressed an interest in joining the F&A Committee as each of them already sat on one or more Committees. Members agreed that Cllr Keith Masdin should be approached to be the fourth member of the committee to ensure that adequate members were available to be called upon, particularly during the budgeting round and planning for the annual parish meeting. Cllr Wendy Chambers agreed to contact Cllr Keith Masdin.
Action: Cllr Wendy Chambers
- 5.2.6. Mandate – the Clerk confirmed that all the necessary forms had been completed and would be delivered to the bank as soon as possible.
Action: Clerk
- 5.2.7. Notifying residents about proposed roadworks – Cllr Shirley Beazer confirmed that she had passed on the suggestion to B&NES that leaflets be issued to residents prior to planned roadworks to ensure any parking restrictions are observed prior to work being undertaken. B&NES had responded that leafleting used a lot of resources and they will use their own discretion about whether a leaflet drop is appropriate.
- 5.2.8. School Fence – Cllr Jean Vesey reported that the Clerk to the School Governors had advised that the school fence was the responsibility of B&NES. Members agreed that Cllr Jean Vesey should contact the Chair of the School Governors and offer the support of the parish council in getting B&NES to replace the fence.
Action: Cllr Jean Vesey

6. Committee Reports

6.1. Amenities Committee

- 6.1.1. Cllr Stan Cherry presented the Amenities Committee monthly report for February 2008. The following items were discussed:-
- 6.1.2. Allotments – Cllr Stan Cherry reported that a meeting was being held with the allotment wardens on 26 February to discuss various issues relating to rent levels and the care and management of the allotments.
- 6.1.3. Meeting with Avonvale RFC – Cllr Stan Cherry reported that the meeting referred to at the last parish council meeting would take place on 19 March.

6.2. Communications Committee

- 6.2.1. In the absence of Cllr Ian Plain, Chair of the Communications Committee, Cllr Wendy Chambers reported on the public meeting which had taken place on 12 February 2008. She said that the Committee had been very ill prepared for the meeting and had not been clear what outcomes they wanted from the

meeting. This had resulted in an open discussion being held which had raised lots of issues, but not agreement on the way forward.

- 6.2.2. One volunteer had withdrawn from the project following the meeting, although three new volunteers had offered to be involved in proof reading etc. Subsequent to the meeting written comments had been received from 2 members of the public setting out their views on the way forward.
- 6.2.3. Members agreed that there should be a controlling body overseeing the production of the Bathford Bulletin and at the moment the Parish Council appeared to be in the best position to fulfil this role. The parish council would be in financial control for the next two years at least as the precept had been raised, but not in editorial control, which would be the responsibility of the editorial board.
- 6.2.4. Council RESOLVED that the future of the Bathford Bulletin should be an item for discussion at the Annual Parish Meeting. It was suggested that the Communications Committee should make a proposal that the parish council should continue to precept for production of the Bulletin and there would be no charge for those wishing to put articles in the Bulletin. As agreed at the January 2008 meeting, it was confirmed that organisations may be asked to make a payment towards costs if they wanted to take up a significant amount of space in a Bulletin and the production of additional pages resulted in additional printing costs over and above the normal print run.
- 6.2.5. Previous proposals for the future of the Bulletin had suggested that it should be self financing by generating advertising revenue, but it was agreed that a balance needed to be found between keeping the content of the Bulletin free from advertising while allowing local business to use the publication to make parishioners aware of the services available in the parish. Cllr Ian Plain said that advertising could be carried on the Bathford Bulletin website and a separate local directory could be produced for which a charge could be levied on those businesses wishing to advertise.
- 6.2.6. Cllr Wendy Chambers said that she would contact Cllr Ian Plain on his return to arrange for the Communications Committee to meet quickly to discuss the issues arising from the public meeting and the views of members. The Committee would put together a well considered proposal for discussion at the Annual Parish Meeting to allow parishioners to comment on the proposal and to ensure that everyone was aware in which direction the Bulletin would be moving and the responsibility for financial and editorial control would be well understood.

Action: Communications Committee

- 6.2.7. Distribution of B&NES News Releases – members confirmed they were content with the electronic distribution (by email) of press releases from B&NES considered to be of interest to them by the Clerk. Paper copies were sent to members without email.

6.3. Finance and Administration (F&A) Committee

- 6.3.1. Renewal of Domain Name – Cllr Ian Plain had been asked to take the necessary action to renew the council's domain name. In his absence from

the meeting, the Clerk was asked to contact him on this return to confirm that the domain name would be renewed by the deadline of 13 March 2008.

Action: Clerk

- 6.3.2. Consultation documents – Cllr Wendy Chambers confirmed that she had read the *Consultation on Orders and Regulations relating to the Conduct of Local Authority Members in England* and a formal response from Bathford Parish Council was not needed.

