

**Minutes of Bathford Parish Council Meeting
held on Monday 21 July 2008 at 7.30pm in the Parish Office, Bathford Hill,
Bathford**

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

Also Present: Ruth Holding (Clerk)

1. Public Five Minutes

1.1. No matters were raised under this item.

2. Apologies

2.1. There were no apologies for absence.

3. Declarations of Interest in any item on the Agenda

3.1. The Chair called for any declarations of interest. Cllr Wendy Chambers said that the planning application submitted for work to her property was mentioned in the Planning Report under agenda item 6e but this has been considered by the Committee and was not due for discussion at this meeting.

4. Approval of the Minutes of the last meeting

4.1. Acceptance of the minutes of the last meeting was proposed by Cllr Stan Cherry and seconded by Cllr Wendy Chambers. The Council RESOLVED to accept the minutes which were agreed and signed by the Chair 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. Secure store for PA equipment in parish hall – Cllr Shirley Beazer reported that she had been assured that all the PA equipment could be found in a lockable cupboard in the hall. Cllr Stan Cherry said that he had equipment in

his home and that he would arrange to move to the secure storage as soon as possible. A notice has been put up in the hall stating that PA equipment is available to hirers of the hall with contact details. The work to prepare the instructions was ongoing.

Action: Cllr Shirley Beazer

- 5.2.2. Letter box in office door - the landlord had confirmed that he was content for the parish council to put a letter box in the door. Cllr Hugh Baker said he would arrange the purchase and fitting of a horizontal letter box with an inside basket. Cllr Stan Cherry proposed and Cllr Wendy Chambers seconded expenditure on this item of up to the £250 expenditure limit for committees set by the council's Standing Orders. The Council RESOLVED unanimously to agree the proposal.

Action: Cllr Hugh Baker

- 5.2.3. Weed control - Cllr Shirley Beazer confirmed that she had asked B&NES to undertake weed control in Church Street and other roads, including High Street and Prospect Place where weed growth was excessive.

- 5.2.4. Speeding cars in Mountain Wood – it was reported that the PCSO had agreed to carry out observations in this area.

- 5.2.5. Neighbourhood Speed Watch – Cllr Paul Faulkner said that the PCSO had spoken to him in the shop asking whether there had been interest in the proposal to set up a Neighbourhood Speed Watch. It was the council's understanding that the police had been informed that a number of volunteers had indicated their willingness to participate and that the council was now waiting for them to arrange the equipment and training. The Clerk was asked to contact the PCSO to confirm the situation with regard to this initiative.

Action: Clerk

- 5.2.6. Vehicle crime in Garstons – it was reported that the PCSO had mentioned that a vehicle had been broken into in Garstons. It was noted that no report of this crime had been issued on the ringmaster alert system.

- 5.2.7. Dog Fouling Penalty Notices – Cllr Ian Plain said that he had tried to contact the dog warden at B&NES on several occasions without success. It was recommended that he should send another email to the warden copied to ward councillors. Cllr Stan Cherry asked that if Cllr Ian Plain did speak to the warden, would he ask what action B&NES could take if the parish council obtains evidence of dogs being allowed to run loose on the playing field.

Action: Cllr Ian Plain

6. Committee Reports

6.1. Amenities Committee

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

- 6.1.2. Allotment Tenancy Agreement - Cllr Stan Cherry reported that following the consultation on the draft tenancy agreement presented at the last meeting, some changes had been made and a revised draft for approval was attached to the agenda. A query was raised about whether it was possible to donate

produce to the shop when the Allotment Act stated that produce from an allotment was for the consumption of the plot holder and their family. The Clerk was asked to look up the relevant section of the Allotment Act and seek further advice. It was not considered necessary to delay the approval of the tenancy agreement pending the outcome of this work.