6.4. Highways, Footpaths and Lighting Committee

- 6.4.1. Cllr Shirley Beazer presented the Highways, Footpaths and Lighting Committee monthly report for February 2008. The following items were discussed:-
- 6.4.2. Traffic Calming – Cllr Shirley Beazer reported that B&NES intended to proceed with the plans to make a 20mph zone in the area of the junction of High Street with Dovers Park and Ashley Road. Priority point 1 would be removed and replaced with a permanent slow sign on the uphill side of the High Street. Members felt it was more important for a sign to be on the downhill side of the road. Cllr Shirley Beazer said that she would speak to B&NES and pass on the request for a second slow sign on the downhill side of High Street. If the local authority would not provide two signs as part of the scheme, then members agreed that the parish council should pay for the sign. Money has previously been precepted for traffic calming measures but had not yet been spent and was available in reserves. Cllr Stan Cherry also asked for B&NES to be reminded that a barrier at the edge of the pavement at the exit of the footpath across the green onto High Street was also be included as part of this scheme.

Action: Cllr Shirley Beazer

- 6.4.3. Grit bins - Cllr Wendy Chambers confirmed that a new grit bin had been provided at the top of Ferry Lane. Cllr Shirley Beazer said that she would contact B&NES to remind them that the grit bin on the Dovers Park turning circle needed to be moved 6 feet to the left away from the bench.

Action: Cllr Shirley Beazer

- 6.4.4. Potholes – two potholes were reported, one on the road through Sally-in-the-Woods and the other on High Street just before the county boundary.

Action: Cllr Shirley Beazer

6.5. Planning and Environment Committee

- 6.5.1. Public exhibition of plans by Future Heritage for the former Tyndale site – Cllr Hugh Baker reported that 50 to 60 people had been to see the exhibition in the British Legion of Future Heritage's plans to demolish Tyndale and build 9 homes on the site with associated car parking. Responses to the design had been largely favourable, although there was some concern about the access and disappointment that affordable housing did not form part of the plans.
- 6.5.2. Notifications – members noted that planning permission for a new house in the grounds of 11 Dovers Park had been refused.

- 6.5.3. Scheme of Delegation for determining planning applications – members welcomed the news that plans to change the way in which planning applications were determined appeared to have been shelved for at least 12 months.
- 6.5.4. Meeting with Ward Councillor Ian Dewey – Members noted that Ian Dewey would be attending the Planning and Environment Committee meeting on 28 February 2008.

7. Planning for Annual Parish Meeting 21 April 2008

- 7.1. Members agreed to keep the same format for the meeting as this had worked well last year. Brief committee reports and a discussion item would be followed by a refreshment break and then a question and answer session.
- 7.2. The Clerk was asked to write to all the organisations in the village asking them to submit a written report on their activities for the year. It was suggested that a “tear off” slip should be placed at the bottom of the letter asking the organisation to confirm if they wanted the use of a table and/or display boards at the meeting.
Action: Clerk
- 7.3. It was suggested that table and board space should be allocated in advance to ensure that every organisation gets the space they need.
- 7.4. The Guides had provided the refreshments last year and Cllr Susan Barclay was to be asked to contact the Guide leaders to ask if they would provide this service again.
Action: Cllr Susan Barclay
- 7.5. It was noted that B&NES had offered display panels about milestones (including Bathford) for exhibition at the Annual Parish Meeting. The Clerk was asked to arrange delivery.
Action: Clerk
- 7.6. The F&A Committee was asked to put together the agenda to include a discussion about the future of the Bathford Bulletin. It was suggested that a display relating to Neighbourhood Watch may encourage new members and the council may also need to be prepared to deal with questions from the floor relating to issues such as affordable housing, allocation of social housing.
Action: F&A Committee

8. Matters arising from the Cluster Meeting held on 6 February 2008

- 8.1. Cllr Shirley Beazer said that there was very little to report from the Cluster Meeting. Bathampton and Swainswick Parish Councils had not been made aware of the meeting and no senior officials from B&NES or elected members had been present at the meeting. Most of the responses to the matters of concern raised by the parishes had been in the form of written briefing notes so there had been very little opportunity for discussion. Cllr Shirley Beazer said that she had asked for her concerns about the lack of representation from B&NES to be formally recorded in the minutes of the Cluster Meeting. It was

suggested that this matter should also be raised with Cllr Ian Dewey at the meeting on 28 February.

Action: Cllr Shirley Beazer

9. Browne's Folly

- 9.1. Members noted the Folly Fellowship's somewhat terse reply to the council's request for information on the progress of work to secure the Folly from intruders. Members were concerned at the implication in the letter that parishioners of Bathford were vandalising the tower. A member of the Folly Fellowship was due to speak to the Bathford Society at its next meeting and members agreed that he should be approached about writing a piece for the Bulletin about the landmark as many residents were probably unaware of its age and history.