Action: Clerk

- 6.1.3. A further query was raised about the requirement to give plotholder's one year's notice to quit before 6 April or after 29 September in any year. Cllr Stan Cherry said that this clause would only be invoked if the allotment field were to be sold for another purpose (most unlikely to occur). Shorter periods of notice were applicable in cases where the plot holder wished to give up their allotment or breached the conditions of the agreement.
- 6.1.4. Cllr Shirley Beazer proposed and Cllr Hugh Baker seconded the proposal to approve the tenancy agreement as drafted. A vote was taken by a show of hands and the Council RESOLVED unanimously to endorse the tenancy agreement.
- 6.1.5. Playing Field Rent paid by Rugby Club – as reported at the last meeting, the Amenities Committee had now considered and devised a formula for calculating a rebate of the rent paid by the rugby club based on actual level of use of the field at the end of a season. Details were presented in the report for endorsement by the full council.
- 6.1.6. It was noted that the rugby club were paying more per game than other users of the field, but not a significant amount more. The club also used the whole of the field for training and youth coaching and it was considered reasonable for the club to pay a retainer fee for the right to use the pitch if they wished. The committee had proposed a method of refunding part of the field rent which would return up to a maximum of £50 at the end of the season if the club played less than 10 matches on the pitch during a season.
- 6.1.7. Cllr Susan Barclay proposed and Cllr Jon Lloyd seconded the proposal to approve the suggested method of giving a rent rebate to the rugby club up to a maximum of £50 per year. A vote was taken by a show of hands and the Council RESOLVED unanimously to endorse the rent rebate system. Cllr Stan Cherry said that he would write to the rugby club to inform them of the council's decision.
- Action: Cllr Stan Cherry**
- 6.1.8. New cricket store – Cllr Stan Cherry reported that the container had been obtained, but the method of getting it into the field was to be agreed. It was likely that it would need to be lifted from the bridleway over some small trees. **Clerk's Note:** Subsequent to the meeting Cllr Stan Cherry reported that the store had been placed in position on the field.
- 6.1.9. Floodlights on playing field – following a meeting with the rugby club to discuss this matter, it had been agreed that there should be fewer floodlights and that these should be lower and if angled correctly would cast more light on the field and reduce the nuisance to residents overlooking the area.

6.2. Communications Committee

- 6.2.1. There was no report this month as there had been no meeting of the Committee. Cllr Ian Plain reported that a second hand black & white laser printer had been donated and installed in the parish office to improve the speed of printing. The existing all-in-one printer would be retained to allow the options for colour printing, copying and scanning.
- 6.2.2. Cllr Stan Cherry asked whether there were any plans to repair the photocopier. Previous enquiries had indicated that it was likely to be uneconomic to repair. The Finance & Administration Committee was asked to look into options for providing an alternative to the photocopier and ways of disposing of the old machine.

Action: Finance & Administration Committee

6.3. Finance and Administration (F&A) Committee

- 6.3.1. Cllr Susan Barclay presented the F&A Committee monthly report for July 2008. The following items were discussed:-
- 6.3.2. Increase in office rent – members confirmed the decision made at the last meeting that the increase in office rent this year should be no more than 3% as the precept had already been agreed for 2008-2009. It was noted that the landlord had suggested a higher increase and the council accepted that the rent could be reviewed again when the budgets were being set for 2009-2010. Cllr Wendy Chambers said that she would speak to the landlord with regard to the council's decision.
- Action: Cllr Wendy Chambers**
- 6.3.3. Clerk's Model Contract – subsequent to the discussion at the last meeting the remaining adjustments to the contract had been finalised. On the recommendation of the F&A Committee councillors approved the contract which was then signed by the Clerk and the Chair of the Parish Council.
- 6.3.4. Approval of Annual Accounts 2007-2008 – Councillors noted the statement of accounts in Section 1 of the Annual Return which had been prepared on a receipts and payments basis, together with the accompanying Bank Reconciliation and the Explanation of Variances.
- 6.3.5. Councillors considered parts 1 to 8 of the Annual governance statement and the Trust funds declaration in Section 2 of the Annual Return. The council agreed with each of the statements in parts 1 to 8 of Section 2 and the Annual governance statement was approved.
- 6.3.6. The Council noted the Annual Internal Audit Report to the Council in Section 4 of the Annual Return.
- 6.3.7. Cllr Stan Cherry proposed and Cllr Hugh Baker seconded approval of the Annual Return for the year ended 31 March 2008. A vote was taken by a show of hands and the council unanimously approved the Annual Return and

the Statement of Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2008. Section 1 was signed by the Responsible Financial Officer and the Chair.

- 6.3.8. The Annual governance statement in Section 2 was signed by the Responsible Financial Officer and the Chair.
- 6.3.9. The Clerk was asked to submit the Annual Return to the external auditors by the deadline of 31 July 2008.

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 July 2008. The following items were discussed:-
- 6.4.2. Traffic calming on High Street – a resident had complained that the existing priority points were doing nothing to slow the traffic and had asked for speed humps to be installed. The Highways Committee had replied to the resident to inform them that speed humps were not considered appropriate, but had requested the urgent provision of a slow sign at the top of the hill.
- 6.4.3. Speeding vehicles around Mountain Wood – the committee had also considered a complaint from a resident about vehicles travelling too fast around Mountain Wood. Cllr Shirley Beazer reported that she had asked the PCSO to monitor this area.
- 6.4.4. Overgrown vegetation - Cllr Shirley Beazer reported that she had asked B&NES to clear the weeds and vegetation from around the footbridge to increase visibility.
- 6.4.5. Cllr Wendy Chambers said that vegetation needed pruning back from around the mirror at the junction with Warleigh Lane. It was also mentioned that the footpath on the A4 opposite the Land Rover showroom needed clearing. Cllr Shirley Beazer said that she would contact B&NES about these matters.
Action: Cllr Shirley Beazer
- 6.4.6. Unkempt land in Dovers Park – concern was expressed about the condition of this privately owned land and the apparent lack of powers available to the parish council to compel the owner to keep it tidy. The council was reminded that it had asked B&NES to serve a section 215 notice on the owner, but this had been delayed by the submission of planning applications to build a new dwelling near the site. The Clerk was asked to contact B&NES again asking them to take urgent action with regard to the section 215 notice and copy the letter to ward councillors.
Action: Clerk
- 6.4.7. Cluster Meeting – Cllr Shirley Beazer reported that the Cluster Meeting with B&NES had been very poorly attended, only 2 parish representatives had been present, and the preparation by B&NES had been very last minute. The agenda was not issued until the day of the meeting and it had not been possible for the Clerk to pick up the email so the paperwork had not reached attendees in time. The Clerk was asked to write to B&NES expressing the parish council's concern at the poor arrangements for the meeting.

Action: Clerk

- 6.4.8. X72 Bus Service – it was reported that Dovers Park was now on the route of the X72 bus to Melksham operated by Faresaver. A new timetable for the X72 was in operation and it was agreed that a copy could be laminated and displayed in the bus shelter on the village green. Cllr Stan Cherry said he would laminate a copy and also email the timetable to Cllr Ian Plain and Richard Wickham so that it could be made available on the Bathford Bulletin and parish council websites. The Clerk was asked to put on note in the Bulletin about the bus service.

Action: Cllr Stan Cherry

- 6.4.9. Drop off point for No.13 bus service – a resident had written to the council asking if it would be possible for the No.13 Bus Service to drop off at the top of the Dovers Park turning circle to avoid the need for residents to walk up the hill. Members could see no reasons why First should not be asked to consider putting a drop-off point at the top of the hill in Dovers Park. The Clerk was asked to write to the bus company.

Action: Clerk

6.5. Planning and Environment Committee

- 6.5.1. The report from the Planning & Environment Committee was noted. The following items were discussed:-
- 6.5.2. Jewson's View Farm – it was reported that building work appeared to be taking place on the site, although the planning application had not been determined. Cllr Hugh Baker said that he would pass this information to the enforcement officer at B&NES.
- Action: Cllr Hugh Baker**
- 6.5.3. New opening at Broadlands Fruit Farm – Cllr Hugh Baker reported that B&NES enforcement team had advised him that permission was not required for the opening as long as it was not being used. He asked to be made aware of any evidence that the gate was being used.
- 6.5.4. Demolition of garages in Mountain Wood – it was reported that Somer Housing Trust had written to residents about the proposals to demolish garages in Mountain Wood, rebuild some of them and to create hard standing. Cllr Shirley Beazer said that she had seen one of the letters and there was no mention of houses being built as part of the scheme.