Action: Cllr Shirley Beazer

10. New social housing in Mountain Wood

- 10.1. Council noted the email from a resident requesting the council's support for their application for one of the new social houses being built in Mountain Wood. Members agreed that they could not get involved in individual cases, but as a matter of principle they would like to see these new homes being allocated to those with existing local connections with a need for social housing.
- 10.2. Cllr Shirley Beazer said that she had contacted Somer Housing Trust and B&NES about the application process and made it clear that the parish council would like to see people with local connection moved into these homes. It had been explained that the previous points system used to allocate homes had lapsed and priority was now based on medical need and overcrowding. Applications for the new homes could be made online from August 2008.
- 10.3. The Clerk was asked to write to the resident who had contacted the council explaining that the council was unable to comment on individual cases, but had made it clear to Somer and B&NES that the council was supportive of all applications from persons with local connections. The contact details given to Cllr Shirley Beazer by B&NES were also to be passed on and published in the Bulletin and on the website.

Action: Clerk

- 10.4. Garages in Mountain Wood – Cllr Shirley Beazer reported that work was going to be carried out at the site of the lower garages in Mountain Wood to rebuild garages for residents who wanted to retain them and to create 12-14 open car parking spaces. Members said that it would be important to rebuild the garage block in a location in which it did not obscure the view of the open car parking because if the area was not perceived to be safe then it would not be used.

11. Neighbourhood Watch

- 11.1. Concern was expressed that the Neighbourhood Watch "Ringmaster" call alert system was not giving information to Neighbourhood Watch Coordinators quickly enough. Cllr Wendy Chambers said that Warleigh had only been alerted about a prowler in the hamlet because Cllr Stan Cherry had happened to receive an email via an alternative alert system and had forwarded it to her. The police had been aware of the presence of the prowler for two weeks before any alert had been issued. A resident had reportedly photographed the prowler,

but there had been nothing from the police to residents in the hamlet to alert them to the possible dangers and a vehicle had been stolen. The Clerk was asked to write to the Chief Superintendent expressing the council's concern that the residents of Warleigh were not alerted sooner to the possible threat of a prowler and ask what action the police have taken subsequently in the light of the photograph available.

Action: Clerk

- 11.2. Cllr Jean Vesey said that she was alerted by the Ringmaster system of any issues affecting the parish, but if she was away then the message might be missed. Members agreed that the police should be given an alternative telephone number to provide cover in Cllr Jean Vesey's absence. Quicker receipt of alerts might be achieved if each of the Neighbourhood Watch representatives was happy to receive the alerts by email. Cllr Jean Vesey was asked to get in touch with each of the Neighbourhood Watch contacts and ask them if they would be happy to receive alerts direct by email and if so to send contact details to the police. Not all the parish was covered by Neighbourhood Watch and it was suggested that Cllr Jean Vesey should identify the areas without a contact and seek new volunteers at the Annual Parish Meeting.

Action: Cllr Jean Vesey

12. Correspondence

- 12.1. Cllr Shirley Beazer reported the following correspondence issued on behalf of the council or received by the council:-
- 12.2. Westminster Briefing Conference – details of a conference on the role that charities played in providing services was noted.
- 12.3. External Auditor – members noted that the Audit Commission has reappointed Mazars as the External Auditor for Bathford Parish Council's accounts for the next 5 years commencing with the accounts for 2007-2008.
- 12.4. Cluster Meeting Date – it was noted that the next Cluster Meeting would be held on 3 July 2008, the location to be confirmed.
- 12.5. Correspondence issued by "round robin" – members noted the list of correspondence issued as a round robin to all councillors in hard copy or by email.

13. Items to report

- 13.1. There were no matters raised under this item.

14. Items for the Bulletin

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

- 14.1.1. Volunteers for Neighbourhood Speed Watch
- 14.1.2. Date of Annual Parish Meeting and invite items for discussion
- 14.1.3. Better Bath Forum
- 14.1.4. Road closures during Bath Half Marathon
- 14.1.5. Illegal use of Birdcage walk by horse riders
- 14.1.6. Application process for new social housing
- 14.1.7. Date of next meeting

Action: Clerk

15. Items for the next meeting

15.1. Preparation for Annual Parish Meeting on 21 April 2008.

16. Payments for approval

16.1. Council RESOLVED to approve the following payments:-

Bathford Post Office	Rent for parish office – Feb 08	£100.00
Tonik Ltd	Ink cartridges	£60.40
BWBSL (Wessex Water)	Allotment water charges	£19.24
Mrs R C Holding	Clerk's salary – Feb 08	£497.93
Mrs R C Holding	Clerk's expenses, petty cash, electricity	£60.00
Post Office Ltd	Tax & NI	£26.71

17. Date of next meeting

17.1. The next meeting will be held on Monday 17 March 2008 at 7.30pm in the parish office.

The meeting closed at 9.25pm

Signed..... (Chair)

Date.....