7. Sustainable Communities Act

- 7.1. Members noted that the Sustainable Communities Act became law in October 2007 and that local authorities would need to 'opt-in' to the Act to enable communities to be included in the processes set out by the Act.
- 7.2. Local Works, the organisation behind the campaign to get the new law had written to the parish council asking them to take various actions, particularly writing to local councillors asking them to opt-in the Sustainable Communities Act when invited to do so by the Government in October 2008.
- 7.3. The Council RESOLVED unanimously to continue to support this piece of legislation by writing to all the ward councillors representing Bathavon North

asking them to opt in to the Sustainable Communities Act process when invited to by the Government.

Action: Clerk

8. Liaison with School Governors

8.1. Cllr Jean Vesey reported that the school had been awarded an 'outstanding' mark by Ofsted following its recent inspection. The penultimate payment had been made to the contractors for the new classrooms. The school roll was expected to be around 157 pupils from September.

9. Neighbourhood Watch

9.1. Cllr Jean Vesey said that there were no significant matters to report. It was noted that the police seemed to be a more visible presence in the village since the new beat manager took up his post and a second PCSO had joined PCSO Greg Doyle on the beat.

10. Correspondence

10.1. Cllr Shirley Beazer said that there was no correspondence to report which had not already been seen by members via email, post or round robin.

10.2. Cllr Ian Plain tabled a letter from a resident expressing concern about a piece of rusty metal protruding from the ground in the children's play area which was a trip hazard. It was confirmed that the Amenities Committee were already aware of this problem and action would be taken to rectify the matter.

Action: Cllr John Lloyd

10.3. Correspondence issued on "round robin" – members noted the list of correspondence issued as a round robin to all councillors in hard copy or by email.

11. Items to report

11.1. The following issues were raised:-

11.2. Email database for village – Cllr Keith Masdin said that a volunteer in a neighbouring parish has set up a database which could be used to send emails about events happening in the parish to residents who had registered to receive information in this way. Such a system might encourage greater participation in local events and provide another way of communicating with parishioners. Members agreed to put a note in the Bulletin asking if there was a volunteer who would be willing set up and manage such a database for Bathford parish.

11.3. Royal Mail Post Box – it was noted that the Post Box currently standing outside the shop was to be moved to Bathford Hill by the phone box. Members queried whether permission would be needed to relocate the box and whether it could be moved to another site nearer to its current location which would avoid the need to cross the busy road. The Clerk was asked to contact B&NES and find out who to speak to about this matter.

Action: Clerk

12. Items for the Bulletin

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

- 12.1.1. Reminder of no parish council meeting in August;
- 12.1.2. Inform parishioners that post for council can be left in the shop following the closure of the post office and that a letterbox is to be installed in office door;
- 12.1.3. Details of X72 bus service;
- 12.1.4. Ask for volunteer to set up village email database;
- 12.1.5. Date of next meeting.

Action: Clerk

13. Items for the next meeting

- 13.1. Budgets for 2009-2010;
- 13.2. PSCO to check problems with parking at the start of the rugby season;
- 13.3. School boundary fence.

14. Payments for approval

- 14.1. Payment of the invoices presented to the council was proposed by Cllr Wendy Chambers and seconded by Cllr John Lloyd. The council RESOLVED to make the following payments:-

Bathford Post Office	Rent for parish office – July & Aug 08	£200.00
GB Sport & Leisure	New swing shackles	£39.25
BT	Internet services	£43.55
Multi-Serve	Engraving plaques for benches	£80.00
Corsham Print Ltd	Printing Bathford Bulletin	£87.00
EDF Energy	Street Lighting	£3.41
R Millbank	Grasscutting & additional work on High St	£440.00
The Phone Co-op	Quarterly phone and internet charges	£84.85
Mrs R C Holding	Clerk's expenses, electricity	£60.00
Mrs R C Holding	Clerk's salary – May 08	£519.65
HM Revenue & Customs	Tax & NI	£42.40

15. Date of next meeting

- 15.1. The next meeting will be on Monday 15 September 2008 at 7.30pm in the Parish Office.

The meeting closed at 9.24pm

Signed..... (Chair)

Date.